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## American Alliance Policy in Southern Asia: 1953-54

Prakash Chandra Kapil  
*University of Rhode Island*

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AMERICAN ALLIANCE POLICY IN SOUTHERN ASIA:

1953-54

BY

PRAKASH CHANDRA KAPIL

A THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE  
REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF  
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IN  
INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

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## ABSTRACT

Direct American interest in Southern Asia began only after the Second World War as a result of three confluencing events which entirely changed the Western-oriented power pattern in the whole of Asia.

One of these events was the demission in a short period of the Imperial West from all of its more important colonial outposts in Asia. Against a background of centuries of exploitation and humiliation, this parting bade fair to be permanent: i.e., any Western return in the old style had become impossible in the foreseeable future.

② The second event was of more direct concern to the United States. Before and during the Second War her strategy in Asia was centred around Japan and China, the former as a threat to be tamed and the latter as her ward and future hope, promising a vast potential for investments, trade, and cultural and religious activities. With Chiang Kai-shek's defeat by Communist forces in 1949 all this changed, causing a wave of outcry by certain political forces to an extent rarely paralleled in American history. The subsequent Red Chinese intervention in the Korean War forced the United States government into an "agonising reappraisal" of its policies in the Orient.

The third event which was destined to count so much in Southern Asia, but which the Rightwing "Asialationists" were mentally unprepared to accept, was the emergence of what has

been called "neutralism" in some of the key countries of the region.

All these trends had become clear by 1951. What was the reaction of the United States to these trends? How did she set about reorienting her attitudes and policies during the years of readjustment?

These questions have been studied in a four-dimensional context: 1) the changing international setting; 2) the place of Southern Asia in American international and domestic policies; 3) the actual formulation of U.S. policies in this area and the manner of their execution; and, 4) the effects of United States actions on her relations with the countries of the region and on the relations of these countries among themselves.

While history cannot be ignored in studying a historical period, the approach adopted in this study is topical and analytical rather than chronological. Although reference has been made to preceding and succeeding events for the purpose of providing a perspective, the study's focus has been on the first two years of the Eisenhower Administration.

The research findings of this study indicate that United States policies towards Southern Asia during 1953 and 1954 were based on outdated and internally inconsistent postulates. They produced "solutions" which were related neither to the international issues of the time nor to the actual problems of the area. As a consequence, they tended to be ineffective and self-defeating.

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## PREFACE

The idea of this study developed from a research paper on the Southeast Asia Treaty Organisation which I wrote earlier for Professor David D. Warren. Most of the writers on Seato I happened to read tended to examine it mainly in terms of the Treaty which created it. This approach seemed to me to be only partially satisfactory. It left one crucial question unanswered: Why would such a powerful nation as the United States want to associate herself with a proposition which, at its best, succeeded only in attracting nations whose particularist aims scarcely coincided with her own, and which, at its worst, seemed to have resulted in alienating a large segment of the Asian sentiment? I found little help from official authors from Seato countries who generally offered facile defense from their position of prior commitment. Similarly, spokesmen for the non-member Asian governments appeared to react emotionally to what they had already rejected in fact.

It was because of this intellectual dissatisfaction that I decided to enlarge the periscope to include the overall domestic and international context from which American decision-makers at that time would have looked at Southern Asia. In this approach Seato becomes only one expression of a many-faceted policy matrix. It is hoped that my effort will help explain this phase of U.S. policies more clearly.

My debts are many, and not always identifiable. The members of the Thesis Committee naturally have the first claim. However, Professor Robert F. Smith is particularly entitled

to my gratitude. To him I owe a huge intellectual debt. It is my pleasure to acknowledge the understanding and help I received from Dr. George Goodwin, Chairman of the Department of Political Science and Dean Ernest W. Hartung of the Graduate School. Without the unlimited cooperation and dispatch with which Professor Francis Allen and other members of the University Library helped me in obtaining materials f r o m elsewhere this work could not have been completed within the time at my disposal.

When I go back to my country I shall always look back on my stay at the University of Rhode Island with the fondest memories.

May 31, 1963.

P.C.K.





## I. INTRODUCTION

### The Geographic Region

This study will examine the post-Korean War phase of United States relations with the mainland and island countries constituting the great Asian arc from Afghanistan in the Northwest to the Philippines in the Southeast.

Unhappily, a terminology acceptable to all to describe the area has yet to be found. The phrase 'South and Southeast Asia' has gained wide currency during recent years, thanks largely to the American university circles and their area study programs. Nevertheless, these terms have meant different things to the historian, geographer, and geopolitician.

Professor Joseph E. Spencer of the University of California, Los Angeles, used the expression "Asia, South by East". The U.S. State Department Geographer, Mr. G. Etzel Percy employs the phonetically monstrous variation: "Geographic Regions of Asia: South and East". Dr. Russel H. Fifield, a political scientist, in the current fashion among academic writers, favors the dichotomous "South Asia" and "Southeast Asia" as the "political area" classification.

The Chinese refer to 'Southeast Asia' as Nanyang (literally, "South Ocean"). The Japanese use the same term, but pronounce it Nanyo. The Australians look at it as "Near North", and the Indians favor a more endearing term, "Further

India", citing their substantial historical and cultural ties with the area.

Afghanistan is considered by many, as also West Pakistan by some for some purposes, to have greater affinity with the area variously described as Middle East, Near East, or Central Asia. Ceylon is included by some with India in "South Asia" and in "Southeast Asia" by others. The Philippines tends to be placed in "Southeast Asia" by Americans but not by the British.

To avoid all this multiple verbiage and to steer clear of the nationalistic preference, for our purpose we shall adopt the generic term, "Southern Asia"<sup>1</sup>, after Professor Charles Wolf, Jr.<sup>2</sup>, to denote the entire area from Afghanistan to the Philippines including the Indo-Pacific oceanic island countries on the way.

### Its International Importance

Afghanistan, the two parts of Pakistan (East and West), India, Nepal, Sikkim, Bhutan, Ceylon, Burma, Thailand, Cambodia, Laos, the two Vietnams (North and South), Malaya, the Indonesian archipelago, and the Philippines: these fourteen countries have an area of about 3.2 million square miles and a population of over 675 million. Culturally and ethnically,

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1. There will, however, be occasions when we will have to refer separately to the Philippines, Indonesia, Thailand, Viet-nam, Laos, Cambodia, Malaya and Burma as a grouping. We will then use the collective term "Southeast Asia".

2. Foreign Aid: Theory and Practice in Southern Asia (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1960).

the region exhibits a puzzling array of diverse strands. Its three hundred spoken languages and the presence within it of nearly every religion of the world--Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Islam, Zoroastrianism, and some unique syntheses like Cao Dai and Hao Hao--illustrate the point. Yet, there is enough of a community of shared past and of present problems and aspirations that lends this 'free arc of Asia' a certain homogeneity and character.

Together, these countries supply more than 90 percent of the world's rubber, tea, and jute and over 85 percent of its rice. The West's substantial dependence on this area's tremendous output of such essential industrial raw materials as tin, mica, manganese, iron ore, chrome ore, and tungsten is acknowledged. Its potential as a market for the goods of the more industrialised nations is dependent on its own economic betterment but has already been and must remain a big consideration in their thinking of this region.

Lying as it does astride the main sea, land, and air routes connecting Europe with the Pacific through the Middle East, its strategic importance is well understood. The region's description as part of a "great arc of freedom around the center of Communist power in Asia"<sup>3</sup> is a recent American feather in its cap.

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3. Mutual Security Program, Fiscal Year 1956: A Summary Statement (Washington: Foreign Operations Administration, May, 1955), pp.43-47.

U.S. and Southern Asia  
in Colonial Past

Up to the time of her participation in the First World War the traditional policy/vis-a-vis the European Imperial Powers has been aptly summed up in Alfred Thayer Mahan's famous trilogy: "In America: Predominance", "In Europe: Abstention", and "In Asia: Cooperation".

"Cooperation" in Asia was epitomized in the celebrated "Open Door" policy which, to use a metaphor, was essentially "polyandrous" in conception: the basic idea being that everybody should have equal access to a territory. It fell to China to be the proving ground for this "cooperation", and it was primarily China's great mystical, magnetic pull which had made the United States "potentially a Pacific power since 1805, actually since 1846, emphatically after 1867"<sup>4</sup>, verily since 1898 and unquestionably after World War II.

China's charm in fact never bloomed into a vast open market, nor did the Chinese change into a "civilized, Christian" people. Its teeming millions nonetheless never lost the attraction and always remained an irresistible future hope till Mao Tse-tung was charged with having planted "Communist witches" in the State Department who "handed over" the China apple to him.

Although there were earlier sporadic forays, America's

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4. Samuel Flagg Bemis, A Short History of American Foreign Policy and Diplomacy (New York: Rinehart, 1959), p.297. Professor Bemis' famous evaluation of the Philippines acquisition as "the great aberration" would seem to be inconsistent with this statement.

planned entree into the Pacific and China became possible only with the wresting of the Philippines from Spain in 1898. To safeguard this avant garde of 'manifest destiny' in the Pacific, the United States had to build a costly spiderweb of naval bases, fuel stations, and communications. A first-rate naval base was built at Pearl Harbor and fortification of Guam, Wake Island, Midway was initiated at the beginning of the Second World War.

With the British, the Dutch, the French, the Portuguese and the Germans firmly entrenched in most of Southern Asia, Australia and New Zealand, the Americans had neither the chance to look west- and southward of the Philippines for expansion, nor, consequently, the necessity for building defenses against these flanks, thanks to the policy of "cooperation". Her main challenger arose from rather unexpected quarters, the Oriental parvenu Japan.

Before and for some time during the Russo-Japanese War of 1905, Theodore Roosevelt had adopted an attitude of encouraging the Nipponese as a counter to Russia's designs in the Far East. But, thereafter, Japan's growing strength and aggressive eye on the "open door" in China caused a sort of undeclared "cold war" with the United States, and, in time, the two became the chief contenders in the Pacific. Eventually, only the American might in the Pacific came to be check on Japan's ambitions of a "Greater Asia" or the "Asian Co-Prosperity Sphere".

The meaning of the 5 : 5 : 3 ratio of naval strength

prescribed by the Washington Treaty after the First World War, combined with the strategic triangular hold of Anglo-American forces in Hong Kong, Manila, and Singapore, was not lost on the Japanese. U.S.-Japanese relations progressively deteriorated thereafter and culminated in total hostilities during the Second World War and an equally total defeat for Japan.

Thus at the end of the Second War the United States emerged supreme in the Pacific. Japan lay prostrate and the War had left the other Powers in no position to challenge the U.S. position. But with this supremacy came other and more menacing challenges which were soon to involve the United States on a world-wide scale and in areas which had been of so little concern to her thus far.

As this rapid survey shows the United States had been primarily concerned with Japan and China in the Pacific, albeit in different ways. Her connections with the countries in Southern Asia were sparing. She depended on the British and other "friendly" Powers for the protection of her minor investments in tin and rubber in Malaya and in rubber and petroleum in Indonesia and her other negligible interests in Burma, Thailand, and Indo-China. Her relations with other countries of the area including India were mainly cultural and on a private plane through Christian missionaries and educationists. By withdrawing from the Philippines she had made good her promise of 1934 and had on many occasions declared her sympathy for freedom from colonial rule in other countries

of the area, for which they were grateful.

But within half a decade after the War the entire scene was transformed and the United States became the most potent factor in the whole of Southern Asia.

### A Tryst With Destiny

Most of the factors which provide the present setting in Southern Asia belong to recent history, so that an enumeration here is justified only because of their very great bearing on a proper understanding of the evolving American response to that region's problems.

The most outstanding fact on the entire Southern Asian scene is that of change; change from a centuries-old social, political and economic stagnation which in the West has understandably been termed as the "revolt of Asia".

All of these countries with the exception of Thailand and Afghanistan had been under foreign domination of one sort or other. They had been chafing under this yoke and in most countries national movements were taking militant character. These national struggles had grown out of genuine patriotism and local grievances of racial discrimination, <sup>and</sup> economic and political exploitation. In many respects people were inferior in their own country. Decisions vitally affecting them used to be made in about half a dozen foreign capitals.

The western ideas of liberty, equality, and fraternity and of constitutional government had much to do with the thinking of the national leaders. In addition, the success of

the Communist Revolution in Russia<sup>5</sup>, rapidly changing the face ~~face~~ of that agrarian country in open defiance of the West and despite its animosity, acted as a great inspirational force. During the War, the Japanese occupation of most of the Southeastern segment of this region had given its people a certain taste of independence, however. fictitious their participation in the national administrations might have been.

The surprising ease with which these areas fell to Japan and the willing cooperation she received in many places pointed up, as nothing else had done before, the impossibility of defending a territory in the absence of local enthusiasm. It also showed that the industrial base for modern defense cannot exist in an economy ordered primarily ex-hypothesi, on the "development" basis.

All these factors resulted in an avalanche which by 1950 swept the Imperial Powers out of most of Southern Asia, except Malaya which finally became independent in 1957. The three Indo-Chinese States of Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia lagged behind. The French, under constant pressure of events and American insistence, did give formal recognition to a "fully independent and sovereign State of Vietnam" in 1954<sup>6</sup>--the

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5. Whatever happens in Russia has always exerted powerful influence on the neighboring Middle East and Asian areas. For the impact of the non-Communist Revolution of 1905 see Ivar Spector, The First Russian Revolution: Its Impact on Asia (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1962).

6. Two separate treaties were simultaneously signed, the second of "association" with the French Union. The treaties were never technically put into force.



last of these States to be so recognised--but still continue to be there under special treaties of "association".

The general poverty and illiteracy of the entire area due to the colonial past, and "the revolution of rising expectations", to use Mr. Adlai Stevenson's famous euphemism, are factors which must weigh in any foreign relations calculus of these countries.

Another factor of very great importance, which is rather a by-product of the other factors mentioned above, is the intensity of feeling with which the masses of the people look upon their newly won freedom and on foreign intentions in anything concerning their countries. It may be nothing more than the proverbial once-bitten-twice-shy attitude; but it is there and any western paternalism, however well-meaning, is judged accordingly, whatever the ruling elites in certain countries may or may not do.

### Regional Realities

During the bygone colonial days the relations between the countries of the region underwent a metamorphosis. Next-door neighbors were shut off from each other and whatever little intra-regional intercourse existed had to be "permitted" by the possessing foreign power in each country.

All this was bound to change after independence, as illustrated by the increasingly closer consultations among the so-called Asian neutrals who have kept clear of foreign entanglements. There is no denying the fact that Afghanistan,

Bhutan, Burma, Ceylon, India, Indonesia, Cambodia, Laos, Malaya, Nepal, and Sikkim--eleven of the fourteen countries of the region--have a certain identity of outlook on their external relations. Left to themselves, perhaps Thailand and a re-united Vietnam would follow the same path.

In the economic sphere, most of the countries have pre-industrial infra-structures and mutually competitive agricultural economies. But as development takes place, their complementarity is sure to increase. As it is, India, being relatively more advanced in industrialisation, has already been helping some of these countries with technical know-how and, in a few cases, even with capital goods. Pakistan has a surplus of raw jute and long-staple cotton which India's mills can and do absorb. Burma's surplus rice can be regionally used. To mention only a few examples.

In any geo-strategy of the area India must occupy a central position. Singapore at the head of the natural gateway of the strait of Malacca and the triangle formed by connecting Manila and Hong Kong to it have obvious defensive value in the hypothetical event of a sea attack on the area from the Pacific. Indonesia too promises to have formidable strategic possibilities in such an attack. Similarly, Afghanistan, in the Northwest and Burma, Vietnam, Laos, and Sikkim, Nepal, and Bhutan, having common boundaries either with Russia or China, will have to provide first-line defenses. But India, with her long arching sea coast, and two thousand miles of

common border with Communist China, will eventually have to bear the main brunt of any large-scale conventional-type invasion in which not only the holding capacity but the long-term sustaining power would be required.

Her very location, size, resources and the quality of her leadership, to mention only a few aspects, have placed India in a position which, honest disclaimers to area leadership by Indian politicians notwithstanding, is bound to exert its weight on anything happening in any part of Southern Asia. We may not accept Professor Michael Brecher's judgement that her neighbors are "by comparison pygmies"<sup>7</sup> and we may not go along with Nehru's self-evaluation:

One of the major questions of the day is the readjustment of relations between Asia and Europe. When we talk of Asia, remember that India, not because of any ambition of hers, but because of history, and because of so many other things, inevitably has to play a very important part in Asia. And not only that; India becomes a kind of meeting ground for various trends and forces and a meeting ground between what might roughly be called the East and West.

Look at the map. If you have to consider any question affecting the Middle East, India inevitably comes into the picture. If you have to consider any question concerning South-East Asia, you cannot do so without India. So also with the Far East. While the Middle East may not be directly connected with South-East Asia, both are connected with India. Even if you think in terms of regional organisations in Asia, you have to keep in touch with the other regions. And whatever regions you have in mind, the importance of India cannot be ignored.<sup>8</sup>

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7. In Selig S. Harrison (ed), India and the United States (New York: Macmillan Co., 1961), p.53.

8. From speech in the Indian Constituent Assembly on March 8, 1949, printed in Jawaharlal Nehru, India's Foreign Policy: Selected Speeches, September 1946-April, 1961 (Delhi: Publications Division, 1961) p.22.

Let us have a look at what a British author has to say:

The preservation of both peace and the open society in Asia depends directly upon Indian stability and growth. Between Peking and Ankara the largest, most efficient, and most quickly deployable military force is the Indian army, which has inherited the tradition of battle training, experience, discipline, and organization going back over the hundred years and more of its continuous establishment. It already defends the Himalayan wall against Chinese infiltration. To the East its existence reinforces Burma and the small successor states of Indo-China. To the West, it contributes at one remove to the security of the Middle East. Take away the lynch pin, transform the Indian subcontinent into a dozen defenceless, squabbling states--and the whole of the Indian ocean and Africa's east coasts become an area where subversion and military intrusion will be impossible to prevent. . . .<sup>9</sup>

Or, at what an American says:

. . . India compels consideration by virtue of size alone. And yet India also sticks out a mile from the rest of Asia, Africa, and the Middle East in the more critical sense that the Nehru government commands the broad nationwide support and confidence of the Indian people.<sup>10</sup>

In fine, India's position in that part of the world is so outstanding that this long excursion in 1963 could be easily dubbed as a redundant, labored, academic exercise were it not due to the fact that the United States policymakers tended to act in that area as if India did not exist. We will have to return to this aspect of the American policies in Southern Asia during 1953 and 1954 in a later chapter.

American Response to  
Changing Asia

For nearly five years after the end of the Second World

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9. Barbara Ward, India and the West (New York: Norton & Co., 1961), p.225.

10. Selig S. Harrison, op. cit., p.2.

War American policies in the Pacific were still largely China-oriented, apart from her demilitarising and democratising mission in Japan.

In China, however, America's friend and war-time ally, Chiang Kai-shek, having been recently made safe from Japan and elevated to take his seat with the world's other four most powerful men in the U.N. Security Council, was faced with another, quite different type of foe; viz., his own people. The Communist Mao Tse-tung rode to victory on the wave of popular discontent. The generalissimo was forced to retire to the Taiwan island before the year 1949 was out.

For the United States it was a major setback. The Administration drew the lesson that unpopular regimes could not be sustained by military crutches made in America. It was a recognition of the force of Asian people's impatience with the corrupt, inefficient and externally bolstered totalitarian regimes, and the U.S. government for an ephemeral moment of time seemed to have been thinking of new policies in line with this lesson.

However, to China's "friends" in the U.S.A., Chiang's debacle appeared to be due to American "domestic villainy", nothing short of a conspiracy on the part of State Department officials. The powerful China Lobby's clamor for blood was temporarily dimmed only by the louder bangs of the North Korean attack on South Korea in June, 1950, culminating in Communist China's own direct intervention and the subsequent

military stalemate.

The McCarthy witch-hunt hearings and the "MacArthur-was-let-down" inquest led the partially paralyzed American government to draw certain lessons from the Korean War which superseded the China lessons and found their expression in a number of mutual defense treaties with the countries along the "Pacific defense perimeter". Mutual Security Programs were also initiated.

As a result of its victory in the 1952 Presidential election, the Republican Party was inaugurated in the White House. The Republican right wing had already said that the Truman-Acheson lessons from China were wrong. To them, the lessons from both China and Korea were the same: the Democratic "containment" of Communism was "too passive and timid"; Communism needed to be "rolled back" and people "liberated" with the threat of "massive and instant" retaliatory might of America. Besides, this could be done "cheaper".

The new orientation of an already established policy brought United States actions to bear on the entire area of Southern Asia in their fullness for the first time. The military alliance with Pakistan and the creation of the Southeast Asia Treaty Organisation were the two most outstanding expressions of this heightened concern for Southern Asia during the first two years of the Republican Administration.

In the next chapter we will attempt an understanding

of the domestic and world dynamics of the evolving American response to Southern Asia's new awakening. Chapters III and IV will explore the actual flowering of this response. These chapters will also examine the impact of the new policies on American relations with the countries of the region and on their relations among themselves. The concluding chapter will state the findings and place them against a resume of the main elements in the United States response during the period surveyed.

## II. THE OLD AND THE "NEW LOOK" AND SOUTHERN ASIA

Having set the stage in the preceding pages we may attempt an analysis of the national and international requirements of the United States security goals and their emerging emphasis on military solutions to Southern Asia's problems.

The material available on this subject is already so voluminous that a comprehensive coverage here would be impossible. What can be done in this small section is to merely attempt an interpretative summary of the points necessary to the subsequent requirements. Moreover, not all aspects of the new strategy were the product of American policies in Southern Asia, nor has the impact been confined to that part of the world. Secondly, much of this material is strictly not germane to the area of our concern. This explains why it was considered necessary to deal with it as a separate unit.

It was, however, felt that without taking the interplay of America's world commitments and domestic realities into account, the treatment of the subject would be analogous to trying to understand the kicks of a horse by taking a count and measuring their frequency without paying attention to the source of its fury and native strength.

Although it will be preposterous to suggest that American policies in Southern Asia were at any time determined by exclusive regional considerations without reference to their larger, world-wide context, it does remain largely



true that, as this analysis would show, Southern Asia was the forge as well as the battleground for the "New Look" armoury developed by the Eisenhower-Dulles partnership.

For a proper understanding of the changes wrought by this "New Look" diplomacy<sup>1</sup> we must look back and briefly trace the general picture of American military posture in Southern Asia and elsewhere at the time when the "New Look" lense came into focus.

#### 1947-51: Containment in Europe

The power realities and general circumstances arising out of World War II largely dominated the Great Power relations through 1947. It is true that fateful changes had already been set in motion in the international arena, and in the United States policies responding to them, but the Truman Doctrine of March, 1947 was the first definite American response to the rapidly developing chill of the cold war which unofficially announced the demise of the "era of good feelings".

This Doctrine's operative formula offering unilateral help to "free peoples who are resisting attempted subjugation by armed minorities or by outside pressures"<sup>2</sup> was intentionally kept vague so as not to lead to any interpretation of formal "entangling" understandings.

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1. Norman J. Graebner calls it "in lieu of diplomacy", The New Isolationism: A Study in Politics and Foreign Policy since 1950 (New York: Ronald Co., 1956), title of Chapter 6.
  2. U.S. Department of State Bulletin, March 23, 1947.

Six months later, the Inter-American Treaty of Reciprocal Assistance (or the Rio Treaty), which was essentially a formal, joint expression of continuing United States Good Neighbor Policy towards the South American Republics, was signed. It has not been "commonly regarded as a military alliance" of the United States<sup>3</sup>. It merely perpetuated the earlier defense arrangements made during the War and collectivized the hitherto North American approach to the hemispheric problems, expressed initially in what has come to be known as the Monroe Doctrine.

It was only with the signing of the North Atlantic Treaty in April, 1949 that the United States could be said to have departed from its traditional policy of no formal, advance commitments for participation in European affairs<sup>4</sup>. Its phrasology of "an attack on one as attack on all" boldly committed the United States to definite actions and responsibilities.

#### Korean War and Containment in Asia

Till the U.S.-Japanese Security Treaty, signed simultaneously with the Peace Treaty on September 8, 1951, the United States had no formal military commitments in Asia:

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3. James E. King, "Collective Defense: The Military Commitment", in Arnold Wolfers (ed.), Alliance Policy in the Cold War (Baltimore: John Hopkins Press, 1959), p.104.

4. President Truman calls it "the first peacetime military alliance entered into by the United States since the adoption of the Constitution". Harry S. Truman, Memoirs (II) Years of Trials and Hope (Garden City: Doubleday & Co., 1955), p.241.

Secretary Acheson's talk of "the Pacific Defense Perimeter" in a Press Conference on January 12, 1950 and the financing of Chiang's resistance to Civil War in China did not amount to acceptance of formal obligations. The Chinese intervention in the Korean War in November, 1950 finally "convinced" the U.S. Administration that the prospects of Mao's turning into a second Tito were wishful thinking<sup>5</sup> and that a new Communist front had opened which would have to be "contained". The Security arrangement with Japan, the erstwhile arch-foe of the United States was, therefore, the first step in that direction.

The Philippines, however, failed to look at the issue in the same light. They wanted, in turn, to be secured against a remilitarized Land of the Rising Sun before it was itself secured from the Red tide. A defense pact had, therefore, to be concluded with her on August 30, nine days before the

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5. In a speech on January 12, 1950 before the National Press Club, Washington, D.C., Dean Acheson pointed out that the Kremlin was "detaching the northern provinces of China and . . . attaching them to the Soviet Union. This process is complete in Outer Mongolia. It is nearly complete in Manchuria, and I am sure that in Inner Mongolia and Sinkiang, there are happy reports from Soviet agents to Moscow. . . . This fact that the Soviet Union is taking the northern provinces of China is the single most significant, the most important fact, in the relation of any foreign power in Asia". The Secretary emphasized that under no circumstances the United States must "seize the unenviable position which the Russians have carved out for themselves. We must not deflect from the Russians to ourselves the righteous anger, and the wrath, and the hatred of the Chinese people which must develop", "The Far East and Southeast Asia: The Basic position of the United States", printed in American Foreign Policy, 1950-55, Basic Documents, Department of State Publication 6446 (Washington: G.P.O., 1957), pp. 2316-2317.

signing of the Japanese Treaty. On September 1, the United States also signed the ANZUS Pact with Australia and New Zealand, again as a guarantee of Japanese good behavior.

That completes the picture of United States commitments under the Democratic Administration.

Basically, the Truman policy had been designed to meet Communist postures as they developed. It tried to respond to these challenges resolutely, but never by over-spreading the American involvement. It extended help to local governments in Greece and Turkey to fight the Communist armed minorities. The Soviet blockade of Western access routes to Berlin was met by a heroic and costly airlift. The Soviet advance in Eastern Europe called for the massive European Recovery Program through which billions of dollars in aid were made available. The North Atlantic Treaty Organisation came into being due largely to American initiative and support.

In Asia, the American response was similarly marked by cautious resolution. It never threw diplomacy to the winds. To the Communist victory in China it reacted warily, keeping open the possibility that China might not cast her lot entirely with the Soviet Union. The United States bore most of the brunt in opposing aggression in Korea. It then tried to strengthen the Pacific defense position by making clear commitments, realistically and recognising the futility of spreading the net too thin. The result was that America was not alone in most of the situations where action became

*it was successful in Europe*

necessary. The Administration tried to work with allies and through the United Nations. When MacArthur openly advocated extension of the Korean conflict, President Truman responded to the World opinion and to the realities of the new power situation in Asia by relieving the five-star general of his command.

In short, the Truman-Acheson policy was geared to the concept of limited power. It was based on the realization that, given the realities of world politics, Communism could at best be "contained"<sup>6</sup> but not "destroyed" in the near future. It, therefore, tried to reconcile to the necessity of having to live with the menace till the Red apple was ripe or rotten enough to fall off by itself. In Asia, the Administration showed appreciation of the forces of political and social change and did not attempt to dam them in mid-stream. For example, this was its lesson from Chiang Kai-shek's rout:

. . . what we conclude, I believe, is that there is a new day which has dawned in Asia. It is a day in which the Asian people are on their own, and know it, and intend to continue on their own. It is a day in which the old relations between east and west are gone, relationships which at their worst were exploitation, and which at their best were paternalism. That relationship is over, and the relationship of east and west must now be in the Far East one of mutual respect and mutual helpfulness. We are their friends. Others are their friends. We and those others are willing to help, but we can help only where we are wanted and only where the conditions of help are really sensible and possible. So what we can see is that this new day in Asia, this new day which is dawning, may go on to a glorious noon or it may drizzle out. But that decision lies

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6. "Long-term, patient, but firm and vigilant containment" was advocated by George F. Kennan when he was the State Department's Policy Planning expert.

within ~~wikik~~ the countries of Asia and within the power of the Asian people. It is not a decision which a friend or even an enemy from outside can decide for them.<sup>7</sup>

Again, presenting the fiscal 1952 Mutual Security Program, Dean Acheson stated that "poverty, disease, illiteracy and resentments against former colonial exploitations are our enemies" in what he termed as the "vital crescent" from Afghanistan to Japan. "These represent turbulent forces", he emphasized and added: ". . . we must assure that the forces of nationalism and of the drive for economic improvement are associated with the rest of the free world instead of with communism. . . . [Our program] is designed to . . . encourage the growth and survival of non-Communist political institutions dedicated to the honest fulfilment of their basic needs and aspirations".<sup>8</sup>

Thus, sensing the momentous changes that were occurring in Asia, the Truman-Acheson policy correctly decided to abstain from interfering or bamboozling these countries into line with its own Weltpolitik.

#### 1952-54: A "New Look" Emerges

Up to the end of 1949 the Democratic foreign policies worked well and, with few exceptions, enjoyed overwhelming public support. In Europe, the Truman Doctrine, Marshall Plan, NATO, and the Berlin airlift had all succeeded in consolidating the Western position. There were signs, in fact,

8. Mutual Security Act of 1951, Senate Hearings, (Washington: G.P.O., 1951), p. 5.

7. Dean Acheson, ~~Far East, Basic Position~~, op. cit., p.2322. "The Far East . . .",

that the rapid recovery of strength by West Europe was arousing the envy of its eastern neighbors. In America, the acute commodity shortages resulting from the War had eased; the employment situation was improving; and, prices, after a spiralling inflation, were stabilizing. The nation was fast developing a general optimistic mood and people tended to forget the emotional and economic privations suffered because of the recent War.

This happy state of affairs, however, proved to be only the lull before a storm. With Chiang Kai-shek's retreat to Taiwan in December, 1949 before pummelling Communist soldiers, the situation in Asia fast acquired ominous hues. In the introductory chapter we noted the specially paternalistic feelings towards China that had of yore existed in America.<sup>9</sup> The substitution of Mao for Chiang turning China from a ward to a foe had, therefore, the irony of a Greek tragedy. The memories of the sacrifices suffered not long ago in subduing a rapacious Nippon for the sake of Chiang started coming alive again. This was the beginning of a great upsurge of frustration and disillusionment that started snowballing into a partisan-led search for scapegoats for

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9. American motives regarding Asia have been complex: "Americans seemed far less afraid of entanglements in the Orient. Here we could spread the Gospel, extend trade, urge reform, and diffuse American ideas without danger of immediate political involvement", Selig Adler, The Isolationist Impulse: Its Twentieth Century Reaction (New York: Colliers Books--paperback edition--, 1961) pp. 24-25.

this "American loss". The uncovering of some Communists through the McCarthy crusade leading to Congressional Hearings against State Department officials and the Institute of Pacific Relations set the public mood into a fuse which was powerfully detonated by the Korean War. Americans had to bear the major burden of that War and suffered tremendous losses in men and materials. But, when Truman restrained MacArthur's march into Manchuria and later relieved the General of his command, he played straight into the hands of the G.O.P. First of all, people could not understand why it became necessary to fight another war so soon after the last War and for a country whose name ~~even~~ most of them had <sup>even</sup> not/heard before. They could appreciate even less the bogging <sup>the</sup> down of/American soldiers indefinitely at the imaginary 38th parallel in a military stalemate. It went so much/against <sup>against</sup> the grain of American military tradition of fighting occasional wars heroically and then speedily returning home to normal vocations.

The success of the hero's welcome to MacArthur and the later Congressional Hearings of his case did enough to arouse public emotions against the Democratic Administration for its alleged failures in Asia. The right wing within the Republican Party, which concluded that this popular enthusiasm gave them a mandate for their Asia-first orientation, acquired ascendancy. The mass hysteria and frustrations whipped up by the wild charges of "official defeatism and deafness



toward Asia which extended from the presidency down"<sup>10</sup> changed the nation's foreign policy mood rather rapidly, making it possible for the Republicans to turn that policy into a domestic struggle for power. The Presidential election year of 1952 offered too timely an opportunity to be missed.

The Republicans inveighed that every wound to America's international position since World War II was, in effect, self-inflicted. The Russian advance into East European countries was not the result of a power-vacuum, but of Roosevelt-Truman "tragic blunders" at Teheran, Yalta, and Potsdam and "others to follow". "On our Pacific flank", the Republican platform charged, the Truman-Acheson "villainy" had "substituted a murderous enemy for an ally and friend". The Administration had first "invited" the Korean War, "invoked the patriotic and sacrificial support of the American people", and, then, it did not have "the will to victory".<sup>11</sup> The platform castigated the Truman "Europe First" orientation and attributed America's Far Eastern "failures" to the Administration's "Asia last" policy when the Soviet Union had turned to an "Asia first" policy. In short, American policy had become "short on ideas, short on understanding of

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10. This is an accurate summation of the Republican charges done by a Republican supporter magazine, five years later: Life, "Truman, China and History" (editorial), XL, Jan. 23, 1956, p.40.

11. "Republican Platform of 1952", reproduced in Current History XXII, October, 1952, pp.246-54.

the nature and methods of the enemy, short on fighting will to win the cold war".<sup>12</sup>

Mr. Dulles became the chief foreign policy expert and spokesman of the Republican Party as well as later "the best Secretary of State" President Eisenhower had "ever known". He is said to have "best articulated the thinking of all the architects of the national defense policies"<sup>13</sup> of his period.

In his article titled "A Policy of Boldness" in the Life issue of May 19, 1952,<sup>14</sup> Mr. Dulles characterized the policy of containment as "negative, futile, and immoral". We are not working, sacrificing, and spending in order to be able to live without this peril--but to be able to live with it, presumably forever". The Truman-Acheson policies were "treadmill policies, which, at best might perhaps [sic] keep us in the same place until we drop exhausted". They were "not designed to win a war conclusively". He accused that "we now sponsor the Iron Curtain to cut off our attracting power; and thus we help to give despotism a lease on life". "There is one solution and only one", he pontificed, "that is for the free world to develop the will to organize the means to retaliate instantly against open aggression by Red armies, so that if it occurred anywhere, we could and would strike

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12. William Henry Chamberlain, Beyond Containment (Chicago: Henry Regnery Co., 1953), p.83

13. James King, op. cit., pp.120-21.

14. XXXVI, pp.146 ff.

back where it hurts, by means of our own choosing".

Concerning the "captive peoples" under the "Godless Communism", Mr. Dulles wrote that the United States "should make it publicly known that it wants and expects [italics added] liberation to occur". The mere statement of that wish and expectation, he went on, "would change, in an electrifying way, the mood of the captive peoples. It would probably put heavy new burdens on the jailers and create new opportunities for liberation".

"Never had the illusion of American omnipotence demanded so much of American diplomacy".<sup>15</sup> "The Republican program of action", Professor John W. Spanier comments,

... apparently envisaged the future Secretary of State, John "Joshua" Dulles, marching around the walls of the Kremlin empire, sounding the call of freedom upon his trumpet. The walls would then come tumbling down, the enslaved people would be liberated, and Soviet power would be forced to retreat.<sup>16</sup>

Mr. Dulles, not only promised to "strike back" and "liberate", but to do so at "cut-rate" price. In the Life article, quoted above, Mr. Dulles had said that the new policy's cornerstone would be "a balanced budget, a reduced national debt, an economical administration, and a cut in taxes".

He amplified his ideas later in an address to the Council on Foreign Relations on January 12, 1954:

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15. Graebner, op. cit., p.93

16. American Foreign Policy since World War II (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, 1960), p.101.

We need allies and collective security. Our purpose is to make these relations effective, less costly. This can be done by placing more reliance on deterrent power and less dependence on local defensive power.

This is accepted practice so far as local communities are concerned. We keep locks on our doors, but we do not have an armed guard in every home. We rely principally on a community security system so well equipped to punish any who break in and steal that, in fact, would-be aggressors are generally deterred. That is the modern way of getting maximum security at a bearable cost.

What the Eisenhower administration seeks is a similar international security system. We want, for ourselves and the other free nations, a maximum deterrent at a bearable cost.<sup>17</sup>(italics added).

Then he wrote an article in ~~the~~ Foreign Affairs whose general theme was also economic. "We do not need self-imposed policies that sap our strength", he wrote and added: "By now, however, the new course is charted and is guiding our military planning. As a result, it is now possible to get, and share, more basic security at less cost".<sup>18</sup>

There is another side of the "New Look" thinking which concerns Southern Asia more directly and which appears to have been at the back of Mr. Dulles' mind all the time.

We have already referred to the Republican crusade, a la China Lobby, against the Truman-Acheson "substituting" of Mao Tse-tang for Chiang Kai-shek. In the Life article,<sup>19</sup>

17. "Evolution of Foreign Policy", Department of State Bulletin, January 25, 1954, pp.107-10.

18. John Foster Dulles, "Policy for Peace and Security", Foreign Affairs, XXXII, April, 1954, pp.352-69.

19. "A Policy of Boldness", loc. cit.

Mr. Dulles had prescribed that in Asia "a more of a hopeful, spirited, dynamism could right the balance". In the Council on Foreign Relations address, he listed "some transformations" which, on application of the "New Look" test, the Eisenhower administration had felt were needed. The first of these transformations he mentioned was: "It is not sound military strategy permanently to commit United States land forces to Asia to a degree that leaves us no strategic reserves".

That his new strategy was hatched in the Asian egg-basket found confirmation in Mr. Dulles' Foreign Affairs article. Having said in a preceding paragraph that "West European countries . . . can create defense of the Continent", he warned: "Most areas within the reach of an aggressor offer less value to him than the loss he would suffer from well-conceived retaliatory measures". Put this against his following clarification of the "deterrence of massive retaliatory power" in the same article:

The essential thing is that a potential aggressor should know in advance that he can and will be made to suffer for his aggression for more than he possibly can gain by it. This calls for a system in which local defensive strength is reinforced by more mobile deterrent power. The method of doing so will vary according to the character of the various areas.

In fact these three ideas of, (1) more punishment for less gain, (2) Western Europe's ability for Continental defense, and, (3), the "areas within the reach of an aggressor" occur in that order in three consecutive paragraphs in the article.

Besides, as James King points out, the theory of

nuclear deterrence received "its first systematic statement" and became a "doctrine" of massive retaliation "in relation to the Indo-China crises of 1953-54".<sup>20</sup> (We will have opportunity to refer to this in the next chapter.)

That there has always been a strong expansionist feeling towards Asia, especially China, among certain sections in the United States was discussed earlier. After the debacle of that "tragic hero of history's Asian tale"<sup>21</sup> the "Asia Firsters'" frustration found new zeal in the "New Look" of the new Administration.

MacArthur is reported to have told Representative Joseph W. Martin, Jr.: "If we lose the war to Communism in Asia, the fall of Europe is inevitable; win it and Europe most probably would avoid war and yet preserve freedom".<sup>22</sup> In thus advocating primacy to Asia in the United States foreign policy, General Douglas MacArthur certainly had company, both among the dead and the then living: Theodore Roosevelt, Alfred Thayer Mahan, the Cabot Lodges, Herbert Hoover, Robert A. Taft, Joseph McCarthy, William Knowland, and the new comer, John Foster Dulles.

The reasoning of the mid-twentieth century "Asialationists" has been well summed up by Selig Adler:

20. op. cit., p.119

21. Phrase used by editors of Life, editorial, loc. cit.

22. Quoted in Charles W. Willoughby and John Chamberlin, MacArthur, 1941-51, vol. II (New York: McGraw Hill Book Co., 1954), pp.421-422.

This confident mood prevailed in 1951, because our prosperity was overflowing, our economy booming, and our armed forces were backed potentially by a stockpile of A-bombs. In Asia we could flex our muscles without help or advice from poverty-stricken allies, for there our leadership could not be challenged (in the near future) by any non-Communist power willing to go our way. If, on the other hand, we continued to place the defense of Europe ahead of victory in Asia, we would still be plagued with allies who would insist upon mutual consultation and action in the campaign against Communism. Senator Kenneth S. Wherry best expressed this feeling of national superiority when he said in 1940: 'With God's help, we will lift Shanghai up and up, until it is just like Kansas City'.<sup>23</sup>

To restate the foundations of the strategy of the "New Look":

1. From the premise that the Truman-Acheson-Kennan "Containment" policy was too "negative, futile, and immoral" and was aimed at stagnating the United States into "living with the peril forever" the "New Look" reached the conclusion that Communism should be "destroyed" and not "contained" and the "captive peoples liberated" through a "Policy of Boldness".

2. America's strength was being "sapped" through defense expenditures when it was possible to achieve "more security at less cost", i.e., by "attaching a price tag to security".<sup>24</sup>

3. The Republican victory had been possible largely due to the mass hysteria and frustration caused by the "Asia Firsters" and China Lobbyists over the "betrayal" of Chiang which had "directly led" to the "seemingly endless

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23. The Isolationist Impulse, op. cit, p.407

24. Hanson W. Baldwin in The New York Times, January 24, 1954.

Korean War" with its "tragic toll" of American life. Their point of view was, therefore, accepted that since "old Europe" was capable of taking care of itself, Asia now must be made safe from the Red tide.

4. In terms of the international situation--supplementing the United States domestic politics--the most significant fact was that since Red China ("glutted with manpower") had no capacity to hit back<sup>25</sup> the only way to reconcile all the above irreconcilables was to concentrate on "rolling back" the Red tide in Asia.

#### Challenge and Response

After prescribing "liberation" and "destruction" of the "Communist peril" at a reduced rate as the therapy for resuscitating the sagging popular morale, the Republican administration had now to face the acid test of proving its efficacy and yet face the realities of mid-century international relations.

Chiang's "defection" and the "wastefully fought" War in Korea had been the key issues of the election campaign. Mr. Eisenhower had said that he would "forgo the diversions of politics . . . to concentrate on the job of ending the Korean War. . . . That job", he had asserted, "required a

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25. Even though China was allied with Russia, the latter herself was behind the United States in the development of nuclear stockpiles. She had, however, already exploded the first atom bomb in 1949 and the consideration that American superiority might not last forever must have also a "bold" policy formulation, while the United States alone basked in the atomic sunshine.



personal trip. . . . I shall go to Korea".<sup>26</sup> Accordingly, in the company of Mr. Dulles he went to Korea shortly after his election. On the return voyage abroad the Helena, Mr. Dulles disclosed to James Shepley of Life<sup>27</sup> during the 1956 Presidential election year, they made this decision: If the Chinese Reds did not agree to "an honorable truce" within reasonable time the United States would renew the fighting and this time "fight to win". This would require air attack into Manchuria which the Truman administration had "protected" by its decision not to cross the Yalu river "even by air". "Furthermore", to save lives, "Eisenhower decided on the tactical use of atomic arms". They decided to convey to the Chinese the gist of what these new decisions meant.

Mr. Eisenhower used the State of the Union message to announce that he had rescinded the Truman order interloping the 7th Fleet between Chiang and Mao. Mao would no longer be saved. Mr. Dulles further confided to the Life correspondent that he himself, on his first goodwill tour to several world capitals, told Mr. Nehru in Delhi that the United States would "lift the self-imposed restrictions on its actions and hold back no weapon or effort to win". To make the point, the Shepley interview informs us that "Dulles had confidence in Nehru's ability to communicate speedily with Peking".

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26. Quoted in Graebner, op. cit., p.101.

27. James Shepley, "How Dulles Averted War" ("Three Times at Brink of War: How Dulles Gambled and Won", title page caption), Life, XL, January 16, 1956, pp. 70-80.

Here, Life puts life into the drama. At 8 o'clock in the morning of June 18, 1953 Mr. Dulles was awakened by the constant uproar of the telephone in his bedroom. It was the watchdog officer at the State Department who had received an urgent radio message from Korea, across the dark Pacific. Syngman Rhee had "unleashed" the prisoners of War. "Dulles listened quietly, grunting an occasional 'yow' to acknowledge. Then he reached over to switch on the light. And at that moment, as his fully aroused mind shook off the fog of sleep, Dulles saw himself and the nation standing on the brink of a new war". Telephone from Dulles to Eisenhower. "Dulles found the President calm and ready. The Helena decision was reaffirmed. The Manchurian targets had already been carefully selected . . ."

But the Reds chickened out. "They continued to negotiate, thus accepting a propaganda defeat . . . They did so, Dulles believes, because they had had unmistakable warning that further delays would no longer be met with U.S. indecision".

"Thirty-nine days later the truce was signed".

Could there have been greater triumph for the "New Look"?

The interpretation that the threat did deter the Reds has been accepted by most of the American writers I have had a chance to read, even by authors<sup>28</sup> who are

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<sup>28</sup>. cf. Graebner, op. cit., pp.152-54; Spanier, op. cit., pp.104-6; and Roscoe Drummond and Gaston Coblentz, Duel at the Brink (Garden City: Doubleday & Co., 1960), pp.111-14.

otherwise critical of the "New Look" braggadocio.

But here are some facts which do not corroborate Mr. Dulles' version in the Life interview:

1. Mr. Nehru is reported to have denied Mr. Dulles' suggestion that the Indian Prime Minister conveyed the atomic attack threat to Peking.<sup>29</sup>

2. Sir Anthony Eden in his Memoirs has this to say:  
The release of prisoners

was a right and a left for President Rhee. A right at the Communists who were alarmed and indignant at so spectacular a desertion; a left at the Americans who were nominally in charge of the camps and correspondingly embarrassed in the negotiations.<sup>30</sup>

3. Mr. Dulles issued the following statement on June 13, the same day that he received the morning call:

I have been in conference with the President . . . This action [Rhee's releasing the prisoners] was in violation of the authority of the United Nations Command . . . We have acted and are acting in good faith. President is communicating with President Rhee in this sense.<sup>31</sup>

4. Mr. Walter S. Robertson, Assistant Secretary of State for Far Eastern Affairs, was immediately dispatched to talk to Rhee in Korea and bring 'instant' pressure to bear on him. After two weeks of talks Rhee "gave in, promising in writing that he would keep his forces under the U.N. Command".<sup>32</sup>

29. Richard Good-Adams, John Foster Dulles: A Reappraisal (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1962), p.65.

30. Full Circle (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1960), p.19.

31. Robert J. Donovan, Eisenhower, the Inside Story (New York: Harper & Bros., 1956) p.114.

32. The New York Times, June 19, 1953

5. Mr. Donovan reports that the "Rhee letters brought great relief to Eisenhower".<sup>33</sup> "The stubborn South Korean President had the United States of America in a painfully delicate predicament and one that caused Eisenhower great worry".<sup>34</sup>

6. The final settlement did not "unify" Korea, and did not secure "liberation" of the "captive peoples" from Communist bondage. The prisoners' repatriation question was solved by a compromise formula, the United States making equal concessions.

7. Lastly, one is entitled to wonder what was the purpose of Mr. Eisenhower's election promise to visit Korea, if not to tone down Syngman Rhee. Emmet John Hughes, who was Eisenhower's speech-writer, says in his recent account of Eisenhower's White House years that no decisions were taken abroad the Helena.<sup>35</sup>

The conclusion would appear to be that in the first encounter between "rollback" and the world power realities "rollback" returned home to "containment", exposing the Dulles "bold" talk that he could not accept a Korean Settlement until the United States had given the Chinese "one hell of licking".<sup>36</sup>

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33. ibid, p.124

34. ibid, loc. cit.

35. The Odeal of Power: A Political Memoir of the Eisenhower Years (New York: Atheneum, 1963), quoted in "Witness in the House", Saturday Review, March 16, 1963, p. 85.

36. ~~xxxix~~, loc. cit.

Characteristically, the "Mutual" Defense Treaty between the United States and the Republic of Korea "desired . . . that no political aggressor could be under the illusion that either will stand alone in the Pacific" (italics added),<sup>37</sup> even as Communist guns were giving the lie in Indo-China.

The second opportunity to apply the "New Look" strategy came simultaneously. In June, 1953 the East Germans rose in revolt against the Communist regime. For some time the quisling Ulbricht government had no control over the country, and Soviet tanks had to move in to restore "Communist enslavement" of the German people.

What did Mr. Dulles do to seize this ready-made opportunity to "liberate the captive peoples"? The answer is: Nothing, beyond opening meal kitchens well away from the East Berlin borders. Food packages had substituted for "liberation", again, so soon after the bugle was sounded!

Three years later the Hungarian people's uprising was put down by Soviet massive intervention. Dulles' ~~only~~ reaction was typically Dullesian: "We do not look upon these nations [i.e., the Russian satellites] as potential military allies".<sup>38</sup>

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37. Reprinted in American Foreign Policy 1950-55, Basic Documents, vol.I, op. cit., p.897.

38. The New York Times, October 28, 1956.

### III. A STRATEGY OF ALIENATION

Among all the manifestations of the "New Look" in Asia, two outstand as perfect examples of the split between the desire and the deed, between overweening reliance on "rollback" and unwillingness to take the consequences.

In both cases, the cost in money and men to the United States was sought to be made "bearable" by acquiring Asian "allies" to do the fighting and in both cases American diplomacy paid a heavy political price. Both resulted in the United States playing the colonial game of its European Allies. And in either case American policies ended up in alienating Asian sentiment rather than uniting it to their own cause.

One of these found expression in the military alliance with the fledgling state of Pakistan, <sup>The</sup> ~~whose~~ results of this on American relations with India, Afghanistan and the Arab countries were to prove disastrous. The second put the United States on the long road to involvement in Southeast Asia. This was the hatching of the strategy of "massive retaliation" at the "brink" in Indo-China which was to whimper into the "misbegotten paper tiger" of <sup>the</sup> Southeast Asia Treaty Organisation.

We will discuss the military partnership with Pakistan in this chapter and take up the United States imbroglio in Indo-China in the next.

### Nehru Loses U.S. Favor

India's "uncommitted" foreign policy, which has been labelled as "neutralism" by the "committed", was earning bad feelings for her already. Her 'no' in the voting on the American resolution in the U.N. General Assembly on February 1, 1951 branding China as aggressor in the Korean War resulted in a further stiffening of attitude toward her.

However, that the United States government in 1951 did not want to do anything which would be interpreted as officially writing India off was clear from the promptness with which it responded to India's request for food relief. The Indian request itself showed that the Nehru administration did not want the feeling to grow that its attitude ~~to~~ toward American conduct of the Korean War and ~~to~~ toward the China vote meant that India was counting the United States out as a friend.

Nevertheless, it was not surprising that the strong opposition to the India Emergency Food Bill came in Congress from the same group of "Asialationists" which had earlier vehemently railed that Truman and Acheson had "sold China down the river". How far this group was responsible for the clamor for an all-out war against China came out more clearly in the MacArthur Hearings. Nehru's opposition to this enlargement of the War earned him many epithets which were to lead to sore feelings for a long time. The powerfull Knowland-wing Republicans had carried a "particularly vicious Anti-Nehru

vendetta"<sup>1</sup> and raised the cry for "getting tough with Nehru"<sup>2</sup>. Mr. Dulles himself was to declare later not only that the concept of "neutralism" was obsolete but "except under very exceptional circumstances it is an immoral, and shortsighted conception"<sup>3</sup>.

The Nehru government had accordingly braced itself to face certain new trends in American policies when the Republicans took office in January, 1953. India's exclusion from membership <sup>2</sup> the Political Conference on Korea was preceded by Mr. Dulles' agreeing with Syngman Rhee that Nehru belonged to the Communist camp and, of course, Nehru had said that Dulles' "bold" speeches "in regard to the Far East . . . have caused grave concern. . . . From the point of view of a psychosis of fear . . . they have had a bad effect. . . . This talk sometimes of a blockade of China or other such step obviously is not the kind of talk that leads to peace or settlement"<sup>4</sup>.

Concerning this deterioration in the two countries' relations Mr. Chester Bowles, American ambassador in New Delhi, wrote later:

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1. Selig S. Harrison, "India, Pakistan and the U.S.--I: Case History of a Mistake", The New Republic, CXLI, August 10, 1953, p.17.
  2. See William S. White, "What Bill Knowland Stands For", The New Republic, CXXXIV, February 27, 1956.
  3. Quoted in Graebner, New Isolationism, op. cit., p.246
  4. Indiagram, Embassy of India in Washington, February 10, 1953.



When Secretary of State John Foster Dulles visited India in 1953 he was greeted with the utmost cordiality, and Indo-American relations still seemed on a solid footing. By the fall of 1953, however, the pendulum was swinging back again, influenced by our opposition to India's presence at the Korean Truce Conference and by widely circulated stories of American intrigue in support of an independent Kashmir<sup>5</sup>.

About that time the Eisenhower administration decided to push through the arms-aid deal with Pakistan. That issue had been under the Pentagon's deliberation for a long time and, prima facie, there might not have been any temporal connection between this decision and the recent trend in Indo-American relations. But, as Senator Fulbright warned in his speech of March 2, 1954 in the Senate opposing the Pakistan aid decision, it was interpreted, not without cause, in New Delhi as an American challenge to Nehru's recent foreign policies and as an attempt "to force his hand".

### The Political Costs

In the introductory chapter we dwelt on the intra-regional power pattern of Southern Asia and India's special position in it. The region's common colonial background, expressing itself in a general mistrust of any foreign moves in that area, was noted and mention was made of the primary preoccupation of its peoples with the betterment of their economic and social conditions. It is against this regional setting that we must look upon the U.S. military aid to Pakistan.

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5. Ambassador's Report (New York: Harper & Bros., 1954), p.231

Moreover, Pakistan's strained relations with its two neighbors, Afghanistan and India were, apart from the war in Kashmir with India and the conflict over the Pushtoonistan issue with Afghanistan, due more to the mutualities of their relations than to any basic difference of outlook. One has just to remember India and Pakistan's mutual Hindu and Muslim minorities, their common borders, common river water supplies, common economic inheritance, and so on to realize the fact of their close interdependence. These problems could have been solved only through recognition of need for each other's understanding which, after the recent traumatic experience of communal riots, would have come eventually. Some of these problems, such those regarding the canal waters, exchange of evacuee properties, etc., have in fact been largely solved.

Even in regard to the Kashmir dispute, India and Pakistan were then moving nearer settlement. "Few of the parties concerned, however", observes Mr. Harrison, "dispute the fact that in early 1952 the prospects for a Kashmir settlement were better than at any other time. The chance still existed when Graham met secretly with the two sides in September 1952 and February, 1953".<sup>6</sup>

As a matter of historical fact the Pakistani Prime Minister, Mr. Mohammad Ali, had visited Delhi in August, 1953

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6. Selig S. Harrison, "Cost of a Mistake", The New Republic, CXLI, August 24, 1959, p.24.

at Mr. Nehru's invitation and they had put their signatures to a statement fixing May, 1954 as the deadline for the appointment of a plebiscite administrator.

The U.S.-Pakistan arms pact came within months of this Nehru-Mohammad Ali agreement. "This created not only a new military situation but a new political situation", as Mr. Nehru was to explain long afterwards in 1956, "and the procedure thus far followed by us became out of date and had to be viewed afresh. That situation has become progressively worse because of the flow of this military aid to Pakistan . . . ."<sup>7</sup>

The more active support of India by the Soviet Union since about this time can be related directly to its effort to cash in on America's snub to Nehru. Even then Nehru stubbornly refused to abandon his policy of non-alignment. But for a government which professes to follow a non-committal policy towards either power bloc, refusal to respond to friendly overtures from one side would, ipso facto, appear to be unfriendly to that side, especially when the offer is not predicated on any commitment. It is submitted that this way of looking at Nehru's continued acceptance of help from both sides is not less valid than the one that sees India benefiting by playing one side against the other.

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7. Reply to debate on Foreign Affairs in Lok Sabha, March 29, 1956, published in India's Foreign Policy, op. cit., p. 484.

The effects of this military tie-up with Pakistan on America's relations with Afghanistan, Pakistan's another neighbor, were more deleterious. The decline of American prestige among the Arab countries and the corresponding Russian gains are also, to a great extent, due to the later enlargement of U.S.-Pakistan alliance into the so-called Baghdad Pact of which the United States never became a member, and, on Iraq's later defection, had to be renamed as the Metro or Cento Pact.

#### India Deflected From Concern with China

The timing of this military aid to Pakistan had another self-defeating effect from the point of view of the American desire to deny to Communist China any gains in that area.

India has always regarded China as the main danger to the countries of Southern Asia, especially the Southeastern nations: "And it is certain that he [Nehru] did not underestimate the fears for their security that existed in these Asian countries, nor did he fail to name China as their source".<sup>8</sup>

In fact, India had definitely become more apprehensive of China's designs after the forcible occupation of Tibet in 1950. After that, efforts were made to establish some watch-posts along the 2,000 mile border with China and border militia to patrol certain areas was created. Military equipment

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8. Rosemary Brissenden, "India, Neutralism and Seato" in George Modelski (ed.), Seato: 6 Studies, (Melbourne: Australian National University, Melbourne, 1962), p. 06.

for high altitude mountain operations were also acquired. Indian interest in the buffer states of Nepal, Sikkim, and Bhutan found heightened expression. A specially vulnerable area along the Tibetan border was heavily fortified through the Northeast Frontier Agency. Nehru's following words are characteristic of that period:

And now our interest in the internal conditions of Nepal becomes still more acute and personal, if I may say so, because of developments across our borders, because of developments in China and Tibet, to be frank . . . Therefore, much as we appreciate the independence of Nepal, we cannot risk our own security by anything not done in Nepal which permits either that barrier to be crossed or otherwise leads to the weakening of our frontiers.<sup>9</sup>

Out of this heightened concern with China Nehru was reported to have accepted a domestically very unpopular step in regard to Kashmir, the main aim of which was to compose differences with Pakistan:

At the time of U.N. mediator Frank Graham's March [1952] mission [India and Pakistan] reached agreement on a variation of the often-discussed partition approach to the Kashmir dispute: Pakistan would get the Moslem majority Azad Kashmir territory on its side of the existing cease-fire line, India would retain Hindu and Buddhist-majority Jammu and Ladakh, and a plebiscite would be held in the Himalayan Vale of Kashmir.<sup>10</sup>

### Pakistan, As An Ally

Militarily, Pakistan's value to the United States has been adjudged to be marginal.<sup>11</sup> Pakistan's commander-in-chief,

9. Speech on December 6, 1950, India's Foreign Policy, op.cit. p436  
10. Harrison, "Cost of a Mistake", loc. cit.

11. Hans J. Morgenthau's conclusion is: "Geography makes it impossible for that Pakistani army in case of war to give effective assistance to any of its allies either under the Baghdad Pact or Seato or receive such assistance from them", "Military Illusions", The New Republic, CXXXIV, March 19, 1956, pp.14-16.

General Mohammad Musa, himself is reported to have told Mr. Edgar Ansel Mower, who wrote in an article in Collier's:

Pakistan could not (as General Musa admitted) prevent Communist land forces from advancing south and occupying the great Iranian or Iraqi oil fields or the Suez Canal Zone.<sup>12</sup>

Does Pakistan share America's concern with the Communist threat? Here is an answer:

For Pakistan . . . alliance with the great powers of the West--chiefly the United States--has meant, from the beginning, security not from Communist China but from India and escape from diplomatic isolation vis-a-vis its powerful neighbor. This much has been admitted--at first unofficially, by Pakistani scholars . . . and then by official spokesmen . . .<sup>13</sup> (*italics added*)

From the above evaluation of the United States military alliance with Pakistan, it would appear that this was a wholly wrong step.

However, Mr. Jernegan, a State Department expert on Near East, South Asia and Africa wrote: ". . . I believe the advantages will far outweigh the disadvantages both for the nations of that area and for the United States and its associates of the free world".<sup>14</sup> We must turn, therefore, to the State Department's thinking on the value of Pakistan as an ally. Mr. Jernegan writes:

When Secretary of State Dulles took office . . . he decided to have a new look at the whole problem of Near East and South Asia . . . In the spring of 1953 he made an extensive tour of the area . . . When he returned he had this to say: "A Middle East Defense Organization is

12. Quoted in Harrison, ibid., p.20

13. George Mogelski, in Sesto: 6 Studies, op. cit., p.137

14. John D. Jernegan, "The Middle East and South Asia--The Problem of Security", Department of State Bulletin, March 22, 1954, p.448.

a future rather than immediate possibility . . . However, there is more concern where the Soviet Union is near. In general, the northern tier of States shows awareness of the danger. . . . While awaiting the formal creation of a security association, the United States can usefully help strengthen the interrelated defense of those countries which want strength, not as against each other or the West, but to resist the common threat to all free societies".<sup>15</sup>

As part of this "United States useful help", moves were initiated in the fall of 1953. By February 19, 1954 Turkey, America's Nato ally, was "helped" in signing a defense pact with Pakistan and on February 25 President Eisenhower was "glad to comply" with Pakistan's request for military assistance. Turkey and Iraq were "helped" to come together in 1955, then Karachi and Ankara were fastened together by the Baghdad buckle and, a month later, the Baghdad Pact was born.

#### The Long, Tangled Background

It was hinted earlier that the Pentagon had for long been siezed of the issue of bringing Pakistan into a military alliance. This aspect of the story has been pieced together by Mr. Selig S. Harrison<sup>16</sup>. Marshalling documentary evidence drawn mainly from British and American sources, he shows that this was originally a British idea which was sold to the Americans. He traces the links back to an article written in 1949 by a British geopolitician and world-renowned authority on Central Asia, Sir Olaf Kirkpatrick Caroe, twice Foreign Affairs Secretary to the Foreign Office in India before India became free.

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15. ibid., p.445

16. "Case History of a Mistake", op. cit., pp.10-17.

In that article Sir Olaf's idea was to fill the power vacuum arising out of the British exit from the Indian subcontinent by bringing independent India into some sort of arrangement to fill the role which Imperial Britain had played in checking "the bear that walks like a man" in its designs on the Middle East oil. However, by 1951 India's position in the cold war had become clear. Sir Olaf, therefore, had to readjust his ideas and in 1951 he wrote a short book called the Wells of Power, which was frankly addressed "to the Americans". In this he revised his geopolitical thinking and, constructing "a great oval or ellipse through elaborate maps accompanied by lengthy Haushofer-like analysis" concluded: "A circle which fails to include Pakistan [in a 'Northern Screen' along the Soviet Central Asian border] is incomplete".

In Washington, Sir Olaf's first converts were in the Air Force, Mr. Harrison says, and he quotes the late Gen. Hoyt Vandenberg, then Air Force Chief of Staff, as giving this "friendly warning" to Ambassador Bowles (who was against this idea) in September, 1951: "We are going to give you some trouble out there in India because we have our eye on bases in Pakistan".

Caroe proudly takes credit for influencing American thinking and earning Pakistani gratitude:

My Pakistan friends regard me as the inventor of the Baghdad Pact! I went on a tour of the US for the British FO in 1952 and had talks with State Department officials and others on these lines, and perhaps some of the



exchanges we had were not without effect. Indeed I have more than once ventured to flatter myself that J.F. Dulles' phrase "The Northern Tier" and his association of the US with the Baghdad countries in Asia were influenced by the thinking in the Wells of Power. In that book I called those countries, "The Northern Screen"--the same idea really.<sup>17</sup>

Mr. Harrison also mentions the names of the "heirarchs"<sup>18</sup> and the interconnections between them: "Britain's man", if not specifically "Sir Olaf's man",<sup>18</sup> Pakistan's ex-President Iskander Mirza (who was Joint Defense Secretary in British India and became Defense Secretary before assuming the Presidency); "his good friend", Brig. Gen. Harry F. Meyers, the U.S. Military Attache in Karachi from 1948 to 1950; the West Pointer, Gen. Henry Byroade whose appointment as Assistant Secretary of State for the Near East, South Asia and Africa marked "the turning point" (he also accompanied Dulles on his Spring, 1953 goodwill tour); Maj. Gen. George Olmsted, Director of the Office of Military Assistance in the Pentagon until mid-1953; besides the Air Force Chief of Staff, Gen. Vandenberg, to whom we have already referred.

This researcher has checked most of the references cited by Mr. Harrison and, in addition, discovered more evidence corroborating his main points.

The London Economist in a July, 1949 issue wrote the following under the byline "By a Correspondent":

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17. Ibid, loc. cit.

18. Observer's Philip Deane's term for senior Army officers and Civil servants.

19. In 1958, Sir Olaf wrote the Pathans, 550 B.C.--1957 A.D., dedicating it to "My Friend Iskander Mirza, President of Pakistan, First Among Those who, having graduated in Mardan among the Yusufzais, are admitted to a life of fellowship in the honorable company of Pathans".

Pakistan's strategic importance has been greatly enhanced by a change of emphasis in the Middle East. The traditional British view has seen the Middle East only as a bridge on the road to India, in that bridge the keystone of the arch was the Suez canal. Now the aeroplane has made the eastern Mediterranean unusable in war, and the importance still given to the canal is only a decent tribute paid to Disraeli's memory. Today it is oil that matters. The strategic crux of the Middle East is no longer Cairo, but Abadan; Persia, not Egypt, is the prize; and so suddenly, bases in Pakistan ought to have become more important than those of Egypt or Palestine.

That this article was obviously addressed to the Americans is clear from: "Looking ahead ten years it is possible to see in the economy of Pakistan one of the world's great dollar earners and dollar savers, strategically the leader of the Middle East"<sup>20</sup>.

That this British strategy was in fact eventually bought by the United States can be illustrated from American sources. Mr. Dulles is reported to have told Mr. Arthur Dean, his "confidant" and "old law partner" this, regarding the creation of the Baghdad Pact:

He [Dulles] would say that the Joint Chiefs of Staff were worried about the utter absence of any organized defense in the northern Middle East, the lack of anything by way of a coordinated military structure to prevent the Russians from taking the entire area. Foster would also argue that we must also sometimes do what the British wanted, and could not only be always asking them to do what we wanted.<sup>21</sup>

Mr. Jernegan, whom we have already quoted, mentions approvingly the Turkish Prime Minister as supporting the

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<sup>20</sup>. Economist, "The Role of Pakistan", CLVII, July 23, 1949, pp.175-77.

<sup>21</sup>. Drummond and Coblenz, Duel at the Brink, op. cit., p.149

Pakistan-Turkish nexus "bearing in mind geopolitical considerations"<sup>22</sup>.

Calling Pakistan "a logical candidate for the military aid", which would give substance to an "idea which has languished for quite some time", William H. Hessler, who served with the Fast Carrier Task Forces during 1945 and is author of Operation Survival (1949), wrote in the Proceedings of the U.S. Naval Institute:

The defense line of the anti-Soviet coalition of the West runs in a great irregular curve South and East from the North Cape of Norway to the Caucasus Mountains. There at the easternmost margins of Turkey it stops cold. Greek-Turkish-Yugoslav rapprochement is giving the line new solidity in its vital southeastern segment. But beyond Turkey, we find poverty, agrarian discontent, military weakness and neutralism--and therefore danger. In this great and neglected region of Middle and South Asia, the leaders of the Western democracies find a massive challenge. And in this area, as a consequence of basic geographic factors, Pakistan has a singular strategic importance.

He concluded: "The attractions of a United States-Pakistan entente are soundly based, because they rest on the solid foundations of military geography"<sup>23</sup>.

Since most of the information relating to so recent a period is still highly classified, no definitive account can be written at this time. Yet, there is enough evidence to show that, although the Pentagon had become converted to the British strategy long ago, the Idea could be sold to the State

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22. op. cit., p.445

23. "Pakistan and the Himalayas", LXXX, August, 1954.

Department only in 1953, when the Eisenhower-Dulles new diplomacy mix became more amenable to military thinking.

That the arming of Pakistan would not only be cheap but would fit in Eisenhower's election declaration to "let the Asians fight the Asians" is borne out by a number of statements. Defense Secretary McElroy, for example, compared the \$3,515 required to pay, feed and house an American soldier with the \$485 cost of a Pakistani<sup>24</sup> and that Pakistanis "were a warrior people ... tough ... mainly six-footers ... rugged eaters of meat and wheat"<sup>25</sup>

Mr. C.M. Woodhouse, a British Conservative M.P. and an ex-Director of the Royal Institute of International Affairs, compares the British oil interests and the American aim of "rolling back" Soviet Communism as the main national interests of the two countries in Middle East.<sup>26</sup>

That Pakistan was selected for "rolling back" the Soviets is also clear from the State Department's own words:

The Pakistan Government had shown its awareness of the danger [of Communism], and in the state of the world today it did not seem good policy to rebuff those who think as we do and who can contribute to the security of the free world on which our own security depends.<sup>27</sup>

And yet we have seen how Pakistan looked upon the Communist threat even at the time the aid program was being mooted, not to mention her later hobnobbing with the Communist States.

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24. Neil H. McElroy, "Military Assistance" in Foreign Aspects of U.S. National Security: Conference Proceedings (Washington: Committee for International Economic Growth, 1958) p.34.

25. Quoted in Harrison, loc. cit.

26. British Policy since World War II (New York: Praeger, 1960) p.134.

27. Jernegan, loc. cit.

In his biography Nixon, Ralph Toledano says that on his return from a stopover in Karachi in December, 1953, Mr. Nixon, Republican Vice-President, had urged the alliance with Pakistan "not for its purported defense value against Soviet aggression but for the very reason that Pakistan sought the aid--'as a counter-force to the confirmed neutrality of Jawaharlal Nehru's India'".<sup>28</sup>

We also know the shifting fortunes of the Baghdad Pact and the fact that the United States did not intend, from the beginning, to become a full member of the Pact.

The military agreement with Pakistan is thus perhaps the best example of the "New Look" preoccupation with Communism as a military threat, and of thinking of "rolling" it back by buying up allies whose real concern lies elsewhere than with the "destruction of the Soviet demon".

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28. Quoted in Harrison, loc. cit. Mr. Hanson Baldwin, The New York Times' military analyst in the newspaper's issue of December 22, 1953 also gave this as the reason for extending military aid to Pakistan: "The problem which the Pakistan arms aid is intended to relieve . . . stems chiefly from the decline in power of the British Empire . . . But the postwar rise of nationalism in the Middle East and Asia, plus the increasing threat of Communism and Nehru's anti-Westernism, altered the entire strategic picture".

#### IV. SEATO: THE INVERTED "ROLLBACK"

The "New Look" seedling, planted by the "Asialationists", nursed and cared by Secretary Dulles with "bold" lullabies, and nourished on a "budget-balancing" diet, flowered into the Southeast Asia Treaty Organisation in the backyard of Red China. But, it so happened that its strong, unsavory smells "rolled back" more friends than enemies.

##### Indo-China: The French "Country"

Seato was a typically Dullesian solution to an old problem which had dogged the American policy-makers ever since VJ Day when the Japanese occupation ended in Indo-China, in the eastern wing of Southern Asia.

We have noted earlier that under the Japanese occupation the local leaders in French Indo-China had enjoyed some independence. Before they left, the Japanese had divided it into the three kingdoms of Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia. By the middle of 1945, Vietnam's Emperor Bao Dai had already become a phantom figure and in August he abdicated his throne in favor of Ho Chi Minh whose party, the Vietnam Independence League, better known as the Vietminh, had set up a government over the entire country. In September Ho declared independence of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam.

Following the Potsdam decision, two separate parties of British and Chinese troops were sent to disarm the Japanese. The British, operating in the territory south of the 16th

parallel, decided to interpret their mission for themselves and helped the French in reestablishing themselves in that area. The Chinese, on their part, let Ho continue in the north, hoping to exert their influence in Vietnam through him.

However, Ho Chi Minh and the French decided to make a deal in March, 1946. A declaration was signed whereby the French recognised the Republic of Vietnam as a "free state, having its own government, parliament, army and treasury, belonging to the Indo-Chinese Federation and the French Union". But, as Ellen Hammer points in her study, The Struggle for Indo-China, Ho Chi Minh proved too conciliatory to the French and the very substantial economic, military, and political concessions he granted to them were attacked by other nationalist groups.<sup>1</sup>

The United States government at that time was unequivocally in favor of independence of colonial territories. Secretary Cordell Hull recalls Roosevelt's comment that the case of Indo-China "is perfectly clear. France has milked it for one hundred years. The people of Indo-China are entitled to something better than that".<sup>2</sup> The Vietainh had, therefore, placed a large store by recent American pronouncements expressing disapproval of French imperialism. Robert Shaplen reports that an American Intelligence Officer,

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1. (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1958), pp. 154-55.

2. Cordell Hull, The Memoirs of Cordell Hull, Vol.II (New York: Macmillan, 1948), p.1537.

who had parachuted into Vietminh's jungle headquarters had found "unrestricted affection for all Americans".<sup>3</sup>

The American attitude of those days contrasts sharply with Mr. Richard Nixon's following warning to the French in late 1953:

If your country (Indo-China) is to be independent and free, it is first necessary to defeat the representatives of Communist imperialism on your soil. Those who advocate (removal of the French troops from Indo-China) must know that if such a course is adopted it will mean not independence but complete domination by a foreign power.<sup>4</sup> (italics added).

In the meantime, what had happened was briefly this. No sooner did the ink dry on the French-Vietminh agreement of March, 1946 than the French started preparing to restore their colonial rule over the whole of Vietnam. By August of that year French attacks on the Vietminh had started and by December, the piecemeal French efforts having failed, general hostilities began.

Up till 1949, the American government kept aloof from the goings-on in Indo-China; but the success of Communism in China caused concern over the fate of Southeast Asia. In an effort to "contain" Communism and to buttress the distressed French ally, the Truman administration recognised the French puppet Bao Dai's Vietnam as an independent state which was preceded by the Communist bloc recognition of the Vietminh. Dean Acheson declared that the "Soviet acknowledgement of

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3. "The Enigma of Ho Chi Minh", The Reporter, III, January 27, 1955.

4. Quoted in Graebner, The New Isolationism, op. cit., p.159.



this movement should remove any illusions as to the 'nationalist' nature of Ho Chi Minh's aims and reveals Ho in his true colors as the mortal enemy of native independence in Indo-China".<sup>5</sup>

France was extended material help but the Democratic Administration, conscious from the beginning of eventual French collapse, never threw caution to the winds and never committed the United States to all-out participation or to a "war to win".

#### The 'Rim of Hell' Thesis

Thus, when the Republican administration took over it saw the French garden in Indochina ablaze, fed by strong winds blown from the lungs of the Chinese dragon. When the fall of the French fortress of Dienbienphu became imminent in April, 1954, the shrewd French, aware of Mr. Dulles' messianic anti-Communist zeal, raised the wolf-cry with renewed enthusiasm. Mr. Dulles, unwilling to spend on an expensive operation of fighting a jungle fire, offered instead two atom bombs and more "massive" hell-fire from nearby air-borne fighters.<sup>6</sup> However, when the British and Mr. Dulles' own Chief of Army Staff, General Ridgway, whispered that ground forces would be required immediately following the air-strike, the Fire Chief relented. Thereafter, Mr. Dulles decided on a face-saving

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5. U.S. Department of State Bulletin, XXII, p.244

6. James Shepley (Life, "How Dulles Averted War"), op. cit., p.72, quotes Mr. Dulles telling him that "at the same time two U.S. aircraft carriers, the Boxer and the Philippine Sea steamed towards the South China Sea. Abroad were their tactical air groups armed with atomic weapons".

"posture of strength" to keep the French and British from "capitulating to the Communist negotiators at the Nine Nation Geneva Conference. Mr. Dulles used a two-pronged pressure on the negotiations: one of "united action"--his "go-it-alone" wish having been scuttled by the leaders of Congress whom he called for a special briefing--and the other of a permanent collective defense organization for Southeast Asia. The story of these pressures and the resentments they caused all around has been well told by Mr. Chalmers M. Roberts ("The Day We Didn't Go to War")<sup>7</sup> and Professor Charles O. Lerche, Jr. ("The United States, Great Britain, and Seato: A Case Study in the *Fait Accompli*").<sup>8</sup>

However, Mr. Dulles had used the occasion to develop his earlier thesis of "nuclear deterrence" into a doctrine of "massive, instant, retaliation" of "more mobile deterrent power" to be employed "at places of our choosing", in his article in the Foreign Affairs issue of April, 1954 from which we quoted extensively in Chapter II. Reflecting later with an eye on the Presidential election in 1956, Mr. Dulles, in the Life article--also referred to in Chapter II--proudly said:

You have to take chances for war, just as you must take chances for peace. Some say that we were brought to

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7. The Reporter, II, September 14, 1954, pp.31-35.

8. Journal of Politics, August, 1956, reprinted in his Readings in International Politics (New York: Oxford University Press, 1958) pp.89-100.

the verge of war. Of course we were brought to the verge of war. The ability to get to the verge without getting into the war is the necessary art. If you cannot master it, you inevitably get into war. If you try to run away from it, if you are scared at the brink, you are lost. We've had to look it square in the face--on the question of enlarging the Korean War, on the question of getting into the Indo-China War, on the question of Formosa. We walked to the brink and we looked it in the face. We took strong action.

It took a lot more courage for the President than for me. His was the ultimate decision. I did not have to make decision myself, only to recommend it. The President never flinched for a minute on any of these situations. He came up taut.<sup>9</sup>

While Mr. Dulles was perfecting "brinkmanship" the Geneva Conference produced a solution agreeable to all including the French. The American delegation did not sign the Agreement but stated that the United States would "refrain from the threat or use of force to disturb" the decisions.<sup>10</sup>

Nevertheless, the Geneva accords were found lacking in "some situation that at least we could call a modus vivendi" which Mr. Eisenhower had earlier said the United States was working for<sup>11</sup>. From June 3 to 11, even before the signing of the Geneva Agreement on July 21, a Conference on Southeast Asian Defense was being held in Washington among military representatives of the United States, Britain, France, Australia, all from outside the Southern Asian region, to find a better

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9. James Shepley, op. cit., p.78

10. Department of State Bulletin, July 21, 1954

11. The New York Times, April 26, 1954.

"modus vivendi". Southeast Asia is of "transcendant importance to us", Mr. Eisenhower had said on March 24 and On April 7 he added:

You have a row of dominoes set up, and you knock over first one, and what will happen to the last one is the certainty that it will go over very quickly,<sup>12</sup> meaning that if Indo-China fell, the other Southeast Asian "dominoes" would also topple down.

It was, therefore, essential "to save all of Southeast Asia, if it can be saved; if not, to save essential parts of it"<sup>13</sup>. To this end, hurried invitations to whoever wanted to come and join were issued. "The countries which indicated their intention of being represented"<sup>14</sup> met from September 6 to 8 and the Southeast Asia Collective Defense Treaty, popularly known as Seato, emerged. After being ratified by the various member states it came into effect on February 19, 1955.

We shall now turn to an examination of the main provisions of the Treaty to see whether and how far they come up to the proclaimed aims and methods of the "New Look" strategy.

#### Who Will be "Saved"

The provisions relating to the areas protected by the Treaty are most loosely constructed and do not admit of a clear definition. Article VIII reads:

As used in this Treaty, the 'treaty area' is the general area of South-East Asia, including also the entire territories of the Asian Parties, and the general area of the

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12. Quoted in Donovan, Eisenhower, the Inside Story, opcit, p.261

13. The New York Times, May 12, 1954.

14. Collective Defense in Southeast Asia, (London: Royal Institute of International Affairs, 1956), p.1.

South-West Pacific not including the Pacific area north of 21 degrees 30 minutes north latitude. . . .

The expression "the Pacific area north of 21 degrees 30 minutes north latitude", (see map), according to one interpretation, "excludes Hong Kong and Formosa as also Korea and Japan from the benefits of the Treaty, but American, Australian, British, French and New Zealand territories in South East Asia and the South West Pacific" south of the line "would appear to be covered, despite the statement made by Mr. Dulles, in a report on the Treaty transmitted to the United States Senate on 10 November, 1954, that the limitation of the American commitment under Article IV (I) to Communist aggression reflected 'the special position of the United States as the only party which does not have any territory in the Treaty area'.<sup>15</sup>

Indonesia, Burma, and Ceylon are clearly within the areas covered by the Treaty, although these three States, along with Malaya after she became independent in 1957, are not members and have refused to do anything with Seato.

Similarly, the States of Cambodia, Laos, and "the free territory under the jurisdiction of the State of Vietnam", which, "under pressure from Mr. Dulles",<sup>16</sup> were "designated" by a special protocol signed simultaneously with the Treaty, have never shown over-eagerness to seek Seato's good offices. The Prime Minister of Cambodia has vehemently denounced Seato,

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15. Ibid, pp.11-12.

16. Godd-Adams, Dulles: A Reappraisal, op. cit., p.140.

and scorned the idea of seeking its protection.<sup>17</sup> The new Coalition Government of Laos, installed on June 22, 1962, announced on the same day that it "would no longer recognise Seato's protection and that Laos would abide by the Five Principles of Peaceful Co-existence", according to a report in the New York Times of June 23, 1962. (The earlier Laos Government also had "eschewed any direct technical or economic aid under Seato auspices"<sup>18</sup>.)

What are the aims and purposes of Seato?

#### 1. Security Aims

A. Overt Military Aggression: By Article IV (I) of the Treaty each signatory would consider that "aggression by means of armed attack in the Treaty area against any of the Parties" or against a "designated" State or territory "would endanger its own peace and safety". In such an event, each party "will act to meet the common danger in accordance with its constitutional processes".

The corresponding Article 5 of the North Atlantic Treaty, by way of comparison, commits each party to regard such an attack as an attack "against them all" and to take "forthwith, individually and in concert with the other Parties, such action as it deems necessary, including the use of armed forces".

B. Situations Other Than Armed Attack: Paragraph (2) of Article IV provides that "if in the opinion of any of the

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18. ibid, loc. cit.

17. Macmahon W. Ball, "A Political Re-Examination of Seato", International Organisation, XX, 1, Winter, 1958, p.17.

Parties, the inviolability or the integrity of the territory or the sovereignty or political independence of any Party in the treaty area or of any other State or territory to which the provisions of paragraph 1 of this Article from time to time apply is threatened by any fact or situation which might endanger the peace of the area, the Parties shall consult immediately in order to agree on the measures which should be taken for the common defence".

It must be noted that any action "on the territory" of a "designated" area is excluded by Article IV (3) "except at the invitation or with the consent of the Government concerned".

#### \*. Economic and Social Aims

The hortative Pacific Charter, proclaiming a general statement of principles, was drawn, according to Mr. Dulles, to make it clear that the Great Powers "were seeking the welfare of the Asian peoples and were not promoting 'colonialism'". This and the Preamble to the Treaty, and its Article III specifically, provide, among other shibboleths, for cooperation among the signatories "in the further development of economic measures, including technical assistance designed both to promote economic progress and social well-being".

We are now ready to subject these aims of the Treaty to the test of Great Powers' actual performance over the years. Its economic and social aims have aroused little controversy

and we may deal with these first.

### Economic and Social Matters

Although the actual amounts spent are not available<sup>19</sup> the Reports of the Seato Annual Meetings mention progress of programs for agriculture, cholera and malaria control, technical training, meteorological research, community development, cultural and educational exchanges, etc. However, alongside these activities, the Reports cite equally, and sometimes more, prominently the country-wise aid being received by these areas through such U.S.-supported projects as the Colombo Plan, the Technical Cooperation Mission, the Mutual Security Program, Export-Import Bank, the President's Fund for Asian Economic Development, the Agricultural Trade Development and Assistance Program, etc. These are other international agencies doing economic and social assistance work in the area. With the existence of these well-knit schemes serious questions arise about the desirability of making a primarily military defense organisation the medium for channelling economic assistance for which it can never be adequately and competently equipped. For a detailed discussion on this point reference may be made to Professor Braibanti's excellent article.<sup>20</sup>

### Military Efficacy of Seato

The pleasing euphony of the sounds Seato and Nato notwithstanding, the two organisations are worlds apart in

19. Budget estimates of \$836,860 for 1958-60 were reported "covering the costs of civil and military headquarters and the previous programs undertaken by the Organisation".

20. Ralph Braibanti, "The Southeast Asia Collective Defense Treaty", Pacific Affairs, XXX, December, 1957, pp. 327-341.



every significant sense for increasing the military capability of a defense organisation against external attack. Seato's military inadequacy springs from a multitude of causes.

Although Seato is a regional organisation for Southeast Asia only three--Thailand, Philippines and Pakistan--of the nine States of the area joined it. All other members--the United States, Britain, France, New Zealand and Australia--are outsiders.

The only aim of Mr. Dulles in organising Seato to combat Communism notwithstanding, the other signatories to the Treaty, notably Pakistan<sup>21</sup>, refused to feel similarly concerned. The United States, therefore, had to sign a separate "understanding" which would limit its participation in Seato only against Communism with regard to the "aggression by means of armed attack" proviso contained in paragraph 1 of Article IV of the Treaty.

The way Pakistan manipulated entry into Seato throws interesting sidelight on how sometimes the United States has allowed other countries' interests to dictate her foreign policy. During the Indo-Chinese peak crisis period, after Mr. Dulles had been asked by Congressional leaders to

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21. "As far as Pakistan is concerned", Mr. Hamidul Huq Choudhury, Pakistan's Foreign Minister was to explain to the Pakistan National Assembly in 1956, "the most notable achievement of Seato is the reaffirmation by the members of our stand on Kashmir and Durand Line with Afghanistan". Foreign Relations (Karachi: Government of Pakistan, 1956), p.56. None of these falls within the aims of Seato.

sound out other States regarding his projected intervention in the War, he made feverish efforts to get some Asian countries also to give his plans a semblance of "united action". Pakistan was not invited. But soon Pakistan raised a Red scarecrow. Professor George Modelski quotes a Karachi dispatch of July 11, 1954 emphasising "Communist subversion" problems Pakistan was facing, particularly in its eastern wing and proclaimed that the "threat of a Communist attack on this seven-year-old country . . . is not remote"<sup>22</sup>.

Professor Modelski then notes that over one thousand alleged "Communists and fellow-travellers" were arrested. Pakistan's border with Burma was spanned with troops "to guard against a possible Communist drive through Burma and Thailand".

Pakistan sent her Zafrullah Khan in June to Washington to show "its intention" to join Seato. In Peking, on the other hand, the Pakistani ambassador entertained Chou En-lai and others over toasts to Pakistan's determination to further develop "the happy and harmonious relations now subsisting between the two countries".<sup>23</sup> Professor Modelski remarks:

Pakistan joined as an associate of the Seato states, but no one believed that fear of China played a significant part in that decision. The Communist danger, suddenly played up in 1954, has not been noticed since.<sup>24</sup>

In the process, the United States relations with India, Afghanistan, and Burma, in particular, and with the

<sup>22</sup>. op. cit., p.131

<sup>23</sup>. Ibid., loc. cit.

<sup>24</sup>. Ibid., loc. cit.

other States of the region reached a low ebb.

Some observers have even felt that the emergence of what is called the "Asian-African" bloc, as a separate entity can be traced directly to the creation of Seato:

In the light of all that has happened since 1954, one of the most interesting aspects of Seato is that in practice it marked the beginning of a new phase in the pattern of behavior of the uncommitted. After that summer the idea of bipolarity began to lose its grip. Instead of the feeling of increasing compulsion to join one side or the other in the cold war, a more flexible international order began to appear.<sup>25</sup>

It was only after Seato's birth, again, that the Afghan government started getting Soviet technicians and military help and the Chinese Communists started revamping the Cambodian army.

That the Asian partners are in no position to add to Seato's strength materially is admitted by themselves. In any case, they are frank about it:

The other day the Prime Minister of Pakistan, describing the Baghdad Pact, used rather striking language. He said: zero plus zero plus zero plus zero equals zero. His point was that unless some powerful country like the United Kingdom or the United States was in the Baghdad Pact with its big military apparatus, all the other members of it, from the point of view of armament, were relatively zero. There is another aspect of it. When a country considering itself zero attaches itself to some figure, it is the figure that counts, not the zero, obviously.<sup>26</sup>

It needs hardly to be added that in the Laotian crisis of 1961, when other members of Seato/sent token forces in support of the United States decision to land marines in Thailand, only

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25. Goold-Adams, op. cit., p.141.

26. Jawaharlal Nehru, India's Foreign Policy, selected speeches, 1953-57 (Delhi: Publications Division, 1958), p.364.

Pakistan excused herself. By this time, Pakistan had a first-class army, thanks to American arms, but then she has become an American ally not because of her anti-Communism.

Also much was never expected of Australia, Britain, France or New Zealand by way of actual contributions to Seato's military strength. Their satisfaction with Seato and their reasons for joining it would appear to be based on the consideration that the United States, for the first time in her history, accepted military commitments in the area and, thereby, underwrote their own interests there. Australia and New Zealand were already covered by the Anzus Pact, but the "Australian government has repeatedly insisted that if it should become necessary to fight to protect Australia, it is much better to do the fighting in neighboring countries than in our own"<sup>27</sup>. Australia's Defense Minister, Sir Philip McBride, said this in so many words. With reference to Australia's Seato membership, he stated that it was important "to maintain the gap between Australia and the present highwater mark of the southward flow of Communism" and that Australia must "hold the Communists at the farthest point advantageous to us, and we must consolidate our strength there as quickly as possible"<sup>28</sup> (emphasis supplied). Sir Philip of course cannot blame his northern neighbors if they show no great enthusiasm for his resolution.

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<sup>27</sup>. Macmahon Ball, op. cit., p.13

<sup>28</sup>. Quoted in Modelski, op. cit., p.78

USA: The Kingpin of Seato

It is obvious that any military effectiveness which Seato may possess at any time depends on the attitude of the United States. How does America look at her commitments to Seato? On June 25, 1956 the Secretary of State told a press conference:

I think you know what certainly all the treaty members know--that it was agreed and that it was understood from the very beginning that we would not attempt to establish a force-in-being to Seato comparable to the force-in-being which is assigned to Nato. We have to depend primarily upon an appropriate cooperation of local forces-in-being with the mobile striking power of the United States which is available in the Western Pacific and which is available to be used whenever it needs to be used".<sup>29</sup>

That makes it clear that so far as the United States is concerned, Mr. Dulles would rely solely on her "massive", airborne nuclear retaliation and expect the "local forces-in-being" to supply the Asian manpower to "fight the Asians".

That Mr. Dulles intended U.S. participation in Seato defense only in case of a third World War becomes further obvious, reading his above statement along with the following:

That does not mean turning every local war into a world war. It does not mean that if there is a Communist attack somewhere in Asia, atom or hydrogen bombs will necessarily be dropped on the great industries of China or Russia.<sup>30</sup>

However, back in 1954 little did Mr. Dulles realise that the rising Soviet might would soon make his "rollback"

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29. U.S. Department of State Bulletin, June 25, 1956.

30. "Policy for Peace and Security", Foreign Affairs, loc.cit.

strategy obsolete and would leave him incapable of fighting any other wars except local, conventional wars for which he was not prepared. Let us see how Seato has worked in actual practice.

### SEATO In Action

It is claimed to Seato's credit that no overt Communist aggression has occurred in the Treaty areas since its inception. Since none of the member states has territories contiguous to the Communist states, the question of aggression against them can arise only vicariously. The situation in the "designated" areas of Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia has continued as it existed at the time Seato came on the scene. Cambodia has firmly adhered to neutrality which has perhaps survived because of her stubborn refusal to let Seato "protect" her. Fighting in Vietnam has spread much further South. The case of Laos is highly illustrative of Seato's ineffectiveness.

The nearest thing to a hostile Communist move was the North Vietnamese complicity in the Pathet Lao rebellion towards the closing of 1959. In those military skirmishes the United States encouraged action through the United Nations and the "Seato conferees discussed the possibility of finding ways and means to maintain a United Nations 'presence' in Laos . . . Although no formal statements were made, it is known that Seato members subsequently used their influence in New York to further this idea in practical ways".<sup>31</sup>

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31. Norman J. Padelford, "Seato and Peace in Southeast Asia", Current History, XXXXVIII, February, 1960, p.98.

Professor Padelford further remarks:

The mild action by Seato is notable, for the Laotian situation appeared offhand to involve the kind of threat to peace and security which the Southeast Asia Collective Defence Treaty was designed to meet.<sup>32</sup>

Seato's this inaction in the face of an obvious Communist aggression makes it clear that the grand strategem of "massive retaliation" was a mere talk and was impotent to deal with situations in which "nuclear and air-borne power" were not possible to deploy.

#### Subversion: Seato's Nightmare

However, to continue to consider Seato's role with reference to armed Communist attack only is to ignore the actual realities of the situation in Southeast Asia. Even before Seato was created a change in Communist techniques from open conflict to sub rosa methods was discernible as early as 1951. The Seato Council at its second annual meeting noted:

. . . we are faced with the unrelenting campaign against our ways of life that international communism is waging . . . At different times, in various places, we see insurrection, terrorism, political pressure and propaganda, underground subversion and loaded offers of economic cooperation, attempts to pervert and exploit the natural aspirations of free peoples towards economic and social betterment. . . . Subversion, which has always been a major problem, is the main threat we now face.<sup>33</sup>

Is Seato equipped to meet such a challenge? The Treat provisions dealing with "any situation or fact" have been stated earlier with reference to which one wit is

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32. Ibid, loc. cit.

33. Seato: Second Annual Report, p.13.

reported to have remarked that these read like the actual situation in Southeast Asia and it was surprising that Seato had not been in continuous session.

The question of subversion bristles with thorny problems. Walter Lippmann even charged that Seato is "the first formal instrument in modern times which is designed to license international intervention in internal affairs".<sup>34</sup> It must be clearly understood that the separate "understanding" signed by Mr. Dulles applies only to "overt Communist aggression". So far as subversion is concerned, the United States obligation to "consult immediately with other Parties in order to agree on the measures which should be taken for the common defense" under Paragraph 2 of Article IV, is not thus limited.

In the case of an open attack from the outside it may be comparatively easy to identify the aggressor, although occasionally it is not so easy. But, how and who is to decide whether or not an internal rebellion is Communist-inspired and is not a genuinely nationalist expression of popular discontent? Professor Bali has parodied the idea thus: "Is it to be assumed that all subversive activities are 'directed from without'?", he asks and then points out that "if the word subversion has any meaning it was surely the method by which the last two regimes in Thailand came to power. But it was hardly 'directed from without'; it has not affected Thailand's territorial integrity and has given Thailand some

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34. Quoted in Braicanti, op. cit., p.352



years of comparative stability".<sup>35</sup> That raises the question: How far is it right to allow American arms to be used by autocratic regimes in these "de facto dependencies"<sup>36</sup> to maintain their "comparative stability" by suppressing legitimate local grievances?

Moreover, it is difficult to see how such subterranean permeation of Communist influence can be dammed without outlawing Communist parties all over the region and following it up by further Seato action, wherever necessary, within the territorial precincts of "protected" states. Such action would certainly open floodgates of international criticism dubbing Seato actions as Western Imperialism, particularly in a sensitive area where past memories are still so fresh. "The fact is that", as Edwin F. Stanton, ex-U.S. Ambassador to Thailand observes, "assistance from other countries is not the answer to subversive activities within a country; subversion can only be effectively countered by the government and the people acting in unison".<sup>37</sup>

That precisely is not what Seato is equipped to achieve. Mr. Dulles' overreliance on massive military means, by its very obsession, precluded working with the people to build slow, democratic resistance to Communism. He saw only the teeth in Communism's open jaw which made it impossible for him to realize that the Reds can win by smiles as well

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35. Macmahon Ball, op. cit., p.23.

36. James King, Jr. uses this description for South Korea, Formosa and South Vietnam, op. cit., p.131.

37. Edwin F. Stanton, "Communist Pressures in Thailand", Current History, XXXVIII, February, 1960.

as scare by their scowls.

That the Southeast Asia Treaty Organisation was to prove so totally inadequate to its tasks has been due as much to the realities of Southern Asia as to its defects at conception. In the words of Professor Hans. J. Morgenthau:

It [Seato] was intended as a gesture of defiance, as an act which would convey initiative and strength where actual initiative and strength were lacking. As such, Seato was slated to take its place in that series of pretentious, yet hollow, pronouncements which range from liberation and the unleashing of Chiang Kai-shek through agonising reappraisal and the "new look" to the brink of war<sup>28</sup>.

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28. "Military Illusions", The New Republic, CXXXIV, March 19, 1956.

## V. CONCLUSIONS

Southern Asia saw itself receiving more attention during the first two years of the Eisenhower Administration than any other previous American government had ever cared to bestow on it. This new concern, however, grew out of policies and circumstances which unhappily led to undertakings that were misconceived as well as ineffective. On balance, the United States policies appeared to have been responsible for the emergence of a strong mistrust of American aims in the area without any countervailing achievements.

The sources of this misconception and the attendant ineffectiveness of policies were manifold; but, in the final analysis, they sprang from the basic postulates of the political philosophy of certain powerful elements in the Republican echelons which, due to a fortuitous combination of good luck and partisan manipulation of popular susceptibilities, came to the fore towards the end of the Truman Administration.

These groups have sometimes been, soi-disant, called "isolationists" in international politics, when actually they merely wished to keep aloof from the dissipating interne-cine struggles of the powerful European countries. At other times, they have selected the more attractive name of America-Firsters, when in fact they were looking Westward to Asian markets across the Pacific.

However, by the time the United States could arrive at the Asian scene, China alone had escaped from falling under European dominance. But China was a large, sprawling country and promised to be potentially the biggest market in the world. The urge for trade was given a spiritualist and wellfarist dimension when religious groups of various denominations sought to win the millions for Christ. A weird compound of racial superiority, money, and morals made China's mystical pull the loadstar in the westward flight of the eagle.

With this background of material and emotional involvement it was not surprising that with the fall of a "Friend and ally", Chiang Kai-shek, in 1949, this group's excessive sense of frustration over China's loss to the Communists found exaggerated expression in a vituperative and full-throated cry against the Truman Administration.

The stalemated Korean War supplied further fuel to widely held illusions of American superiority and invincibility. Had Herbert Hoover asserted for nothing that "the potential strength of this nation is the strongest thing in the whole world. ... America cannot be defeated"? The "Asia-Firsters" or "Asialationists", as they have been called, charged that it was the Truman-Acheson policy of "softness" towards Communism which had "substituted" Mao for Chiang, had "invited" the aggression in Korea, and then fought it "wastefully" with unnecessary cost in American

lives in an Asian war. It was nothing short of the Democrats' "defeatism and deafness towards Asia from Presidency down", they announced from pulpits and housetops, which was responsible for America's shameful "archfailures" in China and Korea.

Applying the same partisan logic to the other areas of United States foreign affairs, they had no difficulty in blaming the "too timid and immoral" concept of "containment" for the enslavement of East European people by the Soviets. Truman policies were "treadmill policies", they inveighed, which were aimed at slowly "sapping" the nation's vitals. America, the richest and the mightiest nation in the world, did not have to suffer the torment of impotently "living forever" with the Red peril. And so on. Through a series of carefully planned and widely publicized inquests on the "Communist-infested" State Department the Republicans whipped up enough mass hysteria to make their charges acceptable to the public at large. They tailored their 1952 Presidential election platform also mainly with an eye on this popular mood.

In John Foster Dulles they found a new Messiah who best articulated the Republican partisanship in foreign policy. Although he had been intimately associated in high capacities with the administration of Democratic foreign policies, Mr. Dulles found the prospect of a commanding position in a Republican Administration too tantalizing to

restrain him in his criticism of Truman policies. He declared that America's "massive retaliatory might" could not only "deter" a would-be Communist aggressor, but could "roll him back" as effectively. He went a step further and, with an ear to the traditional concern of business with taxation, promised to vanquish the Red foe at a "much reduced cost", lower than the Democrats' on unsuccessful "containment". He resurrected the image of American omnipotence in a way which any master of demagoguery would envy: With regard to the people behind the iron and bamboo curtains, he asserted, America must make it clear that "it wants and expects liberation to occur", and these curtains would shatter in an "electrifying way", lifting the Communist yoke.

Whether the Republicans would succeed in "rolling back" the Communists was as yet to be seen, but they did succeed in rolling the Democrats out of the White House. Having ridden to victory on the crest of the current popular wave, they had now to reconcile the mutually incompatible aims of "more security at less cost" into a program of action. They wove together their "concern" for Asia, promises of tax reduction, Dullesian "bold" talk, and a brand "New Look" on strategy for mid-century America emerged.

The basic thinking behind this strategy can be summarised as follows: In order to prevent America's vitality based on private enterprise from slowly eroding through huge government spending, economies must be effected. Since "the

big spending is, of course, the \$60 billion we pay for security", the Republican Presidential candidate had explained in a speech in Baltimore on September 25, 1952, "here is where the largest savings can be made". But if the threat of Communism had to be "destroyed", maintenance of adequate military power was also essential. The only way to reconcile these two opposing urges was to do some rethinking on defense strategy.

As far as Europe was concerned, it was decided that it had received a disproportionate share of attention from the Democratic "Europe-Firsters". Other "areas nearer to the Communist aggressors" would now be made citadels of the free world's defense. Communist China had most recently incurred the wrath of the American people. Besides, she was weak. By concentrating popular attention on her it was possible to serve God and Mammon at the same time. Moreover, it was possible to find cheaper Asian allies, and sharing the costs with them, the whole program could be made "bearable".

This sharing of the costs was easy. The United States already had an overwhelming superiority in nuclear stockpiles and air and naval striking capacity. It could supply this component to the alliance system without much additional cost. In fact, this would prevent industrial layoffs and "sapping" of American prosperity. The waste occurred mainly in maintaining American marine and ground forces. It cost as much five times/to keep an American in uniform as it did to maintain a Pakistani soldier. The manpower of the Asian

allies would not only be cheaper but could make it possible "to let Asians fight Asians".

Military alliances thus became the cornerstone of the "New Look" strategy. To this was added the anti-Communist messianism and "bold policies" of Secretary Dulles. These two in combination produced a situation much like a crusade in which anybody who did not wish to join somehow lacked in moral probity. Problems of economic and social betterment acquired secondary place, not only because a preoccupation with them deflected from the people's anti-Communist zeal but their solution would cause budgetary strains.

It was with this policy mix that the Eisenhower administration looked at the strategic region of Southern Asia. Almost all the countries in that region had recently emerged from foreign domination, and naturally viewed their newly-won freedom as their most precious asset. Because of their so recent experience they looked at any foreign moves in the area with misgivings. They were more concerned with the basic problems of economic, social, and political changes which had been artificially arrested during centuries of foreign control than with the ideological windmills. It was not that actors in this international sub-system were oblivious of the cold war tensions, but to them the only effective way to resist undesirable external pressures appeared to depend on the satisfactory solution of these problems of basic change. Thus the Republican Administration's



concern and the Southern Asian people's concerns r a n tangentially against each other.

The first major manifestation of the "New Look" in this region occurred in the shape of a military alliance with Pakistan. The need for arms aid to Pakistan had arisen directly from the decline of the British Empire. Earlier Britain's India-based power had controlled the strategic Middle East arc encompassing the rich oilfields. The rise of Arab nationalism and India's refusal to let herself be used for Britain's imperial interests necessitated a new system of defense for this area. That is where Pakistan came into the picture. Britain had been anxious to persuade the United States to share Middle Eastern oil worries. But, making no headway with the Truman Administration, which appeared to have appreciated the political repercussions of military alliance with Pakistan on the national forces in Southern Asia and the Middle East, the British quietly started working through the Pentagon. But nothing came out of this till Mr. Dulles took over the State Department. Within months after that the question of arms supply to Pakistan acquired new urgency and, on May 19, 1954 Pakistan became the first U.S. military ally in Southern Asia.

The "New Look" then turned to Indo-China where another imperial power, this time the tottering regime of France, was fighting a last-ditch battle against the Communist national forces. It was in response to the French distress

and the possibility of China's intervention on behalf of the Communist insurgents that Mr. Dulles translated his strategy of nuclear superiority into a "doctrine" of instant massive retaliation". He offered two atom bombs to the French and moved units of the Seventh Fleet for a follow-up air-strike. Simultaneously, he announced that the American action would not be confined to Indo-China but would embrace the "bases of aggression" in the Chinese homeland. When his Army Chief of Staff cautioned that the air-strike would immediately require support from American ground forces, Mr. Dulles relented. American lives were too precious to be bogged down in the jungles of Indo-China so soon after the Korean experience. Congress would not countenance this. The whole thing would be too expensive and preposterous. The British, who had called a conference on Indo-China, would not go along and allow their efforts to be still-born.

Thus checkmated, Secretary Dulles fell back on the second-rate strategy of a "posture of strength". Through calculated leaks he kept up the "deterrence" of some contemplated American action if Geneva did not produce what, Mr. Eisenhower had said, "we could at least call a modus vivendi". But Dulles would not sit with the hated Chinese Communists at the same conference table. And when the Conference produced an agreement satisfactory to all the parties concerned, he felt almost deserted and would not let America be a signatory to the "handing over" of a

territory to Communism.

Throughout the Geneva Conference Mr. Dulles maintained the second threat of collective action in Indo-China. He had in fact already invited the military representatives from a few countries for consultations. After the Geneva accords were signed he insisted that a Western initiated collective defense should be organized to underwrite them. Harried invitations were issued to whoever wanted to join. Three countries from the region and five outsiders met in Manila in September, 1954 and the Southeast Asia Treaty Organisation came into being.

This organisation, despite Dulles' tough talk in the preceding months, proved to be the most ineffective collective defense undertaking ever produced by such powerful backers. No wonder, Seato has been dubbed as a "misbegotten paper tiger", "militarily hollow", and "politically pernicious".

In their indiscriminate search for allies the Dullesian incongruities of "more security at less cost" attracted disparate bed-bellows in Southern Asia who showed little agreement with the American concern about Communism. Pakistan was openly saying, even before the signing of the alliance agreements with the United States, that its only aim was to strengthen itself against its neighbors: India and Afghanistan; India, in particular. Thailand has been similarly more concerned with Cambodia and Burma than with Communist China, and at one time its ambassador in Washington

went so far as to equate its membership of Seato with its membership of the United Nations. While none of these Southern Asian allies has common borders with either Communist China or the Soviet Union, the effect of American tie-up with them has been to drive their neighbors (who do have common borders with the Communist states) to seek an understanding with the "New Look's" enemies. The rise of Communist influence in Afghanistan, Cambodia, Burma and Indonesia, and the birth of the Afro-Asian trend towards a more assertive independence both from the West and the East have been traced back to the intrusion of American arms in Southern Asia.

While the military value of these allies to the United States is questionable, the political cost has been tremendous. By wilfully ignoring the forces of resurgent nationalism in this area and by offering purely military solutions to the area's basically social and economic problems the United States succeeded only in one respect: i.e., in deflecting apprehensions from Communism to herself.

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