THE
ORIGINS OF S. E. A. T. O.

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C O N T E N T S

P R E F A C E

The pattern of international relationship in South-East Asia is made of the interaction of two factors. On the one hand, there is the rivalry between the two power blocs, each being equally determined to expand its own influence at the cost of that of the other. On the other hand, the independent countries of this region, and also those of South Asia, were determined to keep themselves, and also the region of South-East Asia, away from this so-called 'Cold War' between the two power blocs. Conditions of international life did not tend to favour them. Most of them, however, persevered with their policy of non-involvement in the Cold War, for, they did not have an alternative course to pursue.

This work is a case study in international diplomacy in South-East Asia. SEATO bore the stamp of all the forces operating in South-East Asia. While it was an act in the Cold War, its charter, on the other hand, was carefully drafted with an eye to reconcile the non-aligned Governments of South and South-East Asia to its existence.

Although SEATO's features are, in themselves, interesting enough to warrant a study of its origins, its appearance in South-East Asia is still more significant. The non-aligned powers tried to prevent its emergence; when it appeared in spite of them, they resented it. Those who promoted it were fully aware of their resentment and appreciated it. Yet, the inner compulsions of their own existence were such that they seemed to have been left with no alternative.

This is how the author has understood the appearance of SEATO in South-East Asia.

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The author would commit the crime of his life if he failed to mention the inspiration and encouragement that he received from his uncle, Sri Parmananda Jha, and his teacher, Dr. Chetaker Jha. The author doubts if either of them knew what particular kind of work he was doing, but that he was doing something was enough to elate them.

Mitra Nandan Jha 18.11.64

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Chapter One

THE 'COLD WAR' AND THE AWAKENING SOUTH-EAST ASIA

The polarization of the world into two mutually opposed blocs, led respectively by the Soviet Union and the United States, was an outstanding feature of the period following the close of the Second World War. (1) The co-operation between these two great post-war powers, which had been so conspicuous during the course of the war, gave way to rivalry at its close. On 10 February 1947, Dean Acheson, then Under-Secretary of State, told the Senate Atomic Energy Committee that "the foreign policy of Russia is aggressive and expansive." (2) About a month later, on 12 March 1947, Harry S. Truman, then President of the United States, while asking the Congress for 400 million dollars for aid to the governments of Greece and Turkey, allegedly under foreign-inspired Communist pressure, conveyed a new aspect of his policy as being "to support free peoples who are resisting attempted subjugation by armed minorities or outside pressure," for, "totalitarian regimes imposed on free peoples by direct or indirect aggression,

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(1) For details, see H. Seton-Watson, "Five Years of Cold War," The Year Book of World Affairs, 7 (London, 1953) 20-44.

(2) Department of State Bulletin (the official ~~fortnightly~~ weekly Record of the United States Foreign Policy, Washington), 16 (2 March 1947) 392.

undermine the foundations of peace and hence the security of the United States." (3)

With the proclamation of the so-called Truman Doctrine, the cold war assumed a definite character. The Soviet newspaper 'Izvestia' compared U.S. aid to Greece and Turkey to Hitler's tactics of aggression. (4) Marshal Tito of Yugoslavia warned the world against U.S. machinations which were dividing the world into "a front of imperialists and war-mongers" and "a big front of the peoples and all the countries that want peace." (5) At a meeting of eighteen major communist leaders held in Poland in September 1947, the new line of Soviet policy was laid down and proclaimed. The "Declaration" (6) of the Conference drew attention to the existence of "two diametrically opposed political lines," the one held by "the imperialist and anti-democratic camp" with the United States as "its leading force," and the other held by "the USSR and the other democratic countries directed at undermining imperialism and consolidating democracy." The "Communique" of the conference proclaimed the establishment of an information Bureau "to coordinate" the

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(3) Ibid., 23 March 1947, 536.

(4) New York Times, 15 March 1947.

(5) Ibid., 1 April 1947.

(6) For A Lasting Peace, For a People's Democracy ! (Information Bureau of the Communist Parties, Belgrade), No. 1, 10 November 1947.

activities of Communist parties all over the world to hasten the collapse of imperialism. (7)

It was obvious that the United States was aware of the Soviet challenge even before the Cominform had been established. The establishment of the Cominform made the Soviet challenge more formidable than it had been heretofore. In order to further consolidate the anti-Soviet ranks, the U.S. Senate passed a resolution, sponsored by Senator A. H. Vandenburg, calling upon the executive branch of the U.S. Government to associate the United States "with such regional and other collective arrangements as are based on continuous and effective self-help and mutual aid, and as effect its national security." (8) Soon, the government of the United States began negotiations with the governments of Canada and the Brussels Treaty powers - the U.K., France, Belgium, the Netherlands, and Luxemburg - to the end envisaged in the Vandenburg Resolution.

No further evidence need be summoned to emphasize the fact that the rivalry between the Soviet Union and the United States had assumed serious proportions. It was inevitable, as it were, for South East Asia, that is, "the area lying to the east of India and to the south of China," (9) to become

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(7) Ibid.

(8) Department of State Bulletin, 19 (18 July 1948) 79.

(9) Charles A. Fisher, "The concept of South East Asia," Eastern World, 7 (London, March 1953) 12.

one of the theatres of the Cold War. Its tremendous strategic importance causes, and the existence of a number of small and weak states facilitates, outside intrusion. As a matter of fact, these two factors have combined to make South-East Asia "a low pressure area." (10) From the viewpoint of international politics, it has always remained "a sub-system" to the world-wide international system existing at any given time. (11) In one respect, however, conditions in South East Asia were, in the post-Second World War period, far removed from those of the past: the former propensity to succumb to outside pressure had given way, what Dean Acheson called, "to hope, to a sense of effort." (12) This chapter seeks to discuss the 'sense of effort' of the newly independent governments of South East Asia.

The Emerging Nation-States in South-East Asia and Their Inherent Deficiencies

After the end of the Second World War, the pattern of international relationship regarding South East Asia seemed set for a change. New nation-states were arising in place of former western colonies. In spite of this fact, it did not

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(10) Cora DuBois, Social Forces in Southeast Asia (Minneapolis, 1949) 28.

(11) For an explanation of the term 'sub-system' and its applicability to South-East Asia see, G. Modelski, "International Relations and Area Studies," International Relations, 2 (London), (April 1961) 143-55.

(12) Department of State Bulletin, 22 (23 January 1950) 112.

appear that the collapse of colonialism in South-East Asia would bring about any change in the role of South-East Asia in international politics. Its strategic importance, deriving from its positional advantage and its great wealth of mineral and agricultural products, (13) had been further accentuated during the war by its emergence as an important centre of skyways. (14) So long as the struggle for power could remain a force in world politics, its importance was likely to enhance instead of being diminished. The emergence of the Soviet Union and the United States, each striving for world supremacy, indicated that the struggle for power would continue in the post-war era.

The end of colonialism in itself, therefore, was not enough to provide the emerging nation-states of South-East Asia with place of importance in world politics. It was necessary that these states should be capable of being their own masters, and not be used by others to ends not contemplated by themselves. Unless the newly independent states could assert themselves and become their own masters, it was inevitable, that the change in their role would be more formal than real. Instead of being colonies as in the past, they would become the pawns of the

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(13) For a survey of South-East Asia's economic potentials, see Charles A. Fisher, "South East Asia," in W. Gordon East & O. H. R. Spate, ed., The Changing Map of Asia, 180-3.

(14) J. O. M. Broek, "Unity and Diversity in Southeast Asia," Geographic Review, 34 (New York, April 1944) 183.

Great Powers in the present as well as the future. In view of their inherent weaknesses as territorial units and political entities, a role for them in world politics, different from those of pawns was not easy to conceive.

The Territorial Weakness of the South-East Asian States

The territorial weakness of the South East Asian states derives partly from geography and partly from the historical ordeals they had undergone. The most important feature of the geography of South East Asia is to be found in its topographical aspects. (15) Fragmentation is the keynote of its topography. Even Europe cannot compare with it in the high ratio of its coast-line to land area. The advantages derived from its topography are, however, effectively counteracted by two other features. In the first place, almost all the rich agricultural lands in South-East Asia are peripheral; this has led to the concentration of population on the peripheries of the countries of South-East Asia. In the second place, the steep ridges in the mainland and the wide stretches of sea in the archipelago prevent concentric integration of the peoples of these lands.

These topographical features had two far-reaching consequences for South-East Asia. In the first place, the dispersal of rich agricultural lands roumd the fringes precluded the evolution of a territorial unit with a strong

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(15) Fisher, n. 13.

heartland. In the second place, the positional importance, rich resources, and easy access from the sea to its fertile peripheries prompted foreign intruding forces to enter South-East Asia. The absence of a strong territorial unit, for which geographical conditions did not exist, rendered the task of the foreigners easy.

Consequently, South-East Asia became a hunting ground for foreign elements. Before the Europeans came, Indians, Chinese, and Arabs had already intruded into South-East Asia. Their advent resulted in the development of varying cultural patterns in South-East Asia. They became the founders of culture systems in South-East Asia with national identities of their own. The Europeans, when they came, resorted to a practice of colonization different from that of their predecessors; they attached their acquisitions, politically as well as economically, to their respective countries. In doing so, they seem to have accepted the territorial units that they met, as the inevitable products of South East Asia's topography and contrasting cultures. Only that fact can explain the close correspondence, in extent and layout, between the Netherlands Indies and the Majapahit empire; and further that the Irrawady and the Mekong river basins remained the core of the European colonies in peninsular South-East Asia. In addition to establishing the colonies, the European settlers, belonging to different nationalities, also arrived at arrangements among themselves, defining the extent of areas under control of each other. (16)

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(16) Ibid., 192-9.

The European colonization of South-east Asia had two important consequences for the future of that area. In the first place, the European settlers by resorting to the western practice of defining boundaries, rendered heretofore fluid territorial units in South-East Asia into permanent units. Inevitably, therefore, they remained weak, small, and exposed. The tin belt stretching from Thailand and Burma through Malaya to Sumatra, which alone had the promise of becoming a comparatively strong heartland of any territorial unit in South-East Asia, was cut up. In the second place, the colonial powers attached their colonies firmly to their respective countries. This policy stopped the natural growth of native economies, and also increased the existing political and cultural contrasts between the different countries of South East Asia. (17) As each colonial power developed similar economies in its colony, each country of South-East Asia was left to face the world alone "turning its back to the other." (18) In other words, the local consequence of the policy of western colonization was to preclude any realignment - either territorial or functional - in South-East Asia.

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(17) Guy Wint, "South Asia: Unity and Diversity," International Conciliation, No. 500, (New York), (November 1954) 159.

(18) Broek, n. 14, 188.

The Political Weakness of South-East Asian States

The political weakness of the states of South East Asia flowed partly from the consequences of alien rule and partly from the character of nationalist movements. These states were the products of struggle against colonial rule. The nationalist movements in these countries, however, were not carried on within any specific ideological framework. In each country under alien rule, excepting the Philippines, (19) the nationalist movement became an amalgam of the various forces of opposition to colonial rule existing in that country. In Burma, (20) and Vietnam, (21) it is claimed, the dawn of nationalism preceded the advent of alien rule. Even ~~if it was~~ so, nationalism was far from being a dynamic factor in either of these countries at the time the Europeans arrived. As a matter of fact, the

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(19) In the Philippines, the nationalist movement began as a coalition of varied forces of opposition to the Spanish rule. The 'Katipunan' as led by Bonifacio and Aguinaldo during the later part of the 19th century aimed at not only independence from the Spanish rule but also at the abolition of large estates, and privileges enjoyed by the Catholic church. With the advent of the U.S. rule, this coalition broke down. Those interested in independence for the sake of its values joined Nationalist Party, founded in 1907 and led by Manuel Quezon, and the peasants and workers, interested in putting an end to the colonial economic practices, came under the influence of left-wing. Thus, under the U.S. rule, the nationalist movement in the Philippines developed two wings. (J. H. Brimmel, Communism in South East Asia (London, 1959) 100-1.

(20) Htin Aung, "The Progress of Nationalism: Commentary," P. W. Thayer, ed., Nationalism and Progress in Free Asia (Baltimore, 1956) 83.

(21) Milton Sacks, "Marxism in Viet Nam" in Frank N. Trager, ed., Marxism in South East Asia (California, London, 1960) 103-4.

establishment of the British rule in Burma was welcomed by the small peasants and workers. (22) It was only when the policies of the colonial powers adversely affected the native patterns of life, that the opposition to alien rule became truly widespread.

Opposition to colonial rule had three distinctive degrees of elements. First, there were the genuine nationalists who, conscious of having lost national independence, were looking forward to winning it back. Secondly, there were the people who, having joined government services and alien business firms, resented being discriminated against, by their employers. To them, independence was not an end in itself; they looked forward to the coming of such a political order as would give them a better deal. Thirdly, there were the peasants and workers who had been impoverished by the economic and agrarian laws of the foreign system. In the economic sphere, South-East Asian countries did make great strides during the colonial rule, but "little trickled down to the ordinary peasants and labourers who made up the vast bulk of population." (23) The common man had disadvantages of colonial rule. (24) Their primary interest,

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(22) "K", "Burma in My Life-Times," The Guardian (Rangoon), 3 (March 1960) iii, 25.

(23) Victor Purcell, The Colonial Period in Southeast Asia [(Mimeographed) New York, 1953] 4.

(24) Justus Van der Kroef, "The Appeal of Communism in South-east Asia," United Asia, 7 (Bombay, December 1955) 255. Also see J. S. Furnivall, Colonial Policy and Practice (Cambridge, 1948) 214; An extract from the Annual Report for 1941 by the U.S. High Commissioner in the Philippines in John Kerry King, Southeast Asia in Perspective (New York, 1956) 26; George McTurnan Kahin, Nationalism and Revolution in Indonesia (Ithaca, 1952) 3.

therefore, lay in causing the collapse of the exploitative economic system inflicted on them by the colonial powers.

It would be wrong to assume, therefore, that nationalist movements in South East Asia represented the idea of nations on the move. The vast bulk of the population - peasants, workers, low paid employees and unemployed - did not really challenge the rights of the foreigners to rule over their respective countries, but their right to discriminate against the local inhabitants and to oppress them. Moreover, grievances of those fighting against the colonialists also varied. A peasant or a worker, an office clerk or an unemployed individual, was not fighting for a national cause against the alien rulers, but for his own limited interests. The leadership of nationalist movements in the countries of South-East Asia, though looking beyond these narrow bounds, capitalized on the existing revolutionary feelings. The primary purpose of the leaders became to put an end to the alien rule; other things, like ideology, became secondary to this primary aim. (25) The nationalist movements

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(25) The nationalist leadership in Burma, Indonesia and Viet Nam always subjected ideological considerations to the primary need of winning independence. Aung San, the Burmese nationalist leader, was the first Secretary-General of the Burma Communist Party and also simultaneously became the Secretary-General of the Freedom Bloc consisting of several other nationalist groups. In 1940, he fled to Japan and received military training there and returned to Burma with the Japanese. He also joined the government put up by the Japanese but later on joined the Communists in the underground and formed the Anti-Fascists People's Freedom League with them, and became its first chairman. In 1947, he went to London for talks with the British government in spite of the opposition of the

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in South East Asia, therefore, were "movements of protest," (26) and, in their composition, coalitions of varying forces opposed to colonial rule.

It was a foregone conclusion that these coalitions would disintegrate once their purpose had been achieved. Colonial rule, had, at the same time, disrupted the bases on which a nation could be built up. Its constant endeavour had been to deepen sectarian and localized loyalties of the people. It also encouraged the immigration of the Chinese and the Indians into their colonies, thus further diversifying the racial composition of their colonies. Moreover, the colonial powers introduced such administrative systems into their colonies as had proved efficient in their own respective countries. At the same time,

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Communists. In Indonesia, too, the different shades of leadership united together to fight the colonial rule when the Japanese marched into Indonesia, the top nationalist leadership devised a tactics according to which Sjarifoedin, a Communist, was to go underground and oppose the Japanese while Sukarno and Hatta were to collaborate with the Japanese. Sjahrir, another leader, was assigned the task of directing anti-Japanese plans. [Virginia Thompson and Richard Adloff, "The Communist Revolt in Java: The Background," Far Eastern Survey, 17 (New York, 2 November 1948) 258]. In Vietnam, Ho Chi Minh, the Communist leader, disbanded the Indochinese Communist Party in November 1945. The Constitution of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam, as proclaimed by him, granted the right to religious freedom and private property. [Thompson & Adloff, The Left Wing in South East Asia (New York, 1950) 36]. It is obvious that even Ho subjected his ideology to the primary purpose of winning independence.

(26) Rupert Emerson, "Nationalism in Southeast Asia," Far Eastern Quarterly, 5 (Wisconsin, 1945-6) 212.

they also sought to mould the native social structures after their own. Their administrative systems were staffed by their own nationals. As a result, their administrative and social policies disrupted the native political and social order, while the order imposed by them on their colonies remained alien to the local inhabitants. (27)

The Second World War accelerated the pace of disruption of these societies. During the confusion accompanying its beginning and following its end, ~~the~~ influence of law and order ~~over the masses~~ in South-East Asia perceptibly diminished. The economic hardships of the people increased. The influence of traditional mores on the masses, weakening steadily under colonial rule, could be hardly perceived on the eve of the emergence of the new states.

It was, therefore, difficult for the emerging states to lead an independent existence. They were weak territorially, and they did not have the political assets for overcoming this weakness. A strong nationalist movement ~~is~~ could be an asset for an independent existence; but in the case of the South-East Asian states, nationalism was not the same unifying force as it had been in Europe or North America; it was an exclusively anti-colonial force. With the end of colonial rule, nationalism was

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(27) J. H. Brimmel, Communism in South East Asia (Mimeographed, London, 1958) 3. Also see, John Kerry King, n. 24, 27; W. MacMohan Ball, Nationalism and Communism in East Asia (Carlton, New York, London, 1952) 12.

drained of its sustaining force. Henceforth, it became a "blanket emotion" (28) meaning different things to different people.

Anti-Colonialism in South-East Asia and the 'Cold War'

Thus, with no obvious assets to sustain independent existence, the emerging nation-states inevitably fell headlong into the vortex of the Cold War. South-East Asia was a region of such profound strategic significance that neither of the contending world power-blocs would willingly lose it to the other. The leadership in the emerging nation-states, were looking around for such national philosophies, as would not only reflect their own convictions and faith but also make a deep impression on their peoples. Both the world power-blocs thus became interested in the developments in South-East Asia. For, in the Cold War, both the elements of struggle ~~between national~~ for power and a profound conflict between the contending sets of politico-economic systems as practised by the United States and West European powers on the one hand and the Communist countries on the other, are combined. Even if there had been no cold war, an intensive ideological struggle between the two broad sections of nationalists - Westernized liberals and Communists - would have followed the winning of independence. The Cold War,

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(28) Thompson & Adloff, The Left Wing in South-East Asia, n. 25, 6.

however, precipitated the inevitable clash and invested the course and outcome of the struggle in South-East Asian countries with tremendous international significance.

Assets and Strategy of the Communist Parties for Controlling the Nationalist Movements

The Soviet Union entered with two decided advantages in the race for the ideological loyalty of the emerging nation-states in South East Asia. In the first place, the prestige of the West and of western institutions had reached its nadir at the end of the Second World War. Colonialism in South-East Asia was known as a western institution, and therefore, everything western was suspect. (29) In the second place, there were communist parties in South East Asia ready to obey the orders of the Soviet Union and force their way, if possible, into the void created by the decline of western prestige.

In a situation characterized by widespread grievances against western rule and capitalism on the one hand, and by disrupted native social and political systems on the other, communist parties began their struggle for power with several advantages. In the first place, passionate repudiation of capitalism and colonialism inherent in the communist doctrine reflected the hates and fears of the natives; its promise to bring about an egalitarian society was in tune with their aspirations. In the second place, communist leaders and workers

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(29) John Kerry King, n. 24, 27-8.

used Russia's success in the economic field as an example for impressing upon the people the genuineness of their promises. Thus they used Russia's progress under communist rule to strengthen the appeal of their doctrine. Men who could not understand the doctrines of Marx, were attracted by the deeds of "the concrete and visible Marxists" of Russia. (30) In the third place, the decline of the prestige of western institutions combined with the disruption of native social and political patterns of life, brought about a vacuum which communism could step in with ease. It promised "intellectual and philosophical security" to the educated and semi-educated elite, uprooted from their traditional moorings. (31) Its emphasis on planning and management of economy held no terrors for peoples accustomed to considerable state intervention and exploitation during colonial rule. (32) Even religion could not compete with communism for the allegiance of a people living so close to the breadline as the peoples of South-East Asia had been. (33) In the fourth place the champions of communism in South-East Asia were genuine

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(30) Owen Lattimore, Solution in Asia (Boston, 1945) 137.

(31) John Kerry King, n. 24, 78. Also see M. N. Roy, "The Communist Problem in East Asia," Pacific Affairs, (New York, September 1951) 24.

(32) William A. Henderson, "Communist Movements in Southeast Asia," Journal of International Affairs, 8 (New York, 1954) 33.

(33) W. MacMohan Ball, n. 27, 10-12.

nationalists; in an over-all sense, their performance during the course of struggle against colonialists had not been less spectacular than that of their rivals. (34) It was this fact combined with its own appeal that made communism a formidable and explosive force in South-East Asia.

It is, however, necessary to make a distinction between the influence of communism and its champions on the one hand and communist parties on the other. The peoples of South East Asia followed leaders, not because of their ideological affiliations but for their achievements in the struggle against colonialism and their professed convictions. Many leaders among the communists had a great appeal among the people because of their role in the struggle against colonialism and their socialist convictions. But there were many outside the communist parties, who were not less popular than the communists. (35) Conditions in South-East Asia were not favourable for diminishing their popularity by making attacks on their leadership on economic and political grounds. There were no economic classes so that the communists could seize the leadership of a class struggling

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(34) Justus Van der Kroef, discussing the place of the Communist leaders of South-East Asia in the nationalist movement, says, "In the annals of the nationalist struggle in Burma the names of Communist leaders like Thakin Soe are revered as those of the non-Communist nationalists like the late Aung San and Burma's present Premier U Nu. And what ardent nationalist in Indonesia has forgotten the communist inspired insurrections of the years 1926-27 or the names of Indonesian communist leaders like Semaon and Tan Mala ka." "Marxism in Southeast Asia," Current History, 27 (Philadelphia, November 1954) 290.

(35) Thompson & Adloff, "Southeast Asia Follows the Leader," Far Eastern Survey, 2 November 1949, 18.

against exploitation by the class led by the non-communists. (36) Consequently, the popularity of the communist leaders did not necessarily reflect the popularity of the party. Their claim to lead the nationalist movement depended upon their place in the hierarchy of the nationalist leadership. Thus, while Ho Chi Minh, a Communist, led the nationalist movement in Vietnam, Sukarno and Hatta led it in Indonesia and Aung San and U Nu in Burma. All of them alike belong to the "intellectual middle class." (37) None of them was leading a particular class in its struggle against the enemy.

The tactics of the communist parties were designed to overcome these difficulties on the way to leadership of the nationalist movements. It was to that end that, instead of openly opposing non-communist nationalist leaders, the communists joined the latter in the fight against colonialism, planning, later on, to seize the leadership of the movements from within. Many of the Indonesian communists who had remained in the Netherlands during the war and denounced Sukarno and Hatta as "Fascist collaborationist" and the Republic proclaimed by them, as a "Japanese time bomb," joined the nationalist movement led by them, when flown to Indonesia by the Dutch government. (38)

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(36) For detailed discussion of this point, see A. Guber, "The Situation in Indonesia," New Times (Moscow, 15 February 1946); Ho Chi Minh's reply to a foreign correspondent published in the Bulletin of the Vietnam-American Friendship Association (New York), 4 August 1947.

(37) Brimmel, n. 27, 3.

(38) Jeanne S. Mintz, "Marxism in Indonesia," in Frank N. Trajer, n. 21, 212.

They also supported the Linggadjati Agreement concluded in November 1946. In doing so, their only aim was to purge the nationalist movement of right-wing nationalists. (39) In Burma, the Communist Party remained within the AFPFL to fight colonial rule, even though it did not conceal its policy of keeping its own interests above those of the AFPFL. (40) Even Ho Chi Minh, who enjoyed a reputation for his leadership unparalleled by any other nationalist leader in Vietnam, dissolved the Indochinese Communist Party in November 1945, in order to make his leadership of the nationalist movement free of any controversy. (41)

It appears then that the main purpose of the Communists in fighting colonialism, was to further consolidate their hold on nationalist movements as in Indochina, and also place themselves further higher-up in the hierarchy of leadership, by aggravating the struggle between colonialism and nationalism, as in Indonesia and Burma on the other. The role of communist parties in South East Asia was to assist their leaders in the achievement of their uphill task, by putting at their disposal their "discipline,

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(39) "Communists' view on Linggadjati," Voice of Free Indonesia, (Djakarta, 1 February 1947) ii, 204.

(40) Burmese Review (Rangoon), 14 October 1946.

(41) Since the dissolution of the communist party in 1945, Ho Chi Minh continued to reiterate that his is not a communist but a coalition government consisting of all shades of nationalist views. (See report of radio interview with Ho Chi Minh by Harold Isaacs, Newsweek, 25 April 1949).

talent for organisation, and fanatical zeal." (42)

The Strategy of the Enlightened Nationalist Leadership

It might be held that communism in South East Asia was not a subversive propaganda but a formidable idea being used by its followers for winning the allegiance of intensely anti-colonial but unsophisticated peoples. (43) Communists rationalized their opposition to colonialism and promised them as good a world to live in as the Russians had made. It could, therefore, be countered only by a better idea. The enlightened nationalist leadership in Burma and Indonesia had such an idea. Nationalist leaders like Aung San and U Nu of Burma, and Sukarno and Hatta of Indonesia were socialists by conviction. (44) The genuineness of their professions was not suspect in their respective countries; they therefore denied the communists the monopoly of the force of communism.

The strategy of the enlightened nationalist leadership was to deny the communists any further strengthening of their hold over the masses. By preferring negotiation with the colonial authorities to an armed struggle against them, the

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(42) Henderson, n. 32, 41.

(43) For a very erudite analysis of the role of communists in the anti-colonialist and backward countries of Asia, see Lattimore, n. 30, 134-41.

(44) Sukarno and Hatta had long been socialists. After the suppression of the Partai Nasionalis Indonesia (PNI) in 1929, two parties came up - Partindo and Indonesian National Education Club headed by Sukarno and Hatta respectively. Both of them were leftist parties. Similarly in Burma, the Dobbama Asiayone which had been the training ground for the leaders like Aung San and U Nu was strongly Marxist in its economic outlook.

AFPFL in Burma and the Republican leaders in Indonesia seem to have aimed at denying the anti-Western communists a situation advantageous for them. There is no doubt that a situation created by armed conflict between colonial powers and nationalist forces would have enhanced Russia's prestige and increased the Communist parties' hold over the masses. Moreover, envisaging a period of struggle with the communists in the period following independence, they also declared their policy of welcoming foreign aid from any country for the reconstruction of their countries. In January 1947, Aung San went to London to begin negotiations, with the British Government, for Burma's independence; the statement released after the talks envisaged close co-operation between Britain and independent Burma in the military and economic field. (45) Similarly, in March 1947, the Minister for Economic Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia declared that his government would welcome foreign capital as well as experts "for the reconstruction and upbuilding of the country." (46)

The Collapse of the Nationalist-Communist United Front, the Zhadanov Line, and the Communist Insurrections in South-East Asia

It is clear that both the communists and nationalists were trying hard to beat each other at their own game. When

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(45) For the 'Conclusions' reached between Aung San and Attlee regarding future co-operation between their governments, see Nicholas Mansergh, ed., Documents and Speeches on British Commonwealth Affairs 1931-1952, 2 (London, 1953) 768-9, 770-1.

(46) Voice of Free Indonesia, 2 (22 March 1947) 310.

Aung San was preparing to leave for London, Than Tun, the Burmese communist leader, predicted that he would return empty-handed. (47) His success, therefore, greatly shocked the communists, who had looked forward to the sharpening of the nationalist struggle and to seizing its leadership in the process. They had no alternative but to denounce the AFPFL and work for diminishing its leaders' appeal to the people. In Indonesia, where the Dutch, unlike the British in Burma, continued to hold their own against the nationalists, the united front of all the leftists - Communists, Socialists and others - continued far longer than in Burma. In fact, Amir Sjarifoedin, a Communist, also became the Prime Minister of Indonesia.

By the beginning of 1947 the Cold War between the Communist and Anti-communist Blocs had become the most powerful force in international politics. On 9 February 1946, Stalin, declared that that his government would abet and aid "the revolutionary upswing" against colonialism. (48). The fact that the Soviet Union championed the cause of independence for Indonesia and Burma made her the most respected among great world powers, in South East Asia. (49) In September 1946,

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(47) Thompson & Adloff, n. 25, 93.

(48) Quoted in Historicus, "Stalin on Revolutions," Foreign Affairs, 27 (New York, January 1949) 19.

(49) Max Beloff, Soviet Policy in the Far East 1944-1951 (London, 1953) 15.

Jawaharlal Nehru, while still Vice-chairman of the Viceroy's Executive Council, declared that independent India would strive "to keep away from the power politics of groups aligned against one another." (50) Aung San's 'conclusions' with the British government followed in January 1947. With the proclamation of the Truman Doctrine in March 1947, the Soviet Union began taking stock of her own international position. To her, it appeared that India had not been won over to her side while Aung San's agreement with the British Government, envisaging very close co-operation between independent Burma and Britain, appeared as reinforcing Britain's hold over her. At a meeting of the Soviet Academy of Social Science, at which E. M. Zhukov also was present, the communist intellectuals reached the conclusion that Nehru belonged to the same camp as the imperialists, (51) and a Soviet writer branded Aung San as a British agent in July 1947. (52)

In September 1947, A. Zhadanov speaking at the meeting of the Communist leaders in Poland, urged Communist parties, all over the world, to close their ranks, aggravate the crisis endangering "the rear of the capitalist system," and "resist

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(50) Jawaharlal Nehru, A Collection of Speeches, September 1946 to May 1949 (New Delhi, 1949) 340.

(51) John H. Kautsky, Moscow and the Communist Party of India: A Study in the Post-War Evolution of International Communist Strategy (New York, 1956) 25.

(52) A. Klimnov, writing in July 1947, contended that the British government had "directed Aung San to disband" the peasant movement in Burma. Quoted in Thompson & Adloff, n. 25, 116.

the new plans of war and aggression" launched by the colonial powers. (53) Zhadanov did not name the countries, which in his opinion, formed the "rear" of Western colonialism, but he must have included in his list all the countries of South and South-East Asia, whether independent or not. In December 1947, in an article in 'Bolshevik,' a Soviet official magazine, Zhukov was more forthright in urging upon communist parties in colonial Asia to bid for power by "militant forward surge." (54)

The final collapse of the united front strategy of the Communists followed closely on the establishment of the Cominform in September 1947. The Nu-Attlee Agreement of October 1947 confirmed the 'Conclusions' arrived at between Aung San and Attlee earlier in the year. (55) In Indonesia, however, things were moving to their satisfaction. Amir Sjarifoedin had become the Prime Minister of the Indonesian Republic on 3 July 1947. The first Dutch aggression on the Republic, euphemistically called police action, had sharpened, beyond measure, the struggle between nationalism and colonialism. The reluctance of the United States and Britain to coerce the

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(53) A. Zhadanov, "Report on International Situation," For A Lasting Peace, For a People's Democracy, 10 November 1947.

(54) Quoted in John Kerry King, n. 24, 91.

(55) The text of the treaty is given in Mansergh, n. 45, 775-9. See Article 6 and 7 of the treaty regarding financial aid by Britain to Burma and Burma's pledge to respect the contracts signed by the previous government. Also see the 'Defence Agreement' signed between the two countries on 29 August 1947 which was endorsed by the Nu-Attlee Agreement. Ibid., 771-4.

Netherlands into granting independence to Indonesia further aggravated anti-Western feeling in Indonesia. (56) In order to strengthen the international position of the Republic, President Sukarno, authorized a Communist leader, named Soeripino, to negotiate for the exchange of consular representatives with the Communist bloc countries. All these steps indicated that Indonesia was getting closer to the Soviet Bloc; hence communist strategy seemed to be working well. In February 1948, however, Soetan Sjahrir, an Indonesian socialist and one of the leaders of the Communist-Nationalist united front, suggested that Indonesia should adopt the Nehru line in her foreign relations. (57) On 29 January 1948, Mohammad Hatta succeeded Amir Sjarifoedin as the Prime Minister. The Renville Agreement which had been signed between the Republic and the Netherlands on 17 January 1948, prohibited the Republic from establishing diplomatic relations with foreign countries. (58) Though Hatta scrupulously refrained from committing the Republic to any definite course of foreign policy, he was not prepared to permit any step that

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(56) On 12 November 1947, Kasimo, Vice-Minister for Economic Affairs, speaking in the Indonesian Parliament charged the United States and "certain powerful nations" with "partiality" for the Dutch and refusing to recognize the right for the republic which "they subscribe to in the Atlantic and U.N. Charters." Antara (Jogjakarta) 12 November 1947.

(57) Thompson & Adloff, "The Communist Revolt in Java: The Background," n. 25, 259.

(58) See Article A(7) and B(1) of the Renville Agreement, 19 January 1948, in Documents on International Affairs, 1947-8 (Royal Institute of International Affairs, London, 1952) 752, 753-4.

would prejudice the prospects of the peaceful withdrawal of the Dutch from Indonesia; it seems that with that end in view, he recalled Soeripino for consultation. (59) This step left the communists in no doubt that the non-communist nationalist leadership of Indonesia stood for non-alignment as between the two power blocs. With this realization on their part, the split between the enlightened nationalist leadership and the communists became complete in Indonesia also. (60)

With the break-up of the United Front in Indonesia, it became obvious that the Communists would turn to other ways and means to seize the leadership of the nationalist movements in Burma and Indonesia. 1948 was a year of miseries and distresses both in Burma and Indonesia. In Indonesia, the economic miseries of the people reached a point beyond the people's endurance; in Burma, disorder had become universal. Moreover, in both countries, there were different sects and groups who were extremely dissatisfied with some of the policies being pursued by their respective governments. The Karens, Chins, and Mons in Burma wanted ethnic autonomy, while the People's Volunteer Organization wanted to be assimilated with the Army. Similarly,

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(59) For Soeripino affair, see Thompson & Adloff, n. 57, 260.

(60) The decision to recall Soeripino was taken after a meeting of the party leaders on 31 May 1948. As late as 27 May 1948, the communists had been looking forward to joining Hatta Cabinet. After 31 May meeting, the communists started criticising the Renville Agreement, which had been concluded with Amir Sjarifoedin in power, as surrender to imperialism. Thompson & Adloff, n. 28, 181-2.

in Indonesia there were nationalist troops whom the Republican government proposed to disband. Not all these sects and groups were with the communists, but they were dissatisfied with existing nationalist regimes. (61) In them the communists found ready material for use to their own ends. The rebellion in Burma started towards the end of March 1948, and in Indonesia, it started in September.

It is necessary to state at this point the issues which the communists professedly wanted to settle with their rivals in 1948. The Communists of Burma branded the Nu government as "the imperialist-bourgeosie combine," (62) and "Fascist." (63) The Communists of Indonesia branded Soekarno and Hatta "as tools of American imperialism," (64) and asked for the people's support in their attempt "to alienate colonial and feudal elements" from the Republic. (65) It seems that the Communist strategy was to drain the enlightened nationalist leadership of influence that they had on their people as leaders of nationalism. With

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(61) For the situations in Burma and Indonesia respectively, see, John F. Cady, A History of Modern Burma (New York, 1958) 579-89; George McTurnan Kahin, "The Crisis and Its Aftermath," Far Eastern Survey (17 November 1948) 17, 262-3.

(62) "Than Tun's greetings to the Second Congress of the Communist Party of India," (Mimeographed) 28 February 1948.

(63) Government of Burma, Burma and the Insurrections (Rangoon, 1951) 41.

(64) The Hindu, (Madras), 10 September 1948.

(65) Quoted in Kahin, n. 61, 261.

that end in view, they branded them as "imperialist tools," "fascists," and "feudalists," epithets as dangerous in South-East Asia "as the terms 'fellow-traveller' and 'communist' were in America." (66)

It was significant that the strategy of the nationalist leaders both in Burma and Indonesia was to repudiate the communist charges against them. The Hatta government of the Republic of Indonesia, while putting down the rebellion, firmly declined to accept the Dutch offer of help. (67) By doing so, they repudiated the Communist charge that they were tools of western imperialism, and hence, were not entitled to lead the Republic. Similarly in Burma, U Nu repudiated the communist charge that his government was a tool of the imperialists and of the national bourgeosie. Soon after the outbreak of the communist rebellion in Burma, Nu came out with a 15-point "Programme for Leftist Unity" (68) in which he listed his Government's objectives as nationalization of "monopolistic capitalist undertakings," foreign trade and land, and promised help to the poor "against the attacks which are being launched by the capitalists." In respect of international relations,

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(66) Robert M. Scalpino, "Neutralism in Asia," American Political Science Review, 48 (Wisconsin, March 1954) 52.

(67) Lawrence S. Finkelstein, "American Policy in Southeast Asia," (Mimeographed, New York, 1951) 21.

(68) Thakin Nu, Towards Peace and Democracy (Rangoon, 1949) 92-4.

he opted for non-alignment and stated that Burma should seek foreign aid only on such conditions as would be consistent with "the political, economic and strategic independence of Burma." At the same time, he also offered to promote the study of Marxism in Burma; with this programme for unity, Nu offered, in the eyes of the people, fair terms of compromise to the communists. The communist rebels, however, did not accept the offer and stepped up their activities; the rebellion continued for more than two years. During this period, in spite of stresses and strains, Nu, while accepting foreign financial aid and arms, refused to accept the offer for more active assistance by foreign countries. (69) The policies thus followed by Nu denied the communists the use of the motive of anti-colonialism for their own ends. His policy had the effect of showing up the fact that the rebellion led by the communists was an unprincipled bid for power. His criticism of the emphasis placed by the communists on the names of the aid-giving countries as "the method of longing for the aunt at the expense of one's mother" (70) seemed to have made great impression on the people. As a result, the Nu government emerged from its struggle against the communists, with its prestige enhanced.

From the facts given, it is clear that although the communists had lost the first bid for leadership of Burma and

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(69) Cady, n. 61, 597.

(70) Nu, From Peace to Stability (Rangoon, 1951) 91.

Indonesia, those who had won were not pro-West either. In terms of the Cold War, both as an ideological struggle and a struggle for power, the victorious leadership represented a "third force." (71) It was neither for pro-Communism nor for pro-Western liberalism. In the same way, it was neither for the communist bloc nor for the western bloc. The communists failed in their bid for power because they failed to tarnish the socialist and anti-imperialist images of the non-communist nationalist leadership in these countries. The nationalists won because, while preserving their share of the force of socialism, they tilted the balance of social forces in their favour by promising to adhere to the policy of non-alignment. In an overall sense, therefore, the nationalists, while promising to promote the well-being of the people, also assured them an honourable and independent existence in world politics.

Impact of Internal Conditions in South-East Asian Countries on their International Relations

National Problems and Foreign Policies

Although the ruling nationalist leadership in the newly independent countries of South-East Asia had promised an independent existence to their peoples, they were hardly equipped to play such a role in international politics. With their primitive economies dislocated during the war even at that, the countries of South-East Asia did not possess the requisite

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(71) Brimmel, n. 27, 5.

economic strength to sustain an independent existence for themselves in world politics. The economic reconstruction of these countries had yet to be undertaken, and the task was a formidable one. These countries had neither the capital to start new economic ventures, nor the required trained personnel to manage new ventures if they were to be started at all. The communist parties in Burma and Indonesia had been weakened, but it was not possible to destroy them so long as the social and economic conditions were not improved. Consequently, if the ruling nationalist leadership were to fail on the economic front, it was bound to lead to the balance of social forces swinging in favour of the communists. Moreover, it was also necessary to carry on the economic reconstruction of their countries within the framework of socialism. With a people, addicted to rebellions, and relentlessly being reminded by the communists of their importance in the working of the state, the failure of the nationalist leadership to practise socialism would have led to no less disastrous consequences than the failure to reconstruct the economy. The problems that the non-communist nationalist regimes were face to face with were truly formidable.

The Nu government as well as the Sukarno government had always held that they would welcome foreign aid, in the form of finance and experts, if foreign powers were willing to give such aid. The Nu-Attlee Agreement of October 1947, provided for British military, financial, and technical aid to Burma. (72)

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(72) The Nu-Attlee Agreement, n. 55.

The Hague Agreement of 1949, which put an end to Dutch rule in Indonesia, also provided for a system of Dutch-Indonesian co-operation in the military and economic spheres. (73)

It was, however, incumbent on the governments of Indonesia and Burma to convince their peoples that aid accepted from the former colonial power or any other country was consistent with independence. The constitution of Burma provided for the nationalization of private properties, owned either by foreigners or nationals, if public interest so required. It also allowed the government to forbid the use of private property "to the detriment of the public good." (74) In the same way, the constitution of the Republic of Indonesia placed the economy of the country under "the guidance of the state," and made it incumbent upon the state to so manage it as to produce "the greatest possible prosperity of the people." (75) It was, therefore, required of these governments to accept foreign aid only on such conditions as would conform to the terms of the constitution under which they worked. The Nu-Attlee Agreement as well as the Hague Agreement, while providing for financial aid to Burma and Indonesia respectively, recognized also the right

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(73) See Articles 20-23 of the Statute of the Netherlands-Indonesian Union signed on 2 November 1949 at the Hague, Keesing's Contemporary Archives 1948-50 (Bristol) 10588-9.

(74) The Economist (London), 8 November 1955.

(75) The Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia, The Voice of Free Indonesia (Djakarta, undated 1946) 6.

of the recipients to nationalize foreign properties, if such a step was needed in the national interest. (76)

While accepting foreign aid, the governments of Burma and Indonesia thus made it clear that in their international relations, they would lead an independent existence. In March 1950, Nu categorically stated that his government "did not desire alignment with a particular power bloc antagonistic to other opposing power blocs." (77) In May 1950, Hadji Agus Salim, a former Indonesian Foreign Minister and then Adviser to the Indonesian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, declared, that in her foreign relations, Indonesia will find "a third way." He also made it clear that the path to be followed would be the same as that of India. (78)

Here it may not be irrelevant to compare the policies of Burma and Indonesia with those of the Philippines, and the Democratic Republic of Vietnam, the other newly independent states in South-East Asia. Even after the achievement of independence, the Philippines remained attached to the United States. The Democratic Republic of Vietnam, led by the Communist, Ho Chi Minh, followed a policy similar to the one being followed by Burma and Indonesia. In a letter written to

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(76) Regarding Burma, see Nos. 1, 2, 3 of the 'Exchange of Notes' between Attlee and U. Nu, Great Britain: Recognition of Burmese Independence and Related Matters, Command 7360 (London) 6-7; for Indonesia, n. 73.

(77) Nu, n. 70, 86.

(78) Aneta (Djakarta), 10 May 1950.

a foreign newspaper correspondent, Ho stated that his government would "welcome all French and foreign investments on the basis of sincere cooperation." (79) In a radio interview, he further stated that his government would follow a policy of neutrality between the two power blocs. (80)

That Ho Chi Minh, U Nu, and Sukarno followed similar foreign policies, even though, Ho on the one hand and Nu and Sukarno on the other, were ideologically far removed from each other, is to be attributed to the "uncrystallized domestic conflicts," (81) in the countries which each of them governed. While Ho was engaged in the task of holding together the varied forces of nationalism in Vietnam, Nu and Sukarno were engaged in similar tasks in their respective countries. As a result, it would appear, their foreign policies were not meant for consumption of the foreign countries as much as for their respective peoples. The government of the Philippines, as against its counterparts in Vietnam, Indonesia, and Burma, had not to face an "uncrystallized" political situation. Its problems were no less formidable and inescapable than theirs; but the nation was divided along definite political lines. The government led by the Nacionalista Party became aligned

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(79) Ho Chi Minh's reply to a Foreign Correspondent's Queries, n. 36.

(80) Ho Chi Minh's Radio Interview, n. 41.

(81) Harold R. Isaacs, "Problems of Nationalism," in Philip Talbot, ed., South Asia in the World Today (Chicago, 1950) 164.

with the United States and depended on her for dealing with its rivals.

It is obvious that the foreign policies of the newly independent states of South-East Asia were as much the outcome of the convictions of the ruling leadership, as they were the product of circumstances in which they found themselves. The foreign policy of each government was, in equal measure, the part of the ruling political groups' strategy to hold its rivals in check. While the foreign policies of the Nu government and the Sukarno government were designed to deny the communists in Burma and Indonesia a grip over the masses, Ho Chi Minh followed a similar policy to strengthen his own hold over the masses. So long as these governments could hold out to their peoples the prospects of a world better than they were living in, and an independent existence in world politics, and took such steps as would demonstrate that they meant to achieve what they said, they could carry their peoples with them.

The 'Cold War' and Non-Alignment

The policy of non-alignment, as adopted by the newly independent countries of South-East Asia was as easy to conceive as it was difficult to execute. In international politics, respect for a country's policy does not derive from its theoretical design, but from the prospects for its successful operation. In the case of the countries of South-East Asia, it was difficult either for the Soviet Union or the United States to believe, that with no economic strength behind

their functioning in world politics, the newly independent countries could lead an independent existence. These countries were located in such an important region that neither of them could however be indifferent to their fate. The Soviet Union, as was seen, considered them as the satellites of the Western Bloc, in the same way as the United States considered the Democratic Republic of Vietnam a tool of the Soviet Union. With the political situation in the countries of South-East Asia as fluid as it was, and the Soviet Union encouraging the Communists in their activities as much as the United States appreciated their repression, (82) it was the difficult task of each non-aligned government of the newly independent states of South-East Asia to preserve itself from Cold War.

Two of the strands of their non-aligned foreign policies were developed obviously to meet this inevitable problem. Aware of the strength of the powers interested in them, these countries found it necessary, first of all, to insure themselves against aggression. Hence Indonesia and Burma became members of the United Nations; but unlike the Great Powers, they relied upon it

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(82) In a letter written to the President of the Central Intelligence Organization, Philip Murray, Acting Secretary of State Robert A. Lovett said that the United States was "mindful of the proved nationalist character of the Republican Government of President Sukarno and Prime Minister Hatta, which . . . had resolutely taken action against and eliminated a communist revolt against its authority, engineered by a Moscow-trained and disciplined Communist agent." Department of State Bulletin, 20 (16 January 1949) 81.

for defence against aggression. (83) With no such way open to it, the Democratic Republic of Vietnam steadily gravitated towards the Communist Bloc, as pressure on it from the Western Bloc increased. With their security thus ensured in different ways, the subsequent problem of the non-aligned countries was to resist oblique interference in their domestic affairs by the Great Powers. To this end, an anti-imperialist front of all the newly independent states was developed, to resist foreign interference in their affairs; and it became, in course of time, one of the most formidable factors in world politics.

The campaign for forging an anti-imperialist front of the colonial peoples had been started soon after the end of the Second World War. In August 1945, Ho Chi Minh wrote to Sukarno urging him to establish a common front for the struggle against colonialism. (84) In October 1945, Aung San gave a similar call for an "Asian Potsdam Conference" of the leaders of the independence movements in the countries of Asia "to plan a united campaign to achieve freedom within the shortest possible time." (85) In March 1947, an Asian Relations' Conference, attended by delegates from all the Asian countries including

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(83) For Indonesia's attitude towards her membership of the United Nations, see Prime Minister Mohammed Natsir's statement before the Parliament made on 21 September 1950, Indonesian Review, 1 (Djakarta, January 1951) 59. For Burma's attitude, U Nu, n. 70, 89.

(84) Isaacs, n. 81, 89.

(85) Hindustan Times (New Delhi), 10 November 1945.

Tibet and Soviet Central Asian Republics, met to consider Asian problems. The report on the "National freedom movements in Asia," as adopted by the Conference, said that "Asia as a whole should develop the attitude that imperialism could not effectively continue to dominate any part of Asia for any length of time and action should, therefore, be modulated accordingly." (86) Through the New Delhi Conference on Indonesia held in January 1949, this developing anti-imperialist front became a force to reckon with on the international political scene. The resolution passed by the Conference denounced Dutch military action against the Republic of Indonesia and called for the immediate withdrawal of Dutch rule from Indonesia. (87) It is difficult to determine the impact of this conference on the subsequent developments regarding Indonesia. Yet, the fact that such a conference of liberated Asian states could be held and a resolution, denouncing colonialism, passed unanimously, had the effect of serving notice on the Great Powers that Asians would control their own destinies and rise unitedly against any attempt to interfere with them.

The primary task of the leaders in power in the newly independent countries of South-East Asia was to ensure their own existence, which depended on their ability to pursue

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(86) Asian Relations, being Report of the Proceedings and Documentation of the First Asian Relations Conference (New Delhi, 1948) 80-1.

(87) For the text of the resolution passed by the Conference, see Keesing's Contemporary Archives 1948-50, 9792-3.

independent foreign policy and promote the socio-economic welfare of their peoples. These two demands upon their resourcefulness and imagination were not complementary; for, they could not even contemplate the achievement of the latter task without foreign assistance, which meant assistance either from the countries of the Western Bloc or from those of the Communist Bloc, or from both. In this respect, the countries of South-East Asia were not economically developed enough to form a mutual assistance group. (88) All of them faced similar problems of economic reconstruction and were alike underdeveloped. In January 1947, Aung San suggested that the emerging states of Asia should join together in an "Asian Commonwealth;" (89) in April of the same year, he suggested that a "South-East Asian Economic Union" consisting of Burma, Indonesia, Thailand, Malaya, and Indochina should be formed, as a first step towards the proposed Asian Commonwealth. (90) The assassination of Aung San in July of the same year nipped these plans in the bud. But it is not easy to see how these ideas could have developed to any appreciable extent under conditions prevailing in South-East Asia. All the countries of South-East Asia were suffering, in equal measure,

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(88) For a detailed discussion of this point, see Henderson, "Regionalism in Southeast Asia," Journal of International Affairs, 10 (Columbia, January 1956) 70; Fisher, n. 9, 14; Nathaniel Peffer, "Regional Security in Southeast Asia," International Organization, 8 (Boston, August 1954) 311-12.

(89) The Hindu, 6 January 1947.

(90) Strait Times (Singapore), 19 April 1947.

from economic backwardness and lacked the means to help each other; under such a circumstance, a scheme for regional economic co-operation would have been futile and, therefore, unacceptable proposition. In the absence of an economic base for regional co-operation, the proposition of political co-operation was not feasible. In March 1947, a South-East Asian League, sponsored primarily by the Communists, was founded in Thailand with the objective of promoting unity among the Asian peoples; it was envisaged that the proposed League would lead ultimately to the establishment of a Federation of South-East Asia. (91) But nothing was heard of it thereafter.

In the absence of conditions which could have encouraged the development of a system of regional co-operation, such countries of South-East Asia as followed independent policies were left to themselves. They sought foreign assistance to meet the problems they faced; but their dependence on foreign assistance made the genuineness of their professed foreign policies suspect in the eyes of other countries struggling for power. Consequently, the race to win their allegiance between the Communist Bloc and the Western Bloc continued unabated.

It was not, however, the struggle for dominance in South-East Asia between the rival world power blocs that shaped the main trends of South-East Asian history; its peoples were striving for a comfortable and independent existence and the

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(91) Richard Butwell, "Communism's Southeast Asia Alliance," Eastern World, 9 (January 1955) 13.

governments had shaped their policies to that end. The South-East Asia Treaty Organisation, whose course of birth is traced in the following chapters, was based on the belief that the Cold War between the Western and the Communist blocs was the only true force in international politics. It thus ignored the strivings of the peoples of South-East Asia, and produced an organization which the Asians could not but resent.

Chapter Two

BEGINNINGS OF THE MOVEMENT FOR A COLLECTIVE DEFENCE ALLIANCE FOR THE PACIFIC REGION

With the beginning of the Cold War between the United States and the Soviet Union, the primary objective of each became the containment of any further expansion of the dominance of the other on the one hand, and penetration into each other's sphere of influence on the other. The negotiations with the Brussels Treaty powers and Canada that the United States started in July 1948, for the establishment of the North Atlantic Treaty proclaimed to the world that the United States would actively promote such collective efforts, made by the countries of any given region as were designed to defend them from outside aggression.

This turn in the policy of the United States produced two contrary reactions in South East Asia. In the first place, Australia, which since the end of the war, had been urging upon her Allies, the need for establishing a regional defence organization for preserving South East Asia from forces hostile to them, renewed her efforts to that end. Also, the Government of the Philippines, which had been in trouble with Communists at home, was prompted to launch a movement for an anti-Communist regional defence organization, which would consist of the states of the Pacific region and such other states as could effectively contribute to its maintenance. In the second place, the newly

independent countries of South-East Asia became even more zealous to preserve themselves from the Cold War.

This chapter seeks to discuss the interplay of these trends and the reactions of the leaders of the emerging Western Bloc to it.

Australia's Plan for a Pacific Security Pact

Background of the Australian Plan

Before the Japanese invasion of South-East Asia in December 1941, Australia's role had been that of a British outpost in the Pacific. She had an important voice in the making of the Pacific policies of the British Empire, but the ultimate power of decision in all matters rested with London. After the end of the First World War, there developed significant differences between Britain and Australia regarding the approach to the problem of defence of the British interests in the Pacific region, with London always holding her own. The Anglo-Japanese Alliance of 1902, providing for mutual assistance in case of an armed attack on the territorial possessions of either party in the region of East Asia (1) was buried against Australia's wishes during the Washington

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(1) The Anglo-Japanese Alliance, concluded in 1902 and as revised in 1905, provided for joint conduct of war if the possessions of either were under attack. According to it, Japan was obliged to assist Britain in case of an attack on the Pacific Dominions too. The relevant portions of this pact are quoted in H. B. Morse and H. F. MacNair, Far Eastern International Relations (New York, 1931) 518-19.

conference of 1921-2. (2) On 24 July 1923, Stanley Bruce, Australia's Prime Minister, told the Australian House of Representatives that neither the existence of the League of Nations, nor the Washington conference had wholly solved the problem of Australia's defence, and that "it would be a good thing to have a League of Nations of the Pacific . . . to insure the peace of the Pacific." (3) After Japan repudiated her international undertakings, Australia became still more concerned with the problem of peace in the Pacific. The Italo-Abyssinian crisis of 1935 had already shaken her faith in the capacity of the British Royal Navy to perform its traditional role in the Pacific. (4) On 26 September 1936 R. G. Menzies, Attorney-General in J. A. Lyon's cabinet, told the Australian House of Representative that the Government would strive to promote "a regional understanding and pact of non-aggression for Pacific countries in the spirit of League undertakings;" (5)

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(2) Gwendolen Carter, The British Commonwealth and International Security: The Role of the Dominions 1921-1939 (Toronto, 1947) 43-4.

(3) Australia, Commonwealth Parliamentary Debates, 104 (House of Representatives) 24 July 1923, 1184. This statement by Bruce seems to disprove Tyler Dennet's assertion that the League system suited Australia and the idea of collective security inherent in it satisfied her. Tyler Dennet, "Australia's Defence Problem," Foreign Affairs, 18 (New York, October 1939) 116.

(4) Jack Shepherd, Australia's Interests and Policies in the Far East (New York, 1940) 73.

(5) Quoted from Commonwealth Parliamentary Debates (H. of R.) 29 September 1936, 623 in Werner Levi, Australia's Outlook on Asia (Sydney, 1958) 23.

but the Australian Government's efforts to this end bore no fruits. (6) Australia was however so alarmed by developments in the Pacific region that in April 1939 she decided, in order to insure her own security, to maintain her own diplomatic contacts with such powers as were prominent in the Pacific affairs. (7)

The Japanese invasion of South-East Asia in December 1941 accelerated the transformation of Australia's perspective on the security of the Pacific region. It became clear that Britain was incapable of defending the Pacific dominions. The primary reaction of the Australian government to the rapid southward surge of the Japanese invading troops, was that Britain had misled her by making false promises of assistance. (8) On 26 December 1941, John Curtin, Australia's Prime Minister, appealed for aid directly to the President of the United States, F. D. Roosevelt (9) which, he later wrote, was "free of any of the pangs of our traditional links with the United Kingdom." (10)

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(6) For the reactions of the countries approached by Australia, see Shepherd, n. 4, 78, 123.

(7) L. C. Kay, "Australia in the Commonwealth and World Affairs 1939-1944," International Affairs, 21 (London, October 1945) 62.

(8) Telegram from John Curtin to the British Prime Minister on 18 January 1942 in Winston Churchill, The Second World War, IV (London, Toronto, Melbourne, Sydney, Wellington, 1951) 12-13.

(9) Telegram from John Curtin to President Roosevelt on 26 December 1941, ibid., 5-6.

(10) Nicholas Mansergh, ed., Documents and Speeches on British Commonwealth Affairs 1931-1952, i (London, New York, Toronto, 1953) 550.

In thus turning from Britain to the United States, Australia was not simply converting herself from a British outpost to an American one; as a matter of fact, her main concern throughout the war in the Pacific had been to secure a place for herself in the inner bodies determining the Western strategy, equal to that of the United States. (11) In any case, she had given up the role of an outpost and was in search of such a position as would suit her changed role. To this end, she set herself as early as 11 December 1941, (12) which culminated in the establishment of the Pacific Council and the Pacific War Council with headquarters in London and Washington respectively. Australia was represented in both these bodies concerned with devising the allied strategy in the Pacific. (13)

A further change in perspective accompanied Australia's decision to change her role from that of an outpost to that of an independent nation. The Japanese invasion revealed to her the territorial relationship between herself and South East Asia; she suddenly became aware of the weakness of her own northern flanks. Australia's population is concentrated in the

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(11) Curtin claimed that regarding war in the Pacific "the United States and Australia must have the fullest say in the direction of Democracies' fighting plan." Ibid.

(12) H. V. Evatt's statement in the House of Representatives, Australia, Commonwealth Parliamentary Debates, 170 (25 February 1942) 51.

(13) For Australia's role in the formation of these bodies, and their respective compositions, see Mansergh, Survey of British Common Affairs: Problems of Wartime Co-operation and Post-War Change (London, New York, Toronto, 1958) 135-9.

belt of coastal territory from Brisbane to Perth. In other words, the weakest of the flanks of Australia fell nearest to the region from which danger to Australia's security could arise. On her own, she was not capable of providing for its defence; she required such friends as could effectively help her in maintaining her independence. On 16 December 1941, H. V. Evatt, Australia's Foreign Minister, declared that "recognition of the leadership of the United States in the Pacific was a principle on which Australian policy operates." (14) But unlike in the pre-war period, Australia insisted upon her right to be consulted by her allies and the leader. A number of regional bodies for co-operation and consultation among the allies were established during the war. They had proved very effective forums for the presentation of the views of their respective members. (15) The search for a permanent regional alliance for the territorial complex of which she was a part, thus became one of the operations of Australian foreign policy. In November 1943, Evatt stated that "there will have to be zones of security in areas like South-East Asia and the South and South-West Pacific." He visualized these zones to be guaranteed by co-operation among the

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(14) Australia, Commonwealth Parliamentary Debates, 169 (House of Representatives) 16 December 1941, 1085.

(15) H. V. Evatt, "Australia's Approach to Security in the Pacific," in K. M. Panikkar and others, Regionalism and Security (New Delhi, 1948) 18.

colonial powers in the Pacific and the United States. (16)

Australia set herself to the end thus contemplated, even while the war was going on. On 21 January 1944, Australia and New Zealand signed at Canberra an agreement for co-operation, whose scope ranged from security and defence to migration and development of dependencies. (17) The more important clauses of this treaty, however, related to security and defence. The two countries agreed to establish a regional zone of defence "based on Australia and New Zealand, stretching through the arc of islands North and North-East of Australia to Western Samoa and the Cook Islands." The Agreement also provided for an Australian-New Zealand Affairs' Secretariat in order "to ensure continuous collaboration" between the two countries. According to the terms of the Agreement, Australia was authorized to take steps for calling a conference of representatives of countries "with existing territorial interests" in the areas concerned. The countries mentioned in this connection were the United States, Britain, Portugal, the Netherlands, and France.

The countries mentioned in the Charter of the Canberra Pact, generally referred to as the ANZAC Pact, were, however, not similarly disposed as Australia towards her case for security zones. The United States was against any scheme "for alliances, for balance of power, or any other special

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(16) Evatt, Foreign Policy for Australia (Sydney, 1945) 132.

(17) For the text of the treaty, see Mansergh, n. 10, ii, 1157-63. See particularly articles 13, 34, and 38 to 42.

arrangements." (18) An approach by Australia to the Netherlands and Portugal met with no response; (19) nevertheless, Australia continued her efforts. In fact, Evatt regarded "the establishment of a Pacific security zone" as one of the postulates of peace and order in the Pacific region. (20) During the United Nations Conference on International Organization at San Francisco, the Australian delegation worked closely with Senator A. H. Vandenberg of the United States in drafting the section dealing with regional security arrangements. (21) On 26 March 1947, Evatt, in a major foreign policy speech in the House of Representatives, declared that "the development of a system of regional security in cooperation with the United States and other nations" remains one of the primary objectives of the Australian policy. (22)

The Beginning of Negotiations for the North Atlantic Treaty and Australia's Reaction

It is clear that Australia's intensive search for a regional defence organization for the territorial complex in

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(18) The statement of Cordell Hull, the U.S. Secretary of State, Department of State Bulletin, 10 (25 March 1944) 275.

(19) J. B. Chifley, Australia's Prime Minister after John Curtin, disclosed this in 1949. Australia, Commonwealth Parliamentary Debates, 202 (House of Representatives) 31 May 1949, 293.

(20) Evatt, Australia in World Affairs (Sydney, London, 1946) 115-16.

(21) Report by the Australian Delegation to the U.N. Conference on International Organization, Australian Parliamentary Papers, 1945, 3, 726-7.

(22) Australia, Commonwealth Parliamentary Debates, 191 (House of Representatives) 26 March 1947, 1170.

which she herself was situated was the search for a postulate of her own independence. She regarded her proposed project as a pre-condition for peace in the Pacific, which, in turn, was a pre-requisite for her own progress and independence. The beginning of the negotiations among her Western allies had two effects on her; it raised fears on the one hand, and hopes on the other. In the first place, it suggested that a comprehensive security arrangement as envisaged by the Charter of the United Nations was not likely to come into existence; consequently, Australia had to look to the United States and Britain for security. The beginning of the negotiations for the North Atlantic Treaty also aroused the fear in Australia that since Britain and the United States would become pre-occupied with the problems of the security of the North Atlantic region, they might tend to neglect the Pacific region. In the second place, it also raised her hopes that since the United States had adopted it as one of her policies to assist such regional efforts as are designed to preserve the given region from outside aggression, she might associate herself with the ANZAC Pact which was the oldest among the regional pacts. At the Commonwealth Prime Ministers' Conference in London in October 1948, Australia proposed that a Pacific Pact, similar to the proposed Atlantic Pact, should be formed. (23)

It is necessary at this point to summon evidence and classify them in order to observe the specific purposes of the

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(23) Survey of International Affairs 1949-1950 (London, 1953) 32.

Australian plan. It is obvious that as a Pacific Pact, the writ of the proposed pact was to run over the whole Pacific region. But none of the nations of the Pacific region excepting Australia herself and New Zealand, seem to have been proposed as its members. In November 1946, Evatt said that political and security organizations among the new states of South-East Asia should be reserved for "someday in future." (24) Moreover, Australia also did not believe that a forcible drive by Russia's army into South-East Asia was imminent. She was obviously concerned at the increasing influence of the Communists in the countries of South-East Asia, but did not consider that "armies and navies" could defeat Communism in South-East Asia. She believed that a concerted attempt by the Western Powers to improve the economic conditions of the peoples of South-East Asia would defeat Communism and "win their spirit." (25)

Australia's purpose, which she intended to achieve through the proposed Pacific Pact, seems to have been two-fold. In the first place, there was a feeling in Australia that the situation in South-East Asia was unstable and elements hostile to the Western Powers might take advantage of it. (26) Australia's case was that the Western Powers must seize the

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(24) Australia, Commonwealth Parliamentary Debates, 184 (House of Representatives) 8 November 1946, 167.

(25) Chifley's statement, The Hindu (Madras), 18 May 1949.

(26) Werner Levi, "Australia and the New Asia," Far Eastern Survey, 19 (New York, 19 April 1950) 73.

opportunity for leadership of the peoples of South-East Asia by championing their independence and promoting their welfare. One of the purposes of the proposed Pacific Pact seems to have been, therefore, to preserve South East Asia from elements hostile to the West by such means as were necessary to that end. Australia wanted India to be a member of the Pacific Pact because she was a vital link in the communications with, what Evatt called, "Australia's Near North." (27) India's membership of the Pacific Pact, designed to preserve South-East Asia, would have made it a sound strategic proposition. In the second place, Australia was immediately worried about the security of her sparsely populated northern regions from the overpopulated countries of eastern Asia, particularly Japan and Indonesia, who she felt, might look on them as an outlet for their increasing population. (28) As a matter of fact, it was Australia's policy to encourage immigration to her own lands, but her door was shut to migrants from the countries of the Pacific region. She encouraged "best migrants" which meant those coming from the white countries. (29) One of the functions of Australia's proposed Pacific Pact would have been to look after the security of her northern regions, which she felt were

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(27) Evatt, n. 15.

(28) Chifley's speech at the State Immigration Minister's Conference held in Canberra on 18 May 1949. The Hindu, 19 May 1949. He said, "No one expects Japan to sustain 85 million people in 1952, and there is the vastly expanded population of Indonesia. I mention this only to indicate that 1,200 million people are just to the north of Australia."

(29) Vide Chifley's statement, n. 25.

in danger from the over-populated countries of the Pacific region.

It is clear that Australia's plan on the one hand was designed to preserve Australia herself from the overpopulated countries of East and South East Asia, and on the other, South-East Asia from elements hostile to the West. Australia, obviously, did not consider these two functions contradictory. She seemed to feel that the proposed Pacific Pact, by standing for the cause of the peoples and governments of South-East Asia would win their sympathy. Thus, the proposed Pacific Pact was to defend South East Asia, though the South-East Asian peoples themselves would have had no voice in its working. In so far as this was to be its philosophy, Australia was obviously appealing to the sense of power of the Western Powers, particularly the United States to save South-East Asia from enemies of the West. The Pacific Pact was conceived with an eye to reinforcing western influence and prestige in the Pacific region but in so far as Australia conceived it as a measure of protection of her northern regions from the Asian masses, her appeal was directed to her western friends' love of their civilization of which Australia was a Pacific outpost. (30)

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(30) "Australia is concerned with self-preservation, which . . . still remains self-preservation as an European entity." David White, "The Pacific Alliance," The Hindu, 22 May 1949. Another writer considers "the unpopulated nature of Australia's north and north-west" as one of main factors operative in her foreign policy. Barcan Alan, "Australia Policy in South East Asia," Eastern World, 9 (London, April 1955) 21.

The Filipino Plan for a Pacific Union and the Reaction of the countries of South East Asia to it

The Filipino Reaction to the Proposed North Atlantic Treaty

The Filipino reaction to the beginning of the negotiations for the North Atlantic Treaty was apparently similar to that of Australia. Carlos P. Romulo, the Philippine delegate to the United Nations and one of the noted experts on foreign affairs in the Philippines, urged upon the United States "to supplement the Atlantic Pact and the Organization of American States (O.A.S.), with a Pacific Pact." (31) The Filipino case for a Pacific Pact, however, differed in one very important respect from the Australian case for a similar pact. While Australia was offering to align herself formally with the Western Bloc, the Philippines was seeking to align the Western Bloc with her own cause. The Government of the Philippines was in serious trouble with the Communist Hukbalahaps at home; the provinces of Pampanga, Nueva Ecija, Tarlac, and Bulacan, known together as Huklandia, were under the effective control of the Communists. (32) The beginning of the negotiations for the Atlantic Treaty offered the Government of the Philippines the unique opportunity for ranging the prospective anti-Communist bloc with themselves in the struggle against the Hukabalahaps.

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(31) The Hindu, 5 April 1949.

(32) Alvin H. Scaff, The Philippine Answer to Communism (California, 1955) 30-1.

The Filipino case for a Pacific Pact differed from the Australian in another respect too. With Australia, it was to be one of the means for preserving the Pacific region from such elements as were hostile to the West. With the Philippines, on the other hand, it was to be an Asian bloc with such support from the Western Bloc as was required to sustain it. The communist-engineered rebellions in 1948 in Burma, Indonesia, and India, and the actions taken by the existing ruling regimes in those countries for suppressing them had convinced the Government of the Philippines that they were anti-communist, like itself. In January 1949, Romulo represented his Government at the Delhi Conference on Indonesia, convened to protest against the Dutch attack on the Republic of Indonesia. He returned to his country with the conviction that a 'Third Force' of Asian countries had emerged from that Conference. (33) Since South and South-East Asian countries belonging to this Third Force were also being slandered by the Communists at home as well as abroad, the Government of the Philippines seemed to feel that an independent anti-Communist bloc of Asian countries could be formed and that, in turn, it would be sustained by assistance from the anti-Communist Western Bloc. In April 1949, Elpindo Quirino, the President of the Philippines, proposed that "an anti-communist but non-military combination of Asian countries

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(33) The Hindu, 27 February 1949.

predicted on the freedom of all the governments of the Pacific should be immediately formed." (34)

The appeal of the Philippines thus appears to have been directed to the United States as well as to the independent countries of the Pacific region. She wanted the Pacific countries to take initiative in this matter, and the United States to wish them good luck. The United States, however, was reluctant to commit positively on this issue for two reasons. In the first place, a Department of State spokesman disclosed on 3 May 1949, the U.S. belief that the spread of Communism in South East Asia would be "less likely" if the legitimate aspirations of the nationalists were realized. (35) This meant that the United States did not feel the need for an elaborate alliance for fighting Communism in the Pacific region. Secondly, the United States felt that the pre-requisites for an anti-Communist combination in the Pacific region did not yet exist. On 18 May 1949, Dean Acheson, the U.S. Secretary of State, made it clear that such "practical plans for effective collaboration for defence" as had preceded the making of the North Atlantic Treaty will have to precede the making of its Pacific equivalent. (36) Although he remained non-committal on this issue, yet a Department of State

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(34) Ibid., 3 April 1949.

(35) Ibid., 6 May 1949.

(36) Department of State Bulletin, 20 (29 May 1949) 696.

spokesman said that the United States would not obstruct any effort to that end. (37)

The Philippine case, thus, did not receive expected response from the United States. Philippine concern, hereafter, was to ensure support for her proposition from the countries of Pacific region. South Korea and China extended their support to it immediately. Syngman Rhee, South Korea's President, had already proposed, on 1 April 1949, that a Pacific Defence Conference should be held to consider the problems of the Pacific region and "every principle of the Atlantic Pact should be extended to the Pacific." (38) When after Acheson's speech of 18 May 1949, it became known that the United States was not enthusiastic about such a proposal, Rhee suggested that "the Asian nations should proceed with plans for a Pacific Pact even if the United States was not responsive." He warned them that they would be "knocked off one by one" if they did not immediately form "an anti-communist" bloc. (39) In addition to Rhee, Chiang Kai-shek, then head of the Kuomintang Party of China, supported the Philippine case. On 11 July 1949, Chiang visited Quirino for an exchange of views on all matters, "especially the question of the menace of International Communism in the Far East." (40) In a joint statement issued after the conclusion of

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(37) The Hindu, 17 May 1949.

(38) Statesman (New Delhi), 4 April 1949.

(39) The Hindu, 24 May 1949.

(40) The Republic of the Philippines, Official Gazette, 45 (Manila, July 1949) 2797.

their talks, Chiang and Quirino appealed to the countries of Asia and the Pacific to "at once organize themselves into a union for purposes of achieving solidarity and mutual assistance to counteract the common threat." (41) In a radio broadcast on 15 July 1949, Quirino said that the nations of the Pacific region, with "the fire of communism at their door," should immediately forge an anti-communist alliance and not be disheartened by "the most natural" coolness of Washington and London, who with the North Atlantic Treaty to protect them, "could afford to be cool." (42)

The Concept of the Pacific Union

Quirino, however, was keen to present his plan to the Governments of the Pacific region in such a form as could be acceptable to them. He could see that the Asian countries "count with no industrial base of sufficient strength or magnitude to support a majority military undertaking;" (43) consequently, he decided that the proposed Union should strive to secure "the necessary moral rearmament of the threatened countries of the Far East" and undertake to promote economic, political and cultural collaboration among them, to that end. (44) In his talks with Chiang, Quirino discovered that

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(41) Ibid.

(42) Ibid., 2801.

(43) Quirino's Address to the U.S. Senate on 9 August 1949, ibid., (August 1949) 3261.

(44) Vide n. 42, 2800.

his guest did not appreciate his approach. (45) Consequently, he gave up China's support as well as that of South Korea which also held to the same line. (46) In August 1949, Quirino went to the United States on a state visit. In his address to the Senate of ~~the~~ U.S. Congress, he said that the proposed Union would be a non-military organization, because he believed that there was still time for the free countries of Asia "to check the advance of communism by non-military means." (47) As a matter of fact, he always used the term 'Pacific Union,' instead of Pacific Pact, because he believed that the term 'Union' more clearly conveyed his idea. (48) To Romulo, to whom he assigned ~~with~~ the task of selling the Pacific Union to Asian Governments concerned, he wrote that the formation of the Pacific Union "would be an act of faith on the economic, political, and

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(45) Quirino disclosed that China was not inclined to accept obligations of a cooperative system as envisaged by himself. He admitted that her approach is "peculiarly her own - which, just now, is military." Ibid.

(46) On 12 August 1949, Syngman Rhee, President of South Korea, said at Seoul that he could not see the value of an anti-communist pact for the Pacific region" without military preparations or military understanding." The Hindu, 14 August 1949. This meant that Rhee's approach to the problem was the same as Chiang.

(47) Vide n. 43.

(48) The Hindu, 13 August 1949. Quirino explained the significance of the use of the term 'Union' in preference to 'Pact' as follows: "The purpose of the Union is specifically to promote the political, economic, and cultural relations between the peoples of the Pacific region and raise their standard of life. There should be no apprehension in any quarter at such a union."

cultural level, in tune with the work of the ECAFE and the programme of the UNESCO, and that it would involve no military commitments." (49) Romulo gave the idea a further twist. He said that the proposed Union would be a step further "in the union of the peoples launched by the Delhi Asian Relations Conference," and the leadership of it would be given to India, "the strongest and the most enlightened nation in Asia today."(50) As regards its functions, Romulo said that "it would be a permanent organ for consultation on the problems of common interest" and would cultivate, among the peoples of Asia, the sense of a "common destiny." (51)

The Reactions of the Governments of the Pacific Region to the Plan for A Pacific Union

The basic assumption behind the Filipino plan for the Pacific Union was that there was in existence, an international communist conspiracy to topple the nationalist governments in the countries of the Pacific region. Quirino made his own belief clear that "the fire of communism was at the door" of the countries of Asia and the Pacific, and the purpose of the proposed union would be to prevent it from spreading inside the house. While on his state visit to the United States,

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(49) Quirino's letter to Romulo, Philippine Official Gazette, 25 (August 1949) 3251.

(50) Romulo's statement to the press on 2 September 1949, partly reported in The Hindu, 4 September 1949.

(51) Ibid., 5 September 1949. The remaining part of the same statement was reported.

Quirino told the Senate that the Pacific Union would, in its own way, do the same work that the North Atlantic Treaty was expected to do in the region under its jurisdiction. (52) The proposed Pacific Union was, thus, to be a part of an international anti-communist system.

In the context of Asian history, the assumption of the plan for a Pacific Union was not valid. The communist movements in the countries of South East Asia lived upon their socio-economic backwardness and the anti-colonialist momentum of their history. Anti-colonialism in the newly independent countries was the most dynamic force. So long as the Communists could share the hold over them, they could not be dealt with as conspirators. The communists and the non-communists were engaged in a struggle to loosen the hold of each other over anti-colonialism; the Pacific Union, as proposed, could not have helped its member governments in further fastening their hold over it. Instead, by victimizing the communists of its member countries, it would have indirectly helped the communists to present themselves to the people as a victim of an international 'imperialist' conspiracy. The proposed Pacific Union thus would have helped those whom it was meant to fight. It was certain that once the hold of the non-Communist leadership over anti-colonialism loosened, they would continue to lose ground to the communists.

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(52) Vide n. 43, 3260.

Under such circumstances, it could only be wishful thinking to expect the governments of South-East Asia to accept the plan for the Pacific Union. Sukarno said, on 8 July 1949 at Jogjakarta, that the problem of Communism in Indonesia was different from that in Europe or North America and therefore could not be dealt with in a similar fashion. He said that it was "a form of extreme nationalism," and therefore, could be denied opportunities for strengthening itself only if nationalism could be prevented from going to extremes. (53) Burma was one country in South East Asia where communists were on the ascendant, when Quirino was hotly pursuing his case for a Pacific Union. Yet, Burma's Foreign Minister, U. E. Maung felt that each country of South-East Asia could stand on its own in dealing with the communist problem. He said that an anti-communist alliance among the democracies of Asia was not required to meet this problem. (54)

Thus, it became clear that the ruling leadership in Indonesia and Burma either did not regard the communist problem in their respective countries as parts of an international conspiracy, or even if they did, they were confident of defeating the communists in the struggle for leadership on their own. Even after the accession of the communists to power in China, no change took place in their attitude either towards the

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(53) The Hindu, 10 July 1949.

(54) Ibid., 12 August 1949.

communist problem or the Communist Bloc, though Mao Tse-tung, the Chinese communist leader, was on record as being contemptuous of the philosophy of non-alignment. (55) Burma, with communists in arms and sharing long frontiers with China, was convinced that the new Chinese Government would "put their own house in order without giving trouble to anyone else." (56) She was, however, apprehensive about infiltration from China, in order to deal with such a possibility, Burma decided to recognize the new regime and establish diplomatic relations with it, so that all her problems with China could be effectively dealt with on a government-to-government level. (57) At the same time, she was also keen to demonstrate to the communist government of China, that she bore no ill-will against it. She became the first non-Communist country to recognize the new regime and was keen to do so. (58) By taking this step, the Burmese government was hoping that the new regime in China would refrain

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(55) In a speech at Peking, on 2 July 1949, Mao Tse-tung said, ". . . we are opposed to the dream of a third road. . . . There is no third road. Neutrality is only camouflage." The Hindu, 3 July 1949.

(56) The Hindu, 18 December 1949.

(57) On 2 December 1949, Maung said in London, "we have, of course, reason to be nervous of the spread of communism in China across our borders. At the best of times, there have always been border raids on both sides between Burma and China; there have been regular for many years. But with the communists gaining ground in China, these raids are likely to change in meaning and become tainted with political ideology." The Hindu, 4 December 1949. Later, on 18 December 1949, Maung expressed concern with the problem of raids over the Sino-Burmese borders and said "unless we have some relations with the government of the country, we will not be able to stop them. That is the reason for the recognition of the new government." Ibid., 18 December 1949.

(58) K. M. Panikkar, In Two Chinas (London, 1956) 106.

from actively helping the Communist insurgents of Burma. The Government of Thailand, too, did not appear to be unduly concerned with the rise of the communists in China. Pibul Songram, the Thai Premier, told the Philippine Minister to Thailand, that his government would not be interested in the proposed Pacific Union except "for prestige reasons." (59) Mohammad Hatta, Vice-President and Prime Minister of Indonesia, also made it clear that his government had no intention "to create any bloc or join any bloc." (60)

It can be seen that the coolness of the South-East Asian governments towards the proposed Pacific Union was not born of any indifference on their part to the menace of communism in South-East Asia. In fact, ironical though it may sound, their rejection of the plan for an anti-Communist Pacific Union was an aspect of their own over-all anti-communist strategy. It is interesting to note that while they declined to form or join an anti-communist Pacific Union, they expressed their readiness to participate in the making and working of a similar organization, provided such an organization refrained from assisting either of the two world power blocs. In September 1949, Pibul Songram issued invitations to the Governments of India, Burma and the Philippines to send representatives to Bangkok in November 1949, to consider the "political, cultural, and

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(59) The Hindu, 12 August 1949.

(60) Ibid., 5 August 1949.

economic problems affecting South-East Asia." He did not invite Indonesia because of "confusions" prevailing there. (61) No such conference, however, ever took place; the absence of Indonesia from the list of invitees seems to have influenced the decision of the Governments invited. Yet, the interest of the invited Governments in an all-Asian regional organization for co-operation was never in question. In August 1949, Maung said that Burma would join a South-East Asian regional organization if it could be sponsored by "the right people" by which he meant "those who have no axe to grind." (62) In November of the same year, he declared that Burma was "interested" in convening a conference of the South-East Asian countries for considering common problems. (63) Like Burma, Indonesia also expressed her willingness to join any such regional organization as was based on "peace, equality and mutual co-operation." (64) In fact, Hatta declared at Karachi on 10 November 1949, that co-operation with the Asian countries "would be an integral part of Indonesia's foreign policy." (65)

From all these statements, it is clear that the non-aligned countries of South-East Asia were keen to form a regional

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(61) Ibid., 7 September 1949.

(62) Ibid., 17 August 1949.

(63) Ibid., 4 December 1949.

(64) Hatta's statement at Karachi, ibid., 12 November 1949.

(65) Ibid., 13 November 1949.

organization for mutual co-operation, but were opposed to forming or joining any such organization as would be antithetical to their policy of non-alignment. Their indifference towards the proposed Pacific Union should not be construed as an indifference to a proposition for regional co-operation but to that of joining or forming a system of opposition to the Communist Bloc.

The Attitude of the Leaders of the Western Bloc to the Movement for a Pacific Regional Organization

The appeal of the Australian plan exclusively and that of the Filipino plan partly, was directed to members of the Western Bloc, particularly its leaders, Britain and the United States. That the Western Bloc had vital interests in the preservation of South-East Asia from communism was self-evident. From among the British territories in South East Asia, only Burma had become independent. Indo-China was still a French colony and the Dutch and Portuguese held Western New Guinea and Timor respectively. Even more important than these territorial possessions, was the need to preserve South-East Asia as a supplier of raw materials and markets for the finished products of Western Bloc countries. The emergence of the independent states in South and South-East Asia and the strong urge for rapid economic development in these countries held the promise of a widened scope for the movement

of capital between that region and foreign countries. (66) It was in the interest of the Western Bloc to see to it that capital movement between South-East Asia and its own members was not hampered. The way in which the Governments of India, Burma and Indonesia had been dealing with the communists in their respective countries revealed to the Western Powers that the nationalist leaders in power in these countries were all anti-Communist. As a result, they became convinced that the process of movement of capital between the Western Bloc countries and South and South-East Asia, would be fairly smooth, as long as the existing regimes remained. Their primary concern, therefore, was to see that these regimes were not toppled over by communist movements inside these countries. (67) The Australian as well as the Filipino plans offered blueprints of strategies for attaining these objectives. The Australian strategy was that through the formation of a Pacific Pact, the Western Powers should patronize the Pacific region. As against it, the Philippine case was that the Western Powers should

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(66) For a discussion of Europe's economic and commercial interests in South East Asia, see Kenneth K. Kurihara, "Europe in the Far East," Current History, 26 (Philadelphia, January 1954) 31-6.

(67) The Attlee Government in power in Britain justified the British aid to Burma, in spite of Burma's decision to leave the Commonwealth, as investment in her future stability and the promotion of free and democratic government. See U.K., Parliamentary Debates, House of Commons, 472 (23 November 1950) cols. 1953-4, 2292-4; 473 (3 April 1950) col. 96; 475 (8 May 1950) cols. 233-43. For the U.S. attitude towards the non-aligned governments in South and South East Asia see Department of State Bulletin, 22 (23 January 1950) 111-9.

persuade the countries of the Pacific region into a partnership against International Communism.

The Western Attitude Towards the Australian Plan

As regards the Australian plan for a Pacific Pact, the attitude of both the United States and Britain seems to have been completely negative. On 1 April 1949, Ernest Bevin, Britain's Foreign Secretary, said at Washington, that Britain's association with the North Atlantic Treaty did not leave unprotected, either the Pacific dominions or her possessions in the Pacific region. On being asked whether the Australian proposal was feasible, Bevin replied that he wanted "to proceed one step at a time." (68) While thus sidetracking the main question, Bevin at least made it clear that he was not enthusiastic about the plan. Later, Chifley, Australia's Prime Minister himself told the Australian House of Representatives that the United States as well as the Netherlands and Portugal had rejected his plan for a Pacific Pact. (69) Chifley did not disclose the reasons which the United States must have given while rejecting the plan. But Dean Acheson, in a speech at National Press Club in Washington on 12 January 1950, hinted at what his reasons might have been. Explaining, what he called "developing Asian consciousness," he said,

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(68) The Hindu, 3 April 1949.

(69) Australia, Commonwealth Parliamentary Debates, 202 (House of Representatives) 31 May 1949, 293.

> They say and they believe that from now on they are on their own. They will make their own decisions. They will attempt to better their own lot and on occasion they will make their own mistakes. But it will be their mistakes and they are not going to have their mistakes dictated to them by anybody else. . . . Resignation is no longer the typical emotion of Asia. (70)

Further, on 22 February 1950 Acheson said at a Press conference, that if the Western Powers were to take the initiative in forming a Pacific Pact of any variety, "it would have exactly the opposite effect to the one we wish to achieve." (71) On the basis of these evidence, it can be said that the Government of the United States was fully aware of the new mood of Asia. It was therefore natural that she should disapprove of the Australian blueprint for a Pacific Pact in which an active role for the new states of Asia had not been proposed.

The Western Attitude Towards Filipino Plan

The Western Powers, however, did not assail the philosophy of the Filipino plan for a Pacific Union, but their response to it was qualified by certain views of their own. In the first place, they felt that necessary conditions for the working of the proposed Pacific Union did not yet exist. They wanted a practical plan for collaboration among the Asian countries to precede their participation in such a

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(70) Department of State Bulletin, 22 (23 January 1950) 112.

(71) The Hindu, 23 February 1950.

plan. (72) This was the initial reaction to the appeal from South Korea and the Philippines to the United States for initiating a Pacific equivalent of the Atlantic Treaty. In the second place, they believed that the problem of preserving South-East Asia from communism, though real, was primarily a socio-economic problem, and had to be dealt with as such. A statement issued after a conference of Foreign Ministers of the United States, Britain, and France said that the "Asian countries need economic help much more than military guarantees." (73) Even after the accession to power of the communists in China, their belief remained the same. Bevin said on 9 June 1949 that "the first line of defence against communism is not military armament but socialist policy." (74) Acheson observed on 12 January 1950, that the countries of South-East Asia were "susceptible to penetration and subversion." He attributed this susceptibility to "the serious economic problems" and "the great social upheavals" in these countries. With the collapse of the Kuomintang government in mind, Acheson declared that this susceptibility was not likely to be diminished

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(72) For the U.S. view, vide n. 37. An official spokesman for the Foreign Office in London said that "there was no solid basis for a Pacific alliance." The Hindu, 6 August 1949.

(73) The Hindu, 23 June 1949.

(74) Ibid., 11 June 1949.

by military means. (75)

Underlying these views, there was a feeling that there was no chance of aggression by the Communist Bloc on South East Asia. On 26 September 1949, Bevin said in the General Assembly of the United Nations that "Chinese communists were so far peace-loving." (76) This was the major assumption of western policy in South-East Asia. All of them were worried about the threat of communism to South East Asia, but at the same time, they believed that the threat was essentially internal. Therefore, in their opinion, the solution of the problem lay in ameliorating domestic conditions. Acheson went so far as to say that the security of the areas beyond, what he called, the defence perimeter — that is, the areas running along the Aleutians through Japan and Ryukus to the Philippines — could not be guaranteed by the United States. He said that such a guarantee was neither sensible nor necessary, but he made a promise that his Government would supply the "missing component

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(75) Vide n. 70, 166. Explaining the collapse of the Kuomintang government in China, Acheson said, "To attribute this to the inadequacy of American aid is only to point out the depth and power of the forces which were miscalculated or ignored. What has happened in my judgment is that the almost inexhaustible patience of the Chinese people in their misery ended. They did not bother to overthrow this government. There were really nothing to overthrow. They simply ignored it throughout the country. They took the solution of their immediate village problems into their own hands. . . . The communists did not create this. . . . They were shrewd and cunning to mount it, to ride this thing into victory and into power."

(76) U.N. General Assembly, Official Records, Fourth Session, 229th Plenary Meeting (26 September 1949) 79.

in a situation which might otherwise be solved." (77)

It is thus clear that the United States, while reluctant to ~~take the lead in the movement for a~~ comment on the issue of Pacific Pact, was nevertheless willing to assist the Asian governments in their efforts to deal with the communists. Quirino's plan for a Pacific Union, designed, as it was, to promote co-operation among the non-communist governments of the Pacific region, deserved the sympathy of the U.S. Government. On 15 February 1950, Acheson disclosed that, whenever he had been approached with the proposal for a Pacific regional organization, he had taken the position that the United States would look at it with sympathy, if it represented "the genuine efforts of the Governments of Asia to get together." (78) On 22 February, he further disclosed that Quirino had been informed of U.S. sympathy for his proposed project. (79) On 15 March 1950, he went to the extent of applying the Truman Doctrine to Asia and the Pacific, by declaring that the United States would support "free peoples who are resisting attempted subjugation by armed minorities or outside pressure." (80) Acheson thus made it clear that the United States, though refraining from promoting it herself, would welcome the formation of a Pacific Union as proposed by Quirino.

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(77) Vide n. 70, 116.

(78) The Hindu, 17 February 1950.

(79) Ibid., 23 February 1950.

(80) Department of State Bulletin, 22 (27 March 1950) 202.

The Premise of the U.S. Attitude Towards the Movement for a Pacific Pact

It should not be inferred from the above that U.S. diplomacy, as it had been working in the Pacific region, was not related to the power struggle between the United States and the Soviet Union. As a matter of fact, the policy of the United States regarding the Pacific was part of her general foreign policy of which her enmity with Russia was the hub. On 16 February 1950, Acheson stated that the fundamental policy of the United States was "to create situations of strength" everywhere and meet "whenever possible, all thrusts of the Soviet Union." In the case of Asia and the Pacific, the United States believed that the communist bloc, instead of resorting to armed aggression for attaining its goal, would assist indigenous communist parties to seize leadership of the nationalist movements. Since the ruling nationalist regimes in the newly independent countries were demonstrably anti-communist, the United States followed a policy of assisting them in creating "those economic, political, social and psychological conditions that strengthen and create confidence in the democratic way of life." (81) But at the same time, the United States was also assisting France which was engaged in destroying the Democratic Republic of Vietnam headed by Ho Chi Minh. On 7 February 1950, the United States recognized Laos, Cambodia, and Vietnam, who

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(81) Ibid., (20 March 1950) 427-8.

had been given the status of "Associate States" (82) by the French, as "independent states within the French Union." (83) While the United States did not consider her own recognition of the Associate States, which were far from being independent, as extraordinary, she considered Ho Chi Minh as the "mortal enemy" of the people of Vietnam, because he was a communist and the Democratic Republic of Vietnam had been recognized by Communist China and the Soviet Union. (84) In March 1950, Truman announced that military aid to the tune of 15 million dollars would be given to France for carrying on operations against the Communists in Indo-China. (85) Acheson justified the assistance being rendered by the United States to France, as being in the interest of "the restoration of security . . . (and) development of genuine nationalism" in Indo-China. (86)

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(82) Under the constitution of the French Union, the administration of foreign affairs, national defence, and currency were to remain under the jurisdiction of the Union. Consequently, the states under it looked more like autonomous units of a centrifugal federal state than independent political units.

(83) Department of State Bulletin, 22 (20 February 195) 291.

(84) Acheson's Remarks on the Soviet recognition of Ho Chi Minh's Government, ibid., (13 February 1950) 244. Before the United States had recognized the Associate States, Philip C. Jessup, Truman's roving ambassador, said that any move that the United States would make regarding Indo-China "will be inspired by our desire to support and assist the national independence of Vietnam and other states." New York Times, 4 February 1950.

(85) New York Times, 1 April 1950.

(86) Department of State Bulletin, 22 (22 May 1950) 821.

It would thus appear that U.S. policy in South-East Asia was not an aberration from her general foreign policy but was a part of the same system. Its basic objective, as elsewhere, was to contain any further expansion of the sphere of Soviet influence. The policy of destroying the Democratic Republic of Vietnam by assisting France to that end on the one hand and that of being cautious in taking steps, such as the formation of an anti-communist organization, on the other, were the manifestations of the same policy; in both cases, the end contemplated was the same. While she found it necessary to destroy the Democratic Republic of Vietnam in order to keep the Communist sphere of influence limited to the borders of China, she also found it necessary, for the same reason, not to annoy the Asian countries, who, if not in her own sphere of influence, were not under the influence of the Communist Bloc either, and were not likely to fall under its influence, if given freedom of choice.

Impact of the Western Attitude on the Movement for a Pacific Pact

Impact on the Australian Plan

It should be remembered that Australia had been looking forward to achieving two purposes through the Pacific Pact. In the first place, its primary purpose would have been to safeguard Australian territories and the neighbouring areas from outside aggression. Since Australia was territorially related to South-East Asia, the proposed Pacific Pact would have protected South-East Asia for the purpose of protecting Australia.

In the second place, its purpose would have been to win 'the spirit' of the peoples of South-East Asia for the Western Bloc, by implementing such plans for ameliorating the conditions of their life as were urgently required. The effect of this would have been to stabilize the situation in South-East Asia. The rejection of her plan by her Western friends did not diminish Australia's concern either for her own security or for the situation in South-East Asia. During the months following the rejection of her plan, Australia set herself to the task of developing such plans for her own territorial security and economic development of South-East Asia as were possible under the circumstances.

The ANZAM. In the face of opposition of the United States and Britain, Australia decided to secure such conditions as could be obtained to ensure her own security. On 15 May 1949, Chifley declared that his government was engaged in developing "a common scheme of defence between Britain, Australia, and New Zealand," which, he believed, may later emerge as the nucleus for the contemplated Pacific pact. (87) John Dedman, Australia's Defence Minister, told the Australian House of Representatives on 18 May 1949 that "proposals to this end are under consideration and plans on that basis are being developed." (88) The outcome

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(87) "Defence and Regional Security," A Broadcast by Prime Minister Rt. Hon. J. B. Chifley on 15 May 1949. Current Notes on International Affairs, 20 (Department of External Affairs, Government of Australia, May 1949) 645.

(88) Australia, Commonwealth Parliamentary Debates, 202 (House of Representatives) 18 May 1949, 9.

was an organization called ANZAM. It was a body of staff officers from Great Britain, Australia, and New Zealand. The area covered by this organization included Australia, New Zealand and the British territories in Malaya and Borneo, together with adjacent sea areas. Its scope was limited to the defence of sea and air communications in the region; co-ordination was to be conducted at the service level. Although membership of ANZAM did not involve firm commitments, (89) such commitments were hardly required for its members. Its purpose seems to have been to effect continuous co-ordination among the defence units of its three members in the areas under their control. As such, ANZAM ensured, even though temporarily, Australia's northern territories against threats from the north.

The Colombo Plan. The failure of her case for a Pacific Pact aggravated Australia's concern about prevailing conditions in South-East Asia. In her view, it was necessary to deny the Communists the use of transition in South-East Asia to their own advantage. (90) Australia decided to initiate a Commonwealth venture for undertaking the task of helping the countries of South and South East Asia in overcoming their economic problems. In November 1949, the Commonwealth Prime Ministers' Conference held in London decided to convene at Colombo a conference of

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(89) Royal Institute of International Affairs, Collective Security in South East Asia (London, 1958) 20.

(90) Spender's speech in the Australian House of Representatives, Commonwealth Parliamentary Debates, 206 (9 March 1950) 625-9.

foreign ministers of the members of the Commonwealth. The proposed conference was held in January 1950 at Colombo. The conference reached the conclusion that peace and progress in South-East Asia depended "mainly on the improvement of economic conditions." (91) P. C. Spender, Australia's Foreign Minister, laid before the conference a plan establishing priorities for the economic needs of South and South-East Asian countries. The conference also established a Consultative Committee, consisting of the representatives of the Commonwealth governments, to expedite the formulation and implementation of the plan. (92) Later the Consultative Committee recommended that pound sterling credits must be made available to the countries of South and South East Asia for the purposes of economic development. In the order of priorities of their economic needs, it placed food and consumption goods first, technical advice and assistance second, and capital equipment third. (93)

Spender, however, made it clear that the Commonwealth, on its own, would never be able to underwrite the cost of the plan if it was to become a reality. He said that it could succeed "only with U.S. assistance." (94) Acheson, however, assured

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(91) For the text of final communique issued by the conference, see Current Notes, 21 (January 1950) 45-9.

(92) Conference Communique, ibid.

(93) United Kingdom, The Colombo Plan for Co-operative Economic Development in South and South-East Asia, Report by the Commonwealth Consultative Committee, Command Paper 8080 (London, September 1950) 4-5, 46.

(94) The Hindu, 20 January 1950. Also see Spender's speech, n. 90, 629.

Bevin, whom he met in London on 18 May 1950, that the United States would "attempt to coordinate its efforts in that area with the efforts of the Commonwealth, in order that our actions will be mutually supporting." (95) Thus encouraged, the Committee went ahead with its task. At its London session in September-October 1950, a six year "Colombo Plan for Co-operative Economic Development in South and South-East Asia" was agreed upon, and it was decided to launch its programme from July 1951. The Committee also decided to invite all the Governments of South and South-East Asia to become its members. (96)

The launching of the Colombo Plan was a great success for Australian diplomacy as well as for that of the Western Bloc. This is not to say that with its launching, the task had either been achieved or was sure to be achieved. Economic welfare, by itself, is not an insurance against political instability; it has also to be accompanied by such social policies as would put an end to social injustices. (97) It was for the Asian Governments to see that the benefits of economic development were shared equitably by all sections of the society. Australia and the

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(95) Department of State Bulletin, 22 (12 June 1950) 934.

(96) See the text of the statement by the Consultative Committee issued on 5 October 1950. Current Notes, 21 (October 1950) 730-1.

(97) For a discussion on the subject of the relationship between economic welfare and political stability, see George F. Kennan, "Foreign Aid Programme and National Interests of the United States," Proceedings of the Academy of Political Science, 23 (New York, 1950) 452; E. E. Ward, "The Colombo Plan," The Australian Outlook, 5 (Melbourne, December 1951) 202.

Western Powers had at least made a major effort towards supplying the "missing components" to the Asian governments in their fight against communism. They had the satisfaction of taking a step, in co-operation with the Asian Governments, against communism "that rides easily on the tide of economic poverty and instability." (98)

Impact on the Filipino Plan: The Baguio Conference

While the Western Powers had rejected the Australian case for a Pacific Pact, the United States from among them had expressed its sympathy for the Filipino plan for a Pacific Union. She made it clear that she would have no objection to the establishment of a Pacific Union consisting of the nations of Asia, and would even look upon it with sympathetic interest. This worked as a green signal for Quirino who had been specifically informed by Acheson about ~~the~~ U.S. attitude. He had, however, also learnt from the reactions of the Asian Governments, that an anti-Communist Pacific Union would not be acceptable to them. But he was keen "to take advantage of the atmosphere" created by ~~the~~ U.S. response to his plan. On 23 February 1950, he declared that invitations were being issued for the organizational meeting of the Union of Far Eastern Democracies, and added that the proposed Union would be "a non-communist organization of these democracies." (99)

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(98) J. C. Kundra, Indian Foreign Policy: A Study in India's Relations with the Western Bloc 1947-1954 (Djakarta, Bombay, 1955) 215.

(99) The Hindu, 23 February 1950.

In the meantime, Australia, which seems to have been informed by her Western friends that a Pacific Pact must include as many countries from the Pacific region as possible and that the initiative for it, too, must come from them, had come to feel that she must put herself behind the Filipino case. There was at least a chance, in case the Filipino plan materialized, for securing the U.S. commitment for the defence of the Pacific Union areas. (100) In March 1950, Spender visited Quirino and seems to have promised Australia's support to his plan.

The proposed organizational meeting of the Union of Far Eastern Democracies was held at Baguio on 26 May 1950. Representatives to it were sent by the Governments of India, Pakistan, Ceylon, Thailand, Indonesia and Australia. The Philippine statesman, Carlos P. Romulo, who also led his country's delegation, presided over the meeting, and Quirino inaugurated it. In his inaugural address, Quirino said that the "initial task" of the meeting should be one of "mutual discovery of getting our bearings individually and in relation to others." He emphasized the need for creating a "Bigger Unit" of the Pacific countries, because "hitherto we have been drawn into conflicts not of our own choice." (101) Both he and

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(100) Spender's speech in the Australian House of Representatives, Commonwealth Parliamentary Debates, 28 (8 June 1950) 4006.

(101) Philippine Official Gazette, 46 (May 1950) 2020, 2021.

Romulo in his presidential address, emphasized the need for establishing a machinery for regional collaboration. (102)

The delegates at the meeting ventilated the ideas of their respective governments. The Australian, Philippine, and Thai delegates wanted to discuss the question of military co-operation among the Governments represented at the conference but the Indian, Pakistani, and Ceylonese delegates refused to do so. India kept economic questions first in the order of priorities for discussion. Indonesia asked for a plan to uproot "all remaining traces of old diehard colonialism" in the Pacific. (103) Under the circumstances, it could not be decided as to what was the most important problem affecting all of them. The resolution passed by the meeting did not say whether any regional machinery for co-operation had been established or not; (104) but Romulo said that an agreement between the delegates had been reached regarding the machinery for continuous consultation among them. (105)

Although the Baguio Conference did not have to its credit any notable achievement, yet it would be wrong to say that it was a futile exercise in the task of achieving unity in the Pacific. In fact, no spectacular decisions were expected from this conference, and it was conceived only as a preliminary

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(102) Ibid., 2022.

(103) The Hindu, 27 May 1950.

(104) For the resolution passed by the Baguio Conference, see The Hindu, 30 May 1950.

(105) The Hindu, 30 May 1950.

step to the contemplated end. Romulo had said, before the opening of the conference, that the very fact that "the Asian nations come here to what is really the first Asian conference on a government to government basis" to discuss common problems was "a good measure of success." (106) Seen as such, it made a right beginning on the road to the contemplated goal. It was obvious that the Governments represented at the conference did not see eye to eye on many of the problems, but the resolution passed by the conference rightly by-passed those differences and emphasized the existence of a common outlook. The resolution warned the foreign powers against ignoring South East Asian countries when taking any step on matters dealing with this part of the world. (107) The result of the conference might not be regarded as spectacular, but it transpired from the proceedings of the conference that on certain questions, they could agree to establish a joint front. Moreover, the fact that the conference was held and problems were discussed in an atmosphere free of hostility, suggested that the proposition of Asian unity was a possibility, even though a distant one. If it was a task worth achieving the Baguio conference was "a sound move," (108) being a preliminary step to what was a distant goal.

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(106) Ibid., 24 May 1950.

(107) Vide n. 104.

(108) New York Times, 18 May 1950.

But the very fact that all the initial hue and cry about an anti-communist Pacific Pact could only lead to the convening of a conference like that held at Baguio had certain lessons to convey to its proponents. It has been seen that the Baguio conference could be convened only when Quirino made it known that, if convened, it would have no anti-communist professions. Yet, the fact was that all the governments sending representatives to this conference were practically anti-Communist, if not professedly so. The moral of the Baguio conference, therefore, was that a professedly anti-communist alliance could not develop under conditions prevailing in Asia, although practical steps to that end could be taken. The Colombo conference of Commonwealth Foreign Ministers emphasized that point; the Baguio conference laid further emphasis on it.

Chapter Three

THE KOREAN WAR AND THE MOVEMENT FOR A PACIFIC PACT

In the preceding chapter, it was seen that the attitude of the United States on the one hand, and that of the non-aligned countries on the other, to the case for a Pacific Pact, though similar, was not predicated on similar consideration. While the United States wanted to keep the Pacific region safe from the Communist Bloc, the non-aligned countries of this region wanted to keep it safe from the Cold War altogether. Their respective reactions to the beginning of the Korean War, therefore, inevitably varied. To the United States, it revealed that "Communism has passed beyond the use of subversion to conquer independent nations and will now use armed invasion and war." (1) Consequently, her Pacific policy, which had so far been ~~designed~~ meant to deal with subversion, was further modified with an eye to conforming with the new requirements of power politics. To the non-aligned countries, however, it revealed that the struggle for power between the two world power blocs had begun in the Pacific region. Consequently, their primary objective was to break up the vicious circle of power politics in their region. The emerging policies of the United States on the one hand and those of the non-aligned countries on the other,

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(1) Truman's Statement, Department of State Bulletin, 23 (3 July 1950) 5.

therefore, tended to cut across each other; this chapter seeks to discuss its impact on the movement for a Pacific Pact.

The Impact of the Korean War on U.S. Pacific Policy

The New Aid Policy

Before the outbreak of war in Korea, the United States had been inclined to feel that the military weakness of the newly independent countries of South and South-East Asia had nothing to do with the Communist menace in these countries, and that their weakness was due to the socio-economic problem that they faced and could be dealt with as such. After the outbreak of the Korean War, she came to feel that the Communist Bloc would either be tempted to resort to aggression to bring the militarily weak countries of South-East Asia into its own power orbit, or incite the Communist groups in these countries to intensify their violent activities. The policy of the United States was, therefore, so modified as to help these countries in facing the new challenge from the Communist Bloc. The very first statement of President Truman, authorizing the U.S. Army in the Pacific to give cover to the South Korean troops, contained an order for the "acceleration of military aid to the Philippines and to France and the Associate States of Indo-China." (2) On 5 July, 1950, it was announced that a military survey team mission, under the leadership of John Melby,

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(2) Ibid.

would visit the countries of South-East Asia "to determine military build-up possible in each of the visited countries, to recommend priorities for arms shipments, and to discuss the composition of American military advisory groups which could be assigned to each country." (3) Consequent upon the Melby Mission Report, Truman, in a message to the Congress for supplementary military aid, asked for a sum of 303 million dollars in military aid for Korea, the Philippines, and "the general area of China." (4) This sum, if granted, was to be in addition to the 75 million dollars already available for "the general area of China" and the share of the Philippines and Korea in the 27.5 million dollars granted, in the original appropriations under the Mutual Defence Assistance Act of 1949, to Iran, Korea, and the Philippines. In October, 1950, it became known that the major portion of military aid grants would go to Indo-China. The reason for this priority to Indo-China, as given by the Department of State, was that operations against the Communists in Indo-China were sufficiently important" "to justify a particularly high priority in the shipment of U.S. equipment to Indo-China." (5) Thailand was given a sum of 10 million dollars for the construction of roads and airfields. (6)

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(3) New York Times, 7 July 1950.

(4) Department of State Bulletin, 23 (14 August 1950) 247.

(5) Ibid., (30 October 1950) 704.

(6) Ibid., 701-2.

Burma was assigned ten river patrol crafts with an eye to carrying on operations against the insurgents. (7)

This staggering increase in military aid to the countries of South-East Asia was not matched by a proportionate increase in the amount of economic aid, though it is probable that the outbreak of war in Korea might have accelerated matters in respect of economic aid as well. In September 1950, the Point-4 Programme (8) was scheduled to commence. By the end of October 1950, economic co-operation agreements providing for a system of technical and economic assistance, were concluded with Burma, Indonesia and Thailand. (9) Meanwhile, a survey mission for the Philippines, whose terms of reference had been agreed to after consultation between Truman and Quirino in February 1950, (10) but was not despatched till the outbreak of the Korean war, (11) submitted its report, recommending large scale economic and administrative reforms.

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(7) Ibid., (27 November 1950) 856.

(8) The Point-4 Programme is so called because it was the fourth point of a programme for the activities of the United States outlined by Truman in his inaugural address on 20 January 1949. The 'point' was "to help the free peoples of the world through their own efforts, to produce more food, more clothing, more materials for housing and more mechanical power to lighten their burdens." Department of State Bulletin 20 (30 January 1949) 125.

(9) Department of State Bulletin, 23 (25 September 1950) 500; (30 October 1950) 702.

(10) New York Times, 10 February 1950.

(11) The final decision to send survey mission to the Philippines was announced on 29 June 1950. It reached Manila on 10 July 1950.

It also recommended that the United States should give a sum of 250 million dollars, over a period of five years, for carrying on recommended reforms. (12) In October 1950, W. C. Foster, head of the Economic Co-operation Agency, assured the Government of the Philippines that the U.S. administration would recommend congressional action to implement the suggestion of the Survey Mission. (13)

Although the grants were thus made for the purpose of economic development as well, these did not match the grants for military purposes. Instead of balancing the grants for military purposes on the one hand and economic development on the other, the budget for aid to the countries of the Pacific region for the year 1951-2 maintained the imbalance. The new budget, as passed by Congress, provided 237 million dollars for economic aid and 575 million dollars for military aid, for Asia and the Pacific. (14) In other words, 70% of the total U.S. aid to this region was earmarked for military purposes. Moreover, this aid was to be given within the framework of the Mutual Security Act passed by the Congress. According to this Pact, the recipients of U.S. military aid were required to make

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(12) For a summary of the report of the Survey Mission, see Department of State Bulletin, 23 (6 November 1950) 723-6.

(13) Shirley Jenkins, "The Philippines White Paper," Far Eastern Survey, 20 (January 1951) 6.

(14) The full figures for the U.S. foreign aid programme for the fiscal year 1951-2 are given in the United States in World Affairs 1951 (New York, 1952) 236.

their full contribution to the maintenance of their own defensive strength as well as to that of "the free world." (15)

It would appear, from the above, that the shift in the emphasis in U.S. strategy, in order to confront the thrust of the Communist Bloc, from economic to military factor tended to become permanent. Although she cannot be accused of having ignored the socio-economic problems of the newly independent states, the disproportionate emphasis laid on military preparations was revealing. It was obvious that the United States, though still concerned with the problem of communist subversion in the newly independent countries, had relegated it to a secondary place. Her primary concern, hereafter, was to strengthen them militarily in order to put down communist-organized rebellions and to meet invasion. In other words, the ratio between the economic and military aid underwent a change following the outbreak of the Korean war. Whereas before the outbreak of war, economic aid to be given to the countries of South-East Asia was considered of primary importance, after the outbreak of war military aid replaced it in the scale of importance.

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(15) For the conditions of U.S. military aid to foreign countries, see Section 511(a) of the Mutual Security Act of 1951, Documents on International Affairs 1951 (Royal Institute of International Affairs, London, New York, Toronto) 51. Henceforth, the documents compiled and published by the Royal Institute of International Affairs would be cited as R.I.I.A. Documents.

The U.S. Policy in the North-West Pacific

The shift in the emphasis from economic to military aid was a development in U.S. policy which those who did not approve of it, could regret but not resent, since it was none of their business to dictate to the United States what her policy should be. But she reinforced her hold over the North-West Pacific in a manner which others could resent. The decision to act in Korea was in itself an unexpected step, for the United States had refrained from making any definite commitment in regard to the defence of South Korea. Even if it is admitted that the aggression on South Korea morally compelled her to come to the rescue of a victim of aggression, the decision to neutralize Formosa did not seem to have even moral sanction behind it. In a statement released on 5 January 1950, Truman had said that the United States had "no predatory designs on Formosa or any other Chinese territory," and that his Government would not "pursue a course which will lead to involvement in the civil conflict in China." (16) Clarifying Truman's statement at a press conference, Dean Acheson said that the United States was determined not to change her position in regard to Formosa, because those "in control of the mainland of China are not friendly to us." (17) Yet, when the Korean War broke out, the order to the U.S. forces in the Far East for giving cover

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(16) Department of State Bulletin, 22 (16 January 1950) 79.

(17) Ibid., 80.

to the South Korean troops was accompanied by an order to the U.S. Seventh Fleet to "neutralize" Formosa. (18)

As a matter of fact, the United States did not expect that the Communist Bloc would resort to armed aggression in the Pacific region for the attainment of its ends. It will be long debated as to who engineered the war in Korea, but Truman and Acheson were convinced that it was an act of the North Korean Government. They believed that for the Soviet Bloc, the occupation of South Korea was not an end in itself but only a means to capture Japan. On 19 February 1950, John Foster Dulles, special consultant to the U.S. Secretary of State said at Sydney, in Australia, that Japan would be one of "the world's greatest prizes" to the Soviet Union, and "the combination of Soviet Russia, China, and Japan, if formed, would be so powerful that it could not be resisted in this part of the world." (19) While the decision to defend South Korea may also be seen as an act to save an independent regime from extermination, the decision to neutralize Formosa was obviously meant to deny the enemy an area, which was so intimately related to the territories in and around Japan.

The decision to keep Japan inside the U.S. power orbit inevitably followed the decision to defend her from the Communist Bloc. Although the concentration of U.S. troops in Formosa,

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(18) Ibid., 23, (3 July 1950) 5.

(19) The Hindu, 21 February 1951.

Korea, and Japan was sufficient to discourage the Communist Bloc from carrying out the plan, if they had any, for an armed invasion of Japan, the United States nevertheless felt that being still under 'occupation,' Japan was "particularly open" to Soviet propaganda and subversive warfare. (20) The United States, therefore, decided to conclude a peace treaty with Japan. This decision had been taken even before the outbreak of the Korean War, (21) but the war accelerated matters. A memorandum outlining the principles on which the peace treaty with Japan should be based, was prepared by the United States, and circulated to the members of the Far Eastern Commission towards the end of October 1950. It proposed that Japan should agree to the U.N. trusteeship of the Ryukus and the Bonin Islands, and the United States should be appointed as administering power of these areas. It further proposed that all the probable signatories to the proposed treaty should waive claims to reparations arising out of the acts of Japan during the war, and provision should be made for "continuing cooperative responsibility between Japanese facilities and U.S. and perhaps other forces for the maintenance of international peace and security in the Japan area." (22)

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(20) Ibid.

(21) On 14 September 1949, Acheson announced at a press conference that he and Ernest Bevin, the British Foreign Secretary whom he had met on the previous day, had agreed that the conclusion of the Japanese Peace Treaty was urgent. The Times (London), 15 September 1949.

(22) Department of State Bulletin, 23 (4 December 1950) 881.

The U.S. memorandum thus made it clear that the United States was determined to retain Japan within her own power orbit, and immunize her from subversive warfare, as far as practicable within this framework. The ~~designed~~ profound bar on claims for reparations was intended to stimulate the economic growth of Japan and make her prosperous, thereby making communism in Japan lose its appeal. These principles were hardly likely to be acceptable to the Soviet Union, the non-aligned powers of the Pacific region, and those who had suffered great material depredation at the hands of the Japanese troops during the war. But all objections to the principles outlined in the memorandum were ruthlessly brushed aside by the United States. The United States did not send the memorandum to Communist China, on the ground that she had not recognized the communist regime there as the lawful government of China. (23) The Soviet Union challenged the principle of transferring the Ryukus and the Bonin Islands to the United Nations and the provision for the maintenance of foreign troops in Japan. (24) Defending the principles laid down in the memoraudum, the United States also informed the Soviet Union that she did not concede that "any one nation has a perpetual power to veto the conclusion by others of peace with Japan" (25): this remained from the beginning to the end the predominant note in the exchanges between the Soviet Union

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(23) Ibid., 24 (8 January 1950) 66.

(24) Ibid., 23 (4 December 1950) 881-2.

(25) Ibid., 24 (8 January 1950) 65-6.

and the United States on the subject of the Japanese Peace Treaty. India and Burma, though in favour of independence for Japan, wanted that her freedom should be real and true, and should not be inhibited by considerations of power politics with which the Japanese people were not directly concerned. They disapproved of the contemplated transfer of the Bonin Islands and the Ryukus from the control of Japan to the United Nations, and the provision for the extension of stay to foreign troops in Japan. (26) The United States rejected these objections, claiming that the Japanese Peace Treaty, as drafted, would serve the interest of peace and maintain the balance of power in the Pacific region. (27) The Philippines, Indonesia, and also Burma, resented the proposed provisions regarding reparations, and were told by the United States that, though just, these claims to reparations could not be 'validated,' because such a step would drive Japan into the arms of "totalitarian damagogues." (28) The final draft of the Japanese Peace Treaty incorporated all the principles outlined in the memorandum, excepting that it provided that Japan and those who

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(26) The Indian note to the United States, ibid., 25 (3 September 1951) 385-6. On 31 August 1951, Nehru told the Indian Parliament that he had been informed by the Government of Burma that it was in complete agreement with India's point of view on the question of Japanese Peace Treaty, with one addition that it claimed, unlike India, reparations as well. India, Parliamentary Debates, 9, Part 1, (31 August 1951) 839.

(27) The U.S. reply to India's note, Department of State Bulletin, 25 (3 September 1951) 387-8.

(28) The U.S. State Department Communique, The Hindu, 3 September 1951.

claimed reparations from her might settle, on a bi-lateral basis, the terms of reparations after the signing of the Peace Treaty. (29) This draft of the treaty was sent to fifty-five nations, along with invitations to attend the conference to be held in September at San Francisco, for conclusion and signature of a treaty of peace on "the terms of that text." (30)

The signing of the Japanese Peace Treaty was followed by the signing of a bilateral security pact between the United States and Japan. According to this treaty, the United States was given the right to maintain its armed forces "in and about Japan." The United States also agreed to defend Japan against "armed attack from without" and help the Japanese Government, if requested, to deal with " large scale internal riots and disturbances in Japan caused through instigation or intervention by an outside power or powers." The treaty also deprived Japan of the right to concede to other states such rights as had been given to the United States "without the prior consent of the United States." (31)

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(29) Text of the proposed Japanese Peace Treaty, Department of State Bulletin, 25 (27 August 1951) 349-55. For the provision regarding reparations, see Article 14(1;a) of the text.

(30) Ibid., (30 July 1951) 186. The final draft of the treaty was a bit different from that circulated in July, but these modifications were non-substantive. For the revised draft, see ibid., (27 August 1951) 355.

(31) Text of the Treaty, ibid., (27 September 1951) 464-5.

U.S. Co-operation with France & Britain in South-East Asia

While the United States was thus tightening her own grip over the north-western Pacific, she was also helping France, who was holding the fort in Indo-China, and Britain, who was fighting the Communists in Malaya. With the outbreak of the Korean War, the United States became anxious to ensure that they did not give in to the Communists under any circumstance. To this end, military aid to France, which was fighting a well-organized government recognized by the countries of the Communist Bloc, was increased several-fold. (32) As insurance against ~~the~~ intervention by the Communist Bloc in Indo-China in favour of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam, the United States, in the first place, refrained from sending troops to Indo-China, (33) and, in the second place, issued warnings to the Communist Bloc against intervention. On 28 February 1952, John Sherman Cooper, ~~the~~ U.S. delegate to the United Nations, declared in the General Assembly of the United Nations that an aggression by the Communist powers on Vietnam "would be a matter of direct and grave concern requiring the most urgent and earnest

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(32) Before the outbreak of war in Korea, the military aid to France, specifically for the fighting in Indochina had been 15 million dollars. This too, had been granted only in March 1950. (New York Times, 1 April 1950). In November 1950 the State Department announced that military aid to France for carrying on operations in Indo-China would amount to between 300 and 400 million dollars. (N.Y. Herald Tribune, 25 November 1950).

(33) On 11 October 1950, Acheson announced that the U.S. troops would not be sent to Indo-China. New York Times, 12 October 1950.

consideration by the United Nations." (34) On 30 June 1952, a U.S.-French Communique issued in Washington said that the operations being carried on against the communists, in Indo-China, by France were "an integral part of the worldwide resistance by the free nations to Communist attempts at conquest and subversion." (35) The purpose of these statements was to impression upon the Communist Bloc that the United States would intervene in Indo-China in favour of France if ~~either~~ any of its members sent troops to help the troops of Ho Chi Minh.

Following the outbreak of war in Korea, there also developed a system of close consultation and co-operation between the United States, France, and Britain in the Pacific region. On his visit to the United States in January 1952, Winston Churchill, the British Prime Minister, had stressed the need for developing a system of co-operation among the three powers, to fight the Communists in South-East Asia and the Far East. (36) A conference of the Chiefs of Staff of the three powers was held in Washington from 11 January 1952 to the 18th of the same month. General Alphonse Juin, the French Chief of Staff, said on his arrival in Washington on 10 January, that the conference would establish a common strategy in South-East

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(34) U.N. General Assembly, Official Records, Sixth Session, First Committee, 505th Meeting, 275.

(35) Department of State Bulletin, 26 (30 June 1952) 10.

(36) Ibid., (28 January 1952) 118.

Asia. (37) The blueprint of this common strategy, if it was established at all, was kept a secret, but Juin disclosed that the United States and Britain would give air and naval cover to the French troops if the Communist Bloc sent troops to reinforce those of Ho Chi Minh. (38) Later, it was reported that an agreement regarding the exchange of information was reached, and an ad hoc committee was set up in Washington to implement the decisions of the conference. (39) On 20 February 1952, a conference of the military attaches of the United States, Great Britain, and France, and several Asian countries, whose names were not disclosed, was held at Singapore. (40)

Besides the system of consultation and co-operation at the military level which was thus growing, there also developed a system of similar co-operation at the political level. On 28 May 1952, the Foreign Ministers of the three powers met at Paris. The communique issued after the conference went no further than saying that cordial and frank discussions had been held regarding the Far East, (41) but Raymond Marcellain, the State Secretary in the French Prime Minister's Office, disclosed that Britain and the United States had recognized that France

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(37) The Hindu, 11 January 1952.

(38) New York Times, 14 January 1952.

(39) The Sunday Times (London), 20 January 1952.

(40) Statesman, 22 February 1952.

(41) The Hindu, 30 May 1950.

acted as "a veritable pillar of defence" in South-East Asia. (42) On 5 June 1952, Robert Schuman, the French Foreign Minister, reporting on the talks to the Foreign Affairs Committee of the National Assembly, said that technical and political agreements on material and common effort in South-East Asia were more advanced than he was able to disclose. (43) The three foreign ministers conferred again in June 1952 in London; the communique issued after the conference said that they had agreed to the need for closer co-operation and consultation in regard to both Korea and Indo-China. It also said that the means to ensure this had been considered. (44) On a lower level, the staff of the three powers stationed in the Pacific region continued to consult each other and co-operate with each other, whenever it was needed. The system was running so smoothly that Malcolm MacDonald, the British Commissioner-General in South-East Asia, said on 14 July 1952 at Singapore that greater co-operation could not have been effected even through a formal alliance. He also said that a formal alliance for doing the same work as was being done even without it, would be un-called for. (45)

The Reactions of the Non-Aligned countries of South and South-East Asia to the Korean Crisis

Reactions to the outbreak of War in Korea

The North Korean aggression on South Korea aroused as

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(42) The Times, 30 May 1952.

(43) Scotsman (Edinburgh), 10 June 1952.

(44) R.I.I.A. Documents 1952, 490.

(45) The Times, 16 July 1952.

much indignation against North Korea in the non-aligned countries of South and South-East Asia, as it did in the United States. India, which was a member of the U.N. Security Council when the war broke out, supported the resolution, passed by the Council on 25 June 1950, calling for the immediate cessation of hostilities and the withdrawal of North Korean forces to their own side of the border. (46) In spite of it, North Korean troops continued to advance; consequently, the Council passed another resolution on 27 June 1950 making it incumbent upon the United Nations "to furnish such assistance to the Republic of Korea as may be necessary to repel armed attack, and to restore international peace and security in the area." (47) India supported this resolution too. (48) Burma (49) and Pakistan (50) also supported the case for U.N. action in Korea. Indonesia formally remained neutral, but her support for many of the

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(46) U.N. Security Council, Official Records, Fifth Year, No. 15, 7-8 (S/1501).

(47) Ibid., No. 16, 4 (S/1511).

(48) The Indian representative, at this session of the Security Council, abstained from voting for lack of instructions from his government. On 29 June, however, the Indian Cabinet decided to support this resolution as well, and conveyed the decision to the Security Council. Ibid., (S/1520).

(49) For the text of the statement made by the Government of Burma supporting the resolutions of the Security Council, see U Nu, From Peace to Stability (Rangoon, 1951) 95.

(50) Annual Register 1950 (London) 128.

subsequent actions of the United Nations indicated that she, too, was tacitly in favour of the action being taken by the United Nations in Korea. (51)

The stand of the non-aligned powers, on the problem of the war in Korea, was one of the most crucial decisions that they had taken so far. They were convinced that aggression on South-Korea had occurred and, therefore, the United Nations must right the wrong. In taking this stand, their sole motive was to help the establishment of a precedent for U.N. action, which could be invoked by the weak nations, such as themselves, whenever such a need arose. (52) Yet, the war in Korea, being one between a Communist and an anti-Communist regime, had such an ominous setting that they had to be discreet in playing their cards. Their policy was designed to help the United Nations establish a precedent for the use of its authority in favour of a victim of aggression, without themselves becoming involved in power politics in Korea. To this end, they made it clear that their support for the U.N. action in Korea was within the framework of their general policy of keeping out of the Cold War. (53)

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(51) For Indonesia's stand on the Korean Crisis, see George McTurnan Kahin, "The New Indonesian Government," Far Eastern Survey, 19 (22 November 1950) 213. Indonesia, while remaining neutral on the Korean issues announced on 24 May 1951 that she would respect the U.N. embargo on the export of strategic materials to China. Annual Register, 1951, 335. In 1952 she also supported the U.N. over the issue of the prisoners of war in Korea. Ibid., 1952, 335.

(52) Nu's statement on Korea, n. 49, 99; Nehru's statement in Indian Parliament, Parliamentary Debates, 5, part ii, (3 August 1950) col. 235-6.

(53) Nu, ibid., 101-3; Nehru, ibid., col. 224.

Efforts to Restore Peace

The non-aligned powers were, however, quick to realize that it might not be possible to stop war in Korea unless steps to that end were taken immediately; failure to do so might ~~leave~~ cause it to degenerate into a war between the two rival power blocs. Thereby world peace would immeasurably suffer, and their respective countries would be subjected to unbearable stains. In order to prevent such a probability from becoming a reality, Nehru addressed indentical letters to Dean Acheson, U.S. Secretary of State, and Stalin, the Soviet Prime Minister, urging upon them the need to preserve world peace and localize the conflict in Korea as a first step to that end. He suggested that Communist China should be allowed to take "a seat in the Council," and this should be followed by a joint effort of the United States, the Soviet Union, and China to settle the crisis in Korea. (54) Nehru's letter evoked a favourable response from Stalin, (55) but Acheson, obviously referring to the suggestion for China's admission to ~~the~~ U.N., wrote back that the termination of aggression in Korea should not be "contingent in any way upon the determination of other questions which are currently before the United Nations." He left Nehru in no doubt, that ~~the~~ U.S. troops in Korea would continue to fight till victory was won. (56)

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(54) Department of State Bulletin, 23 (31 July 1950) 170.

(55) R.I.I.A. Documents 1949-50, 707. (Stalin's reply to Nehru's letter was despatched on 15 July 1950).

(56) Department of State Bulletin, 23 (31 July 1950) 170-1.

By the middle of September 1950, the U.N. forces had reached the 38th Parallel, the imaginary line dividing South and North Koreas. On 30 September, a resolution was put forward before the Political Committee of the General Assembly asking for the establishment of a United Nations Commission for the Unification and Rehabilitation of Korea (UNCURK). It was approved by the General Assembly on 7 October 1950. (57) In the meantime a counter-proposal by Russia calling for immediate cessation of hostilities and withdrawal of foreign troops from Korea had been rejected. (58) India voted against the resolution, on the ground that it would extend the war at a time when the defeat of the North Korean troops seemed to have at last opened the way to peaceful solution. (59) Burma, Indonesia, and Pakistan abstained from voting. On 8 October, the U.N. troops crossed the 38th Parallel. Communist China retaliated towards the end of November and the U.N. troops retreated. By the beginning of December, it seemed, as if it was now China's turn to cross the 38th parallel. On 5 December, India along with ten other countries which included Burma and Pakistan, sent an appeal to China requesting her not to cross the 38th parallel. (60)

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(57) U.N. General Assembly, Official Records, Fifth Session, Supplement No. 20, Resolutions 376 (OV) 9-10.

(58) Ibid., Annexes, Agenda Item 24, 9.

(59) For the explanation of India voting against the resolution sponsored by the Western Bloc, see the report of Nehru's press conference on 16 October 1950. R.I.I.A. Documents 1949-50, 710.

(60) Ibid., 713.

On 6 December 1950, India's representative in the United Nations, Sir B. N. Rau, introduced two resolutions concerning ceasefire and settlement of disputes in Korea. (61) These efforts, however, bore no fruit; on 26 December 1950, the Chinese troops crossed the 38th parallel.

From Efforts For Peace To 'Peace Area'

The war in Korea had a very significant lesson to convey to the neutrals. It continued in spite of their expressed annoyance and efforts to stop it, revealing thereby that the pattern of international relations in their own region was subject to the world-wide pattern of international relationships which they did not have the power to control. It was obvious that peace in the Pacific was being jeopardized without regard to their sentiments and interests. Having failed in their efforts to influence the operations in Korea, the non-aligned countries of South and South-East Asia concentrated on designing steps for preserving themselves from the rivalry of the Great Powers. India and Burma did not attend the San Francisco Conference to conclude the Japanese Peace Treaty, because they felt that the terms of that treaty would increase further international tensions in the Pacific region. (62) They were not opposed to freedom of Japan from occupation, as was shown

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(61) U.N. General Assembly, Official Records, Fifth Session, First Committee, 415th Meeting, 433-4.

(62) Vide n. 26.

by their separate treaties with her. (63) Similarly, India and Burma opposed the neutralization of Formosa by the U.S. Seventh Fleet, as such a step could only keep up tension between China and the United States. (64) Only Indonesia, among the non-aligned powers, tended to look with sympathy upon the anti-communist measures taken by the United States in the Pacific region. She signed the Japanese Peace Treaty and also signed an agreement accepting military aid from the United States under the terms of the Mutual Security Act of 1951. (65) But the Cabinet led by Sukiman which decided upon these measures, had to resign for having taken decisions which tended to incline Indonesia in favour of the Western Bloc as led by the United States. (66) The Cabinet, that followed headed by Wilopo, revoked the decision of the preceding Cabinet as regards the acceptance of aid under the Mutual Security Act, and shelved the

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(63) India concluded peace treaty with Japan on 9 June 1952. For the text of the treaty signed, see Contemporary Japan 1952, 21, nos. 4-6 (Tokyo) 325-8. Burma concluded peace treaty and Reparations Agreement on 5 November 1954. For the texts, see ibid 1955 23, nos. 4-6, 424-9.

(64) Vide n. 26.

(65) The Government of Indonesia, however, disputed that her support for the U.S. policies meant sympathy for the United States. For the explanation of its policies given by the Government see "Indonesia looks Abroad," Indonesian Affairs, 2 (February, March) 8-11.

(66) The official announcement on the resignation of the Sukiman said that it was done with a view "to overcome the problems which have arisen around the conclusion of an agreement pertaining to the Mutual Security Act." Ibid., 1.

question of the ratification of the Japanese Peace Treaty. It decided to pursue such an independent foreign policy as would "conform to Indonesia's . . . national interests." (67) On 17 August 1952, Sukarno said that "experience had taught" that his country could not afford to take sides in the struggle between the two power blocs. (68) Since the fall of the Sukiman Cabinet, Indonesia, too, thus adopted a policy similar to that of Burma and India. Yet, the stark fact was that the non-aligned powers had neither been able to persuade the United States to revoke her decision to neutralize Formosa, nor could prevent the conclusion of the Japanese Peace Treaty whose features they resented; nor could they prevent the crossing of the 38th parallel by either party to the Korean war.

The failure to influence the pattern of international relationship in the Pacific region led the neutrals of South and South-East Asia to design methods for keeping themselves out of the Cold War and also to preserve as much areas, around them, from it as they could. On 12 June 1952, Nehru told the Lok Sabha of the Indian Parliament that "our neighbours" should tell "those warring factions and those great countries that are so explosively bitter against each other" that "they will save their own regions and try to save the rest as best as they

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(67) Indonesian Affairs, 2 (February-March 1952, Djakarta).

(68) "Indonesia Takes Stock," Far Eastern Survey, 31 (8 October 1952) 143.

can." (69) Later, he said that this task cannot be achieved by military means but by the establishment of "a third area," "an area which . . . does not want war, works for peace in a positive way and believes in cooperation." (70)

Even before Nehru spoke in terms of a "peace area," trends towards it were developing. At the end of the year 1950, the Government of India, facing famine conditions in the north-eastern provinces of India, sent an urgent request to the United States for shipment of 2 million tons of grain for beating off the impending famine. (71) Truman recommended to the Congress that half the amount be made available immediately as gift. (72) The Congress was reportedly in favour of helping India, but wanted that the entire amount should be granted as loan rather than as a gift and that terms of repayment should provide for the shipment of specific strategic and critical materials. Nehru, however, let it be known that grain given in whatever form, must be unaccompanied by "political strings." (73) When the measure was passed finally, terms of repayment did not

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(69) Jawaharlal Nehru's Speeches 1949-50 (The Publication Division, Government of India, New Delhi, 1954) 215.

(70) Ibid., (17 February 1953) 231.

(71) J. C. Kundra, Indian Foreign Policy: A Study of Relations with the Western Bloc (Bombay, Djakarta 1955) 155.

(72) Department of State Bulletin, 24 (26 February 1951) 350.

(73) The United States in World Affairs 1951 (New York, 1952) 257.

specify the materials that were to be supplied in exchange. (74)

In July 1952, Sukarno, wiser after the fall of the Sukiman Cabinet, said in a broadcast especially beamed to the Philippines, that "we have resolved to occupy the no-man's land that lies between the opposing camps." (75) In Burma, U Nu was equally determined "to shun any activity which is likely to create misunderstanding in any quarter." (76) A Defence Agreement signed between Burma and Britain at the time of the transfer of power had provided for the stationing of a British Military Mission in Burma; according to the terms of the Agreement, Britain alone had the right to maintain such a mission in Burma. (77) In January 1953, Burma gave the required one year's notice to end the agreement, which duly expired at the end of the year. (78) Even more important step that Burma took to demonstrate her neutrality in the Cold War was her decision in regard to the Kuomintang troops who, forced to retreat from mainland China in June 1950, had settled down in Burma with the

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(74) The "India Emergency Food Act of 1951," under which India's request for grains had been fully met, provided for repayment of loans through the supply of strategic and critical materials "so far as practicable and possible." See the text of the Act in Department of State Bulletin, 25 (2 July 1951) 38-9.

(75) Indonesian Affairs, 2 (June-July 1952) 19-20.

(76) The Hindu, 7 June 1954.

(77) See the text of the Anglo-Burmese Defence Agreement signed on 29 August 1947. Articles 4 and 8(a) N. Mansergh, ed., Documents and Speeches on British Commonwealth Affairs, II, 772, 733.

(78) The Times, 6 January 1953.

intention of carrying on operations against the Communist troops of the mainland China. The Burmese Government fearing that the presence of Kuomintang troops on their soil might provide an excuse to the Communist Government to despatch troops into Burma, professedly to deal with the Kuomintang forces, urged upon the United States to prevail upon Chiang Kai-shek to immediately withdraw his troops from Burma. (79) The Government of the United States apparently did nothing to satisfy Burma. In March 1952, the Government of Burma began operations against the Kuomintang troops. Burma registered her dissatisfaction with the attitude of the United States by notifying the U.S. Government on 17 March 1953, that she did not desire further aid after 30 June 1953, (80) and brought the issue of the presence of Kuomintang troops in Burma before the United Nations. (81) In other words the non-aligned countries of South and South-East Asia were keenly pursuing their policy of non-alignment by such steps as were necessary to impress upon the world at large, the genuineness of their neutrality as between the existing rival power blocs.

Prospects for the formation of a Pacific Pact

"Situation of Strength" Versus "Peace Area"

So far, we have examined the reactions to the outbreak

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(79) Manchester Guardian, 18 May 1951.

(80) Department of State Bulletin, 28 (13 April 1953) 530.

(81) General Assembly, Official Records, Seventh Session, Annexes, Agenda Item 77, 1-2.

of war in Korea of the United States on the one hand and the non-aligned countries on the other. Their reactions not only varied but were also antithetical. The United States had shifted the emphasis in her policy, from that of making the democratic way of life acceptable to the Asians, to one of relying upon physical strength as the means for maintaining a 'situation of strength' in Asia and Pacific. The non-aligned countries, on their part, were desperately trying to maintain a "Peace Area," which would remain unaffected by the struggle for power between the rival power blocs. The anti-thesis between these two political approaches to the problem of the Pacific security is obvious. The policy of the "situation of strength" postulates a readiness on the part of those trying to promote and maintain it, to act ruthlessly to counteract the challenge of the rival; in pursuing that objective, their area of operations might not be limited. The United States, as has been seen, acted without regard to the feelings of others, to reinforce her existing hold over the north-western Pacific, and helped France and Britain to pursue a similar policy in Vietnam and Malaya respectively, without regard to the repercussions that such a policy might have on the peoples in and around these areas. On the other hand, an essential condition for the continued existence of the 'Peace Area' was that those dedicated to its maintenance must, under all conditions, preserve it from the fire of the struggle for power going around it. Thus, the two objectives - 'situation of strength' and 'Peace Area' - were mutually contradictory.

With the simultaneous operation of these two mutually contradictory factors in the international policies of the Pacific region, the movement for a Pacific Pact reached an interesting stage. Its formation would have synthesized the various strands of the 'situation of strength' policy; but at the same time, it would also have been an anti-thesis to the 'Peace Area.' Though pledged to the maintenance of a situation of strength in the Pacific, the United States, was not willing to bring herself face to face with the 'Peace Area.' On 23 January 1951, a bi-partisan resolution was introduced in the House of Representatives of U.S. Congress, urging the Administration to join the efforts to "discourage further aggression," in the Far East, and take the lead in giving the countries of the Far East and South-East Asia "the hope of material betterment of living conditions so urgently required."(82) But the Administration, though preoccupied "twenty-four-hours-a-day" with the problem of the defence of the Pacific, was, as in the past, not willing to take the required steps on her own. (83)

ANZUS and the U.S.-Philippines Mutual Defence Treaty

On 18 April 1951, however, Truman announced that the United States had agreed to make such arrangements with Australia and New Zealand as "would establish consultation to

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(82) The Hindu, 24 January 1951.

(83) Acheson's statement issued on 21 February 1951. Department of State Bulletin, 24 (5 March 1951) 369.

strengthen security on the basis of continuous and effective self-help and mutual aid." He also made it clear that the proposed arrangements would be "in pursuance of articles 51 and 52 of the United Nations Charter," (84) which together entitle a member of the United Nations to make such arrangements for self-defence as it deems necessary, and to join or form regional organizations to that end or any other end not inconsistent with the terms of the Charter. As a result, a security pact between Australia, New Zealand and the United States was signed on 1 September 1951; the signing of the bilateral security pact between the Philippines and the United States preceded its conclusion. The fourth article of both the treaties provided for mutual assistance, "in accordance with constitutional processes" of the party or parties concerned, in case of an armed attack on the territories or possessions of either party or parties. (85) The treaty between Australia, New Zealand, and the United States, more popularly known as the ANZUS Treaty, also provided for a Council, like that under the North Atlantic Treaty, to consider matters concerning the implementation of the treaty. (86) The treaty between the Philippines and the United States provided for no such Council,

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(84) Ibid., (30 April 1951) 699.

(85) See the text of the ANZUS treaty, ibid., 25 (23 July 1951) 148-9. For the text of the U.S.-Philippines treaty, see ibid., (27 August 1951) 335.

(86) See Article VII of the ANZUS treaty, ibid.

but for consultation "from time to time regarding the implementation of the treaty." (87)

It should be mentioned, that the decision of the United States to conclude these security pacts was in the nature of compensation given by her to the other parties for their signature to the Japanese Peace Treaty. They had objected to the provisions of the Japanese Peace Treaty which provided for the rearmament of Japan. Dulles, who toured Australia and the Philippines in January-February 1951 to dissipate their fears returned, convinced, that the United States would have to guarantee their security as the price for their signatures of the Japanese Peace Treaty; (88) hence these treaties. Even before the ANZUS Pact had been concluded, Dulles had said that the "primary security value" of proposed ANZUS would be to let the probable aggressors know that "the deterent striking power of the United States would be brought instantly into play, if there should be an attack upon Australia or New Zealand." (89) A U.S. Senator, A. Wiley, considered that the ANZUS was "a new form of Monroe Doctrine for the West Pacific." (90) Richard Casey, Australia's

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(87) See Article III of the U.S.-Philippines treaty, n. 85.

(88) Department of State Bulletin, 24 (12 March 1951) 406. For a more detailed description of Dulles' experience in Canberra especially, see, R. N. Rosecrance, Australian Diplomacy and Japan (Sydney, London, New York, 1962) 200-1.

(89) The Hindu, 24 April 1951.

(90) Christian Science Monitor (Boston), 13 July 1951.

Foreign Minister, was also inclined to rate its value in the same terms. (91)

It is thus clear that the purpose of ANZUS as well as the Mutual Security Treaty between the United States and the Philippines was to actively associate the United States with efforts being made by other parties for self-defence. The multi-lateral and bi-lateral twists given to these treaties were insignificant. The parties to both the treaties agreed that "a more comprehensive system of regional security in the Pacific" should develop in time. (92) That such a pact had not been concluded was obviously due to the feeling of the United States that the time for it had not yet arrived. This decision had been taken in spite of the expressed disappointment of the British Government at the smaller confines of ANZUS, and resentment of the Conservative Party, then in opposition in the House of Commons of the British Parliament. (93) South Korea, too, resented that she had been kept from, what she considered ANZUS to be, a Pacific Pact; (94) but the United States held her own.

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(91) Richard Casey, Friends & Neighbours (Michigan, 1955) 82, 86.

(92) This phrase occurs in the Preamble of the U.S.-Philippines Treaty, and Article VIII of the ANZUS Treaty. See the texts, vide n. 85.

(93) U.K., Parliamentary Debates, House of Commons, 486 (19 April 1951), col. 2007-10.

(94) Ben C. Limb, "The Pacific Pact: Looking Forward or Backward," Foreign Affairs, 29 (New York, July 1951) 539-50. (Limb was then the Foreign Minister of South Korea; this article has, therefore, been relied upon as the representative opinion of the Government of South Korea.)

The State Department stated that "steps looking towards . . . the development of a more comprehensive system of regional security in the Pacific Area" would follow ANZUS, (95) but ~~she~~ it did not specify the steps to be taken to that end. Explaining the inhibitions of the United States in this regard, Dulles wrote that the attitude of the neutrals towards the Western Powers was the most important factor influencing U.S. decisions regarding a comprehensive Pacific Pact and the champions of the Pacific Pact, therefore, must wait and work for the dissipation of those "unreasoned fears" which "barred fruitful collaboration between Orientals and Westerners." (96)

ANZUS, the United States, and the Movement for a Pacific Pact

Consequent upon the conclusion of ANZUS, the movement for a Pacific Pact assumed a new lease of life. With the United States pledged to develop a comprehensive security system for the Pacific area, a major obstacle from its path had been removed. Now the problem that remained was to reconcile the neutrals to such a proposition. Even before the conclusion of ANZUS, Truman himself appealed to the peoples and Governments of the Far East "to understand us as we try to understand them" and "undertake together" the tasks of opposing the spirit of

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(95) The Hindu, 10 August 1951.

(96) John Foster Dulles, "Security in the Pacific," Foreign Affairs, 31 (January 1952) 182, 184.

aggression. (97) In July 1952, Quirino went on a state visit to Indonesia, and in his address to the Indonesian Parliament, he said that his country held before herself a vision of a "partnership" of the countries of this region, and appealed to the Indonesian Government to agree to accept its benefits and responsibilities. (98) Quirino returned home convinced that his plan had made a favourable impression on the Indonesian Government; (99) but Soenardjo, Chairman of the Foreign Affairs sub-committee of the Indonesian Parliament, declared that a military agreement between Indonesia and any other country was out of question. (100) Wilopo, the Indonesian Prime Minister, declared on 11 August 1952 that Indonesia would adhere more closely than ever to its independent foreign policy. (101)

The attitude of the Government of Indonesia to the proposed Pact seemed to have gone a long way in determining the attitude of the United States towards it. Indonesia was the only professedly neutral Asian country which had been inclined to take the side of the United States, in her struggle for power in the Pacific region. The popular reaction in Indonesia against the pro-American steps taken by the Government disclosed

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(97) Truman's speech of 17 October 1950. Department of State Bulletin, 23 (30 October 1950) 685, 686.

(98) Indonesian Affairs, (June-July 1952) 17.

(99) The Hindu, 14 August 1952.

(100) Times of Indonesia (Djakarta), 11 August 1952.

(101) Ibid., 12 August 1952.

that such steps were unpopular in the Asian countries. The United States was, however, determined not to alienate public opinion in Asia, unless it was absolutely necessary. Since the United States considered the existing security system as adequate, only a country capable of effectively coercing the United States could have succeeded in securing her support for the contemplated Pacific Pact.

The first meeting of the ANZUS Council was scheduled for August 1952. South Korea (102), the Philippines (103) and Britain used this opportunity to impress upon the United States the need to form a Pacific Pact. The United States, however, showed no inclination to change her earlier stand on the subject of a Pacific Pact. The ANZUS Council which met in Hawaii in August 1952, decided against undertaking any project for its own enlargement "at this early stage of its own development." (104) Between 22 and 26 September 1952, the military committee of ANZUS met at Honolulu. The British Government made it known that its request for either the membership or association with

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(102) On 21 August, the South Korean Ambassador to the United States was reported to have formally conveyed his government's request to the United States for taking the lead in the formation of a Pacific Pact. The Times, 23 August 1952.

(103) On 10 August 1952, Romulo said that since "the ground" for a possible Pacific Pact "had been" laid by the ANZUS treaty, he had been asked by President Quirino to work for its materialization. Manchester Guardian, 15 December 1952.

(104) Department of State Bulletin, 27 (18 August 1952) 245.

ANZUS had been rejected by the ANZUS powers. (105) It was reported that Australia and New Zealand recommended the acceptance of the British request, but the United States threatened to abandon the pact, if they pressed the British case further. (106) This report was promptly denied by the United States, (107) but in spite of the denial, there was little doubt that the United States resolutely resisted the pressure of her ANZUS partners to admit Britain into ANZUS. S. G. Holland, the New Zealand Prime Minister, himself championed Britain's case for membership of ANZUS. (108) The Australian Prime Minister, R~~obert~~ G. Menzies, however, told the Australian Parliament that the decision to turn down the British request was a unanimous decision, (109) but in London on 14 December 1952 he reached "complete understanding" with his British and New Zealand counterparts regarding "certain fundamental propositions which will, in due course, be the subject of friendly discussion with their ally, the U.S.A." (110) The subject of their discussion was reported to have been related to Great Britain's

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(105) U.K. Parliamentary Debates, House of Commons, 505 (26 October 1952) col. 26.

(106) New York Times, 19 October 1952; Observer (Manchester), 12 October 1952.

(107) Manchester Guardian, 11 October 1952.

(108) L. K. Munro, "New Zealand and the New Pacific," Foreign Affairs, 31 (July 1953) 636.

(109) Commonwealth Parliamentary Debates, 219 (15 October 1952) 1558.

(110) R.I.I.A. Documents, 1952, 492.

case for membership of ANZUS. (111) While these evidence establish that neither Australia nor New Zealand was against British association with ANZUS, the oft-repeated statements of U.S. Assistant Secretary of State John M. Allison during his tour of the Pacific region from September to November 1952, that the neutrals were unenthusiastic about the idea of a Pacific Pact, made it clear that the United States had not changed her stand as regards the Pacific Pact. (112)

The year 1952 was the presidential election year in the United States. The Republican Party, whose candidate Dwight D. Eisenhower, was voted president, had promised to end, what it considered, "the neglect of the Far East," if its candidate won the elections. (113) The victory of General Eisenhower, therefore, aroused fresh hope among the champions of a Pacific Pact. In January 1953, Churchill paid a visit to the United States and also met Eisenhower's Secretary of State-designate, John Foster Dulles. He was reported to have urged upon the latter, the need to put an end to American inhibitions regarding the Pacific Pact, and establish it without delay. (114) The new Administration, however, showed no marked inclination to break away from

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(111) Manchester Guardian, 15 December 1952.

(112) New York Times, 26 September 1952; Times of Indonesia, 8 October 1952; The Hindu, 5 November 1952.

(113) James Eayers, "A Pacific Pact: 'Step in the Right Direction'?" International Journal, 7, No. 4 (Toronto 1951-2) 295.

(114) New York Times, 13 January 1953.

former U.S. policy in this respect. The military and financial aid to France and Britain for purposes of fighting the communists in Indo-China and Malaya was increased, but that was all that the new Administration was willing to do. The second meeting of the ANZUS Council was held in September 1953. Regarding its own enlargement, it reached the conclusion that such a step "would not contribute directly and materially" to the defence of the Pacific area. (115) Dulles held that either ANZUS or any other existing bi-lateral security pacts between the United States and countries of the Pacific region could not be "the framework" for a Pacific Pact. Moreover, he felt, like the leaders of the preceding Administration, that "the development within the Pacific area of a greater measure of international goodwill and greater unity of purpose" might precede the establishment of a Pacific Pact. (116)

It is necessary at this point, to explain the continuing coolness of the United States towards the case for a Pacific Pact. Some have sought to explain it away by attributing it to the deep opposition of the United States to the maintenance of colonial rule in any part of the world. This coolness has also been attributed to the unwillingness of the United States to underwrite the defence of the mainland of South East Asia.

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(115) Department of State Bulletin, 29 (28 September 1953) 415.

(116) Current Notes on International Affairs (A Ministry of External Affairs of Australia Publication, November 1953) 656.

There can be no doubt about the fact that the United States was, in principle, opposed to the maintenance of colonial rule in South-East Asia, as much as she was opposed to it in any other part of the world, and used all opportunities to demonstrate to the people of Asia her opposition to colonialism. In February 1952, the British Government declared its policy that "Malaya should in due course become a fully self-governing nation;" (117) this declaration was promptly and warmly welcomed by the United States. (118) In respect of Indo-China, too, she advocated independence for the Indochinese States from French rule, but wanted that the emerging independent states should not have communist governments. In June 1952, a Franco-U.S. communiqué said that the United States would bear 40% of the expenditure on anti-communist operations in Indo-China, if the given aid was used "to build up national armies of the Associated States." (119) It showed that the United States, in fact, wanted France to leave Indo-China if the defence of the successor states could be ensured.

U.S. coolness towards the Pacific Pact, however, can be hardly attributed to her hatred for colonialism and her fear of being involved in the struggle between colonialism and anti-

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(117) R.I.I.A. Documents 1951, 675. (It was the theme of a directive issued to General Sir Gerald Templer, High Commissioner for Malaya, by the Secretary of State for the Colonies towards the end of 1951 but was released to the press only on 7 February 1952).

(118) Acheson's reactions, Department of State Bulletin 26 (17 March 1952) 427.

(119) Ibid., (30 June 1952) 1010.

colonialism. She was opposed to Communism more than to colonialism; wherever these two forces were pitched against each other, she elected to support colonialism. The assistance that she had been rendering to Britain and France in Malaya and Indo-China respectively, cannot be explained otherwise. The argument that she was willing to keep away from the mainland of South-East Asia is, likewise, not very convincing; for she was expressly appealing to the neutralist countries of this region to join her in fighting the menace of communism. Moreover, the fact that she was helping France and Britain in holding the communists at bay could not but convey her determination to preserve the mainland from the Communist Bloc.

As a matter of fact, the reason for U.S. coolness towards the case for the Pacific Pact lay in her confidence, that the existing arrangements were enough to restrain the Communist Bloc. Dulles wrote that the Japanese Peace Treaty, the security pacts with Japan, the Philippines, Australia and New Zealand, and the instructions to the U.S. Pacific Fleet to prevent an attack on Formosa, constituted together "an impressive deterrent to the domination of the Pacific by Communist imperialism." (120) Besides, the Government of the United States was confident that Britain and France, in Malaya and Indo-China respectively, would succeed in breaking the strength of the Communists. (121) With

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(120) Dulles, n. 96, 187.

(121) Acheson's speech, Department of State Bulletin, 26 (30 June 1952) 1009-10.

this confidence, the United States was not prepared to further alienate the neutrals who were opposed to the idea for a Pacific Pact. However, when these calculations were upset, the United States proceeded towards the goal, envisaged by her allies, ruthlessly disregarding the representations of the neutrals against the steps being taken.

Following the conclusion of the separate security pacts with the Philippines, Japan, and ANZAC powers, Thomas E. Dewey, the Republican candidate in the 1948 presidential election in the United States, called for "a single Pacific treaty to supersede the bits and pieces approach of President Truman." He said that the United States had gone "eighty-per cent towards collective security" and must cover the remainder. (122)

It is difficult, however, to see the security pacts referred to by Dewey, as deliberate steps towards the kind of Pacific Pact under discussion among its champions. The United States, as we have seen, had never been opposed to the principle of an anti-communist Pacific Pact; she had only opposed the suggestion for forming such a pact without the co-operation of the non-aligned governments of South and South-East Asia. The outbreak of the Korean war did not cause any change in the attitude of the non-aligned countries towards the idea of a Pacific Pact; for that matter, ~~the~~ U.S. attitude to~~wards~~ the case for the formation of a Pacific Pact did not undergo any

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(122) Christian Science Monitor, 18 September 1951.

change either. Even when Eisenhower, a Republican, became President of the United States, the attitude of the government towards the Pacific Pact remained as it had been in the past. It cannot be held, therefore, that the proponents of Pacific Pact had achieved greater measure of success during the period following the outbreak of Korean War than that preceding its outbreak.

Yet, the movement for a Pacific Pact had better atmosphere in which to develop than during the period preceding the outbreak of the Korean war. In the first place, the aggression in Korea and war in Indo-China tended to suggest that the Communist Bloc might be planning to launch aggression on South-East Asia; consequently, the champions of a Pacific Pact pursued their case even more vigorously. In the second place, the United States, too, demonstrated that she could disdain the protestations of non-aligned governments, if such a course became necessary in the interest of the maintenance of her own influence in the Pacific region. This provided the champions of the movement for a Pacific Pact with hope in the future.

Chapter Four

THE COLLAPSE OF FRENCH DEFENCES IN INDO-CHINA AND THE REACTION OF THE UNITED STATES TO IT

In the preceding chapter, it was seen that the United States had developed a broad military strategy with an eye to contain any further advance of Communist Bloc forces within the borders of mainland China. The U.S. troops as disposed for the defence of South Korea, Formosa, and Japan on the one hand, and the French troops carrying on operations against the Democratic Republic of Vietnam on the other, provided the backbone of this strategy.

In March 1954, however, the Government of the United States was informed by France that her resistance to the troops of Ho Chi Minh had reached a collapse, and could not be continued any further without more active help from the United States. As soon as this news became public, U.S. resistance to the movement for a Pacific Pact broke down. She had no choice than to fill in the breach that had occurred in her system of strategy with a collective defence pact for South-East Asia. In this chapter, an attempt is made to explain the breakdown of U.S. resistance to the movement for a Pacific Pact.

Problem of the Defence of Indo-China

The Franco-Viet Minh War In Indo-China and the Navarre Plan

It was pointed out previously that what France was up against in Indo-China was not merely a strong communist movement but also a nationalist movement at the same time, spearheaded by the communists. Though Ho Chi Minh was a staunch communist, he was also a great nationalist leader of Vietnam. It was his personality as a nationalist that was prominent in the minds of those fighting for the liberation of their country from alien rule. (1) As has been already pointed out, Ho laboriously sought to build up his image as a nationalist in the minds of his own people as well as of those abroad. (2)

If the nationalist movements in South-East Asia had any lesson to convey to the colonial powers, it was that such a movement could not possibly be prevented from reaching its appointed goals, though attempts to contain it might drive the rank and file into the ranks of opposition to the Western Bloc. The problem for France, therefore, was not merely to crush the communists — that was impossible to achieve till the

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(1) For the attitude of the non-communist supporters of Ho Chi Minh, see Virginia Thompson & Richard Adloff, The Left-Wing in Southeast Asia (New York, 1950) 35, 37.

(2) Ho Chi Minh's reply to foreign correspondents, vide Chapter I, n. 36; Harold R. Isaacs's interview with Ho Chi Minh, vide Chapter I, n. 77. Also see Ho's speech on the occasion of the inauguration of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam, Allan B. Cole, ed., Conflict in Indochina and International Repercussions (New York, 1956) 19-21.

the communist cause in Indo-China remained identified with the cause of nationalism, but to isolate them from the currents of nationalism in order to crush them. The first step taken by France to this end was the organization of the Associate States of Indo-China. France's allies helped her in this task by recognizing these states as the lawful states. (3)

In spite of it, the war in Indo-China appeared to be a war between France and Ho Chi Minh's government. Most of the fighting against Ho's troops was still being done by French troops. It was obvious to the United States that as long as the war in Indo-China was not drained of its colonial character, the popularity of Ho would continue to be enhanced. After the outbreak of the Korean War, it became far more necessary to exterminate the communists in Indo-China; but trends in Indo-China did not suggest that this goal of the Western Bloc would be easy to attain. In order to solve the dilemma in Indo-China, the United States began urging upon France to develop the fighting strength of the Associate States and to put them ultimately in charge of the fighting. (4) The

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(3) The new states of Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia were called Associate states, because they were still to attain independent statehood. The administration of foreign affairs, defence and currency still remained in the hands of France. The United States recognized them as "independent states within French Union" (vide Chapter II, n. 83), but Britain took them as "Associate States within the French Union," The Times (London) 8 February 1950.

(4) On 30 June 1952, a U.S.-Franco communique issued in Washington said that the U.S. government had agreed to cover 40% of the French military expenditure in Indo-China on the condition that additional aid would be used "to build up nationalist armies of the Associate States." Department of State Bulletin, 26 (30 June 1952) 1010.

calculation of the United States was that if the Associate States, instead of France, fought Ho's troops, the war in Indo-China would cease to be a colonial war. France was, however, to continue to fight Ho's troops till the Associate States acquired the needed military strength. When Dulles became Secretary of State in January 1953, he kept to this policy. (5)

In March 1953, Rene Mayer, the French Prime Minister, paid a visit to the United States and discussed with Eisenhower and Dulles "the plans for military action" in Indo-China. Mayer promised his hosts "to increase the effectiveness of the French and Associate States' forces in Indochina" and his hosts promised "to determine how and to what extent the United States might be able to contribute material and financial support to their achievement." (6) The new plan for military action, reportedly prepared by R. Salan, the Commander-in-Chief of the French Expeditionary Forces up to May 1953 and finally approved of by his successor Paul Henri Navarre, (7) conformed to the desires of the United States. The purpose of this so-called the Navarre Plan was two-fold. In the first place, it aimed at creating an operational force more powerful than that of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam. The number of Ho's fighting

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(5) Ibid., 28 (9 February 1953) 212-16.

(6) Ibid., (6 April 1953) 491.

(7) Donald Lancaster, The Emancipation of Indochina (London, 1961) 265.

troops was supposed to range between 300,000 and 400,000. The Navarre Plan aimed at the creation of an army of 550,000 men by the end of 1955. In the second place, it aimed at adding 125,000 Indo-Chinese to the existing strength of 175,000 Indo-Chinese in the army of the Associate States by the end of 1955. (8) With this plan, Dulles disclosed later, it was designed "to break the organized body of communist aggression by the end of the 1955 fighting season and thereby reduce the fighting to the guerilla warfare which could, in 1956, be met for the most part by the national forces of the three Associate States." (9) In June 1953, a military mission under the leadership of Lt. Gen. John W. O'Daniel was dispatched to Indo-China by the United States in pursuance of the promise made by Eisenhower to Mayer. (10) Consequent upon the Daniel Mission report, the United States promised to give France, prior to 1954, "additional financial resources not to exceed $385 millions" to assist France "to break up and destroy the regular enemy forces in Indochina," "with maximum speed and effectiveness." (11)

The Navarre Plan, however, was based on the assumption that the war in Indo-China would continue to remain localized. In order to ensure that its calculations were not upset by the

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(8) Ibid.

(9) Dulles' testimony before the Foreign Affairs Committee of the House of Representatives on 5 April 1954, Department of State Bulletin, 30 (19 April 1954) 583.

(10) Ibid., 28 (29 June 1953) 909.

(11) Ibid., 29 (12 October 1953) 486-7.

intervention of the Communist Bloc countries in the war, the United States continued to refrain from sending her own troops to Indo-China, as such a step would have given them a reason to send their troops to help Ho's troops. The impending cessation of hostilities in Korea, however, carried a danger that the Chinese, relieved from Korea, might be tempted to undertake engagements in Indo-China. As the Allies of France had helped her by recognizing the Associate States, so also they came to her aid when she was going to launch the most crucial of her plans for military action. On 16 April 1953, Eisenhower declared that "the new Soviet leadership confronts" a free world which knows that aggression in South-East Asia was "a threat to the whole free community" which, if necessary, was to be met by "united action." (12) A communiqué issued after a session of the North Atlantic Council on 25 April 1953, expressed its "deep concern" at the extension of hostilities in Indo-China which had increased the burden of France in "the struggle against aggression." (13) The conference of the Foreign Ministers of France, Britain, and the United States held at Washington during 10 and 14 July 1953, also expressed concern at "the struggle against aggressive communism" which France was carrying on in Indo-China. (14) On 27 July 1953, representatives of the sixteen Governments, whose

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(12) Ibid., 28 (27 April 1953) 601.

(13) Ibid., (11 May 1953) 674.

(14) Ibid., 29 (27 July 1953) 105.

troops had fought in Korea, made, following the signing of the Korean armistice, a declaration, warning the Communist Bloc that the "armistice must not result in jeopardising the restoration of the safeguarding of peace in any other part of Asia." (15) On 2 September 1953, Dulles warned the Communist Bloc against intervention in Indo-China which, he said, "could not occur without grave consequences which might not be confined to Indochina." (16) Thus supplemented, the Navarre Plan was launched in October 1953.

The Situation in Indo-China, and the Attitudes in France To the war in Indo-China

The Navarre Plan and the allied backing for its implementation provided a solution only of one side of the problem of the French resistance in Indo-China. The successful implementation of the Navarre Plan required, besides the support of the allies, a strong will to fight the Communists on the part of France. The existence of such a will on the part of France depended, in its turn, on the attitude of the people in the Associate States to the policies of France, and that of the French people to the war in Indo-China.

Regarding the attitude of the people within the Associate States towards the war, a hint had been given in January 1953. In a municipal election held in Vietnam, one of the parties

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(15) Ibid., 24 (August 1953) 247.

(16) Ibid., (14 September 1953) 339.

stood for "a genuine unification of the country" and "negotiations with the Viet Minh." (17) That such issues could be raised even in municipal elections indicated the extent of concern of the people for such matters.

Norodom Sihanouk's Revolt. The French authorities could afford to ignore the issues raised during municipal elections but they could hardly afford to do the same with Norodom Sihanouk, the monarch of Cambodia. In Cambodia, the movement for independence from French rule had been formally launched by some nationalists in 1940; the organization formed by them was known as Khmer Isaark (Free Cambodia). In 1951 Khmer Isaark joined hands with the Viet Minh. (18) Its popularity was on the increase when Sihanouk decided to steal its nationalistic thunder. In February 1953, he left Cambodia for a holiday in Europe, but soon the holiday turned out to be a crusade for the independence of Cambodia from French rule. In April, he reached New York, and declared at a press conference that unless the French gave his people "more independence within the next few months," they would join the Viet Minh. Sihanouk pleaded that France should accept his demand for independence as such a step would nip the Khmer Isaark in the bud. (19) As a result of his

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(17) Ellen Hammer, The Struggle for Indochina (California, 1954) 290.

(18) For detailed information about the Khmer Isaark, see Thompson & Adloff, "Cambodia Moves Towards Independence," Far Eastern Survey, 22 (August 1953) 106-10.

(19) New York Times, 19 April 1953.

campaign, France was constrained to give him some concessions. On 9 May 1953, two protocols were signed in Paris by the Cambodian Prime Minister, Penn Nouth, and the representative of the Government of France, conceding to the King the right to command the Cambodian army and granting complete judicial competence to the Government of Cambodia. (20) But in respect of economic matters and the extra-territorial rights of the French in Cambodia, the French Government still held its own. (21)

Sihanouk, who had returned to Cambodia in the meantime, was not at all satisfied with the new concessions. He asked for as much independence for Cambodia as had been granted to the Philippines by the United States, and wanted a Franco-Cambodian military agreement on the same basis as that of the U.S.-Philippines agreement of March 1947. (22) On 13 June he openly revolted against French rule and fled to Thailand where he announced his decision to fight the French "to obtain independence" for his country. (23)

Negotiations with the Associate States. Sihanouk's revolt was an enormous success. In the first place, he succeeded in convincing the ranks of the Khmer Issark that he was far from

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(20) The Hindu, 13 May 1953.

(21) Manchester Guardian, 12 May 1953.

(22) New York Times, 26 May 1953.

(23) Manchester Guardian, 15 June 1953.

being a mere tool of the French. (24) In the second place, it constrained France to make an offer, [on 3 July 1953] of negotiations to each Associate State for a review of their status within the French Union. (25)

Only Laos among the three Associate States gave in easily. On 22 October 1953, a treaty of "Amity and Friendship" was signed in Paris between Laos and France. By this treaty, France recognized Laos as a "fully independent and sovereign state" and Laos agreed to remain a member of the French Union, according to whose constitution, the foreign and defence policies of the Union were to be a subject for the Union. (26) An attempt to conclude a similar agreement with Cambodia failed; she held firmly to the stand that the constitution of the French Union should be so changed, as to conform to that of the British Commonwealth whose members had unfettered sovereignty. (27) In Vietnam, the case for continued French rule was rejected with no less emphasis than in Cambodia. In August 1953, Bao Dai, the King of Vietnam, left for Paris for negotiations regarding the new status for his state within the French Union. But soon it became clear

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(24) After Sihanouk's revolt, one of the most prominent among Khmer Isaark leaders, San Ngoc Thanh said that he had mistaken the King as a mere tool of the French. (New York Times, 24 June 1953). Sihanouk claimed in July that more than 3,000 guerillas had joined him after he revolted against the French rule. (New York Herald Tribune, 25 July 1953).

(25) New York Times, 4 July 1953.

(26) Manchester Guardian, 24 October 1953.

(27) Ibid., 14 July 1953.

that he did not have the support of the people of Vietnam for doing so. On 6 September 1953, a conference of nationalists was held to ventilate the nationalist reaction to the French offer. The conference issued an anti-French manifesto which also contained criticism of the rule by Bao Dai. (28) Bao Dai, who was then in Paris, was perplexed by the turn of events in Vietnam, in his absence, and immediately dispatched Prince Buu Loc, his trusted lieutenant, to convene another Congress. The purpose of this Congress, according to Bao Dai, was to determine the terms of independence and conditions under which Vietnam would be willing to remain within the Union, and the submission of a list of twenty names from which Bao Dai would choose five or six as additional members of the Vietnamese delegation which was already in Paris. (29) The Congress was held in Saigon from 12 to 17 October 1953; on 16 October, it passed a resolution, asking for the "total independence of Vietnam." (30) Buu Loc soon applied pressure on the delegates and got it amended. (31) Even so, the resolution as finally passed emphasized the right of the national assembly — whose members were to be elected on the basis of universal suffrage and which was to be completed before the conclusion of Paris negotiations — to ratify any agreement that was reached in Paris. The Congress also refused to designate

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(28) New York Times, 7 September 1953.

(29) Ibid., 9 September 1953.

(30) Ibid., 17 September 1953.

(31) Manchester Guardian, 19 October 1953.

candidates to participate in the negotiations with France, giving a clear indication thereby that it wanted to be completely free to disavow the results of the negotiations if these did not conform to its desires. (32)

War-Weariness in France. The unrest in Cambodia and Vietnam against French rule was in itself enough to break the morale of the Government of France which was fighting to preserve these two countries from the communists. It was obvious that even if France could exterminate communism from Indo-China, she would still lose the region to the nationalists. The resulting outlook for the future of French rule in Indo-China bore heavily on the political situation in France. As a matter of fact, weariness with the eight-year war had been mounting in France for some years, and the various French governments had been aware of it. Late in 1952, Prince Bun Hoi, a Vietnamese noble, had been dispatched to Rangoon by the French Government to discuss the settlement of the problem with a representative of Ho Chi Minh. Bun Hoi, however, did not succeed in his mission. (33) The beginning of negotiations for the armistice in Korea raised hopes that a similar course might be followed in Indo-China. The expression of a desire to that end by the Communist Bloc increased war-weariness within France. (34)

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(32) For the text of the resolution, see The Hindu, 19 October 1953.

(33) Hammer, n. 17, 310.

(34) On 2 August 1953, the Russian army paper 'Red Star' said that the Korean truce provided a fresh stimulus for ending the war in Indo-China. (New York Times, 3 August 1953). A broadcast from Peking on 14 September also stressed the possibility of a truce in Indo-China. (The Hindu, 16 September 1953).

This weariness, however, became an important factor in French politics, only after the Saigon Congress. Sihanouk's revolt, which had preceded the Saigon Congress, and reports about the proceedings of the Congress aroused "contemptuous anger" in France. (35) The French were intelligent enough to see that the French Union, in its current form, had no prospects of success in Indo-China; they were not interested in the war in Indo-China if victory of France was to be followed by liquidation of French rule. The feeling in France was that there was no point in losing French soldiers in Indo-China while Germany was being rearmed nearer home, if the latter was not to remain with France in future. A discussion on the problem of Indo-China in the National Assembly followed the conclusion of the Saigon Congress. The Assembly decided by 315 votes to 257, that everything should be done to achieve peace by negotiation in Indo-China. (36)

The Dien Bien Phu Crisis and U.S. Reaction to it

The Problem of Dien Bien Phu

The dilemma of the French Government cannot be described; it can only be imagined. On the one hand, it was being pressed by its people at home to abandon the struggle in Indo-China if it saw no prospect of the French Union in Indo-China. (37)

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(35) Manchester Guardian, 27 October 1953.

(36) New York Herald Tribune, 29 October 1953.

(37) While the French National Assembly pressed the government to explore the possibilities of peace in Indo-China, it also asked it to see that independence of the Associate States was granted within the French Union. Ibid.

Even while allowing the Government to fight, they wanted it to seek peace whenever such an opportunity arose. On the other hand, unrest against French rule in Cambodia and Vietnam was too real to be ignored. The allies of France, however, wanted her to fight in Indo-China in the interest of a common cause. As a matter of fact, the U.S. Government was reported to have urged France to bring her case before the United Nations, so that the communists could be condemned by the Security Council and allied help to France could assume more effective proportions. (38) Such a course would have mitigated the French burden, but at the same time, it would have deprived her of the direction of the war. Moreover, this policy would also have drained her of the capacity to influence political trends in Indo-China, and would lay open her colonial rule in Africa also, to the attack of the Afro-Asian Bloc in the United Nations, which, though not very large, had a vast and lively audience all over the world. Considering the mood of the people of France, this policy would have been dangerous for any government to pursue. (39)

In October 1953, the Government of France decided to make its most crucial move to escape from the dilemma in which it found itself. It opened an offensive on the forces of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam, disposed round Thanh Hoa, south

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(38) Manchester Guardian, 9 May 1953.

(39) See a report on the prevailing view in France regarding the possible reference of Indochinese War to the United Nations, New York Herald Tribune, 8 May 1953.

of the delta of the Red River. This was the beginning of the implementation of the Navarre Plan. Joseph Laniel, the French Prime Minister, justified this act as necessary in view of the intransigence of Ho Chi Minh, whom he accused of being apathetic to his call for peace. (40) At the same time, the French Government also started negotiations with the Associate States, with the professed intention of determining their new status within the French Union. On 20 November, French para-troops aptured Dien Bien Phu, a town which had been under Ho's control since the previous year.

The town of Dien Bien Phu did not have any major positional significance in the war between Ho's troops and the French. But towards the end of 1953, it was invested with tremendous significance by the French. The core of the Franco-Vietnamese army, the French Expeditionary Force, was concentrated on this town with a view to fight the highly trained mobile units of Ho's army. Under the Navarre Plan, the French Expeditionary Force was charged with the task of meeting the threat of the mobile units of Ho's forces. Its capture of Dien Bien Phu, therefore, meant that it was preparing for the final assault. Ho's troops accepted the challenge. When the French Expeditionary Force proceeded to provoke battle round Thanh Hoa, they retreated, but towards the end of the war, they, too, were reported to have been positioning themselves to meet the challenge thus thrown. (41)

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(40) Ibid., 29 October 1953.

(41) The Hindu, 27 December 1953.

The significance of the capture of Dien Bien Phu, therefore, was primarily political. It indicated that the Government of France was trying to provoke a direct showdown between its own crack units in Indo-China and those of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam. With Ho's troops, led by the skillful General Vo Nguyen Giap, accepting the challenge, the future of the war in Indo-China was pinned on the fate of Dien Bien Phu.

The Siege of Dien Bien Phu

While the Government of France had, it seems, given firm orders to the authorities in Indo-China to provoke battles with Ho's troops, it also remained on the lookout for opportunities to negotiate peace with Ho Chi Minh in deference to the wishes of its own people. In November 1953, Le Dinh Than, a delegate from the Democratic Republic of Vietnam to the World Peace Council session held in Vienna, said that the war in Indo-China could be ended by peaceful negotiations. (42) On 29 November, a Stockholm newspaper, Expressen, published a report of an interview with Ho Chi Minh. According to this report, Ho professed his preference for peaceful negotiations as a means to the settlement of the terms of independence for Vietnam. (43) The French press demanded an exploration of the desire for

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(42) The Times, 17 December 1953.

(43) The Hindu, 1 December 1953.

peaceful negotiations expressed by the Ho Government. (44) Meanwhile, the Soviet acceptance of the Western proposal for a conference of Foreign Ministers of the Soviet Union, the United States, Britain, and France came to the rescue of the French Government. The conference met in Berlin during January-February 1954, and V. M. Molotov, the Soviet Foreign Minister, agreed, professedly in deference to the wishes of France, (45) to convene jointly with France, Britain, and the United States, a conference in Geneva to discuss the problems of Korea and Indo-China.

Dulles was, however, sceptical about the prospects of the proposed conference. He advised Georges Bidault, the French Foreign Minister, against being complaisant as regards Indo-China, and urged him to go ahead with the implementation of the Navarre Plan. (46) His attitude to the coming encounter with Communist China at Geneva was that she would come to "account before the bar of world opinion" for her role in the Korean and Indochinese war. (47) In other words, Dulles was not contemplating any serious negotiation for peace with the communists at Geneva.

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(44) For a survey of the French press reactions to Ho's offer, see The Hindu, 13 December 1953.

(45) V. M. Molotov said in Berlin on 10 February 1954 that his government would readily discuss the Far Eastern problems at a wider conference than the one being held in Berlin if it was "a matter of such great urgency to France," Christian Science Monitor, 11 February 1954.

(46) Ibid., 18 February 1954.

(47) Department of State Bulletin, 30 (8 March 1954) 346.

In France, attitudes to the forthcoming conference on Indo-China varied. On 19 February 1954, Rene Pleven, the French Minister for National Defence, accompanied by General Ely, the Chief of Staff of the French Armed Forces, inspected defences in Indo-China. They, however, returned with contrary opinions. Ely told Laniel that the French defences in Indo-China were strong and could resist any offensive if it was launched by Ho's troops. (48) Pleven, on the other hand, confided to Laniel that the general military situation in Indo-China was unfavourable for France, and, therefore, advised him to send Ely to Washington "in order to inform our allies very exactly of the real military prospects." (49) Laniel, however, elected to rely on Ely's reports. On 5 March 1954, he told the National Assembly that the evacuation by Ho's troops of Laos, Cambodia, and South Vietnam and an agreement between France and the Democratic Republic of Vietnam for the creation of a no-man's land around Dien Bien Phu were his conditions for peace with the Democratic Republic. (50)

Meanwhile, the French troops based in Dien Bien Phu were further entrenching themselves. On 6 February 1954, the United States had dispatched 200 mechanics and twelve B-26 bombers to reinforce the French position there. (51) The Democratic Republic of Vietnam, however, was equally determined to deny the

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(48) Lancaster, n. 7, 294.

(49) Ibid., 295.

(50) Ibid., 294-5.

(51) New York Times, 7 February 1954.

French the advantage of being in control of Dien Bien Phu, while negotiating with the Communists at the Geneva Conference. No less than France, the Democratic Republic was thus determined to negotiate at Geneva from a position of strength.

The fateful day came on 13 March 1954 when Ho's troops took the offensive with an attack on Dien Bien Phu. The battle that ensued between the crack units of the opposing troops was a trial of strength between France and the Democratic Republic, each being equally determined to negotiate from a position of strength at Geneva. Soon after the opening of the battle, the French began to suffer reverses, till the French troops posted in Dien Bien Phu were subjected to a protracted seige by Ho's troops. They, however, did not surrender in the knowledge that their surrender would represent a decisive defeat for France in Indo-China. On 8 May 1954, however, they were constrained to surrender.

The Reaction of the United States to the Siege of Dien Bien Phu

The United States was committed not to send her troops to Indo-China. The decision to send material reinforcements to Indo-China on 6 February 1954 had caused apprehension in the United States that she might become involved in the war in Indo-China. (52) The Government, however, made definite

(52) See editorials asking for defining the U.S. attitude in New York Times, 9 February 1954; New York Herald Tribune, 8 February 1954; Christian Science Monitor, 10 February 1954. These newspapers also contained letters to the same effect during the week beginning from 7 February 1954. Several influential Senators also voiced their opposition to it, New York Herald Tribune, 15 February 1954.

pronouncements to remove any cause for alarm. On 10 February 1954, Eisenhower stated that he could "conceive of no greater tragedy than for the United States to become involved in war in Indo-china." (53) Charles Wilson, the Defence Secretary, also said that the United States would refrain from being involved in war in Indo-China. (54) On 18 February 1954, Admiral Radford, chairman of the Joint Chief of Staff and Walter Bedell Smith, Under-Secretary of State and himself an experienced soldier, told the Foreign Affairs Sub-Committee of the House of Representatives that the French had developed such a military strategy for Indo-China, that they would win the war even without the help of the U.S. troops. (55) In spite of the French reverse at Dien Bien Phu, the United States appeared to stick to her old policy. On 23 March 1954, Dulles told the press that a communist victory in Indo-China "in terms of the communist domination of Indochina" was not probable, and that U.S. policy towards the war in Indo-China was established "so far as the political aspects of it are concerned." He made it clear that in view of the definite principles of the U.S. policy regarding Indo-China, any further request for help by France would be "a matter for Defense people in any case." (56)

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(53) New York Times, 12 February 1954.

(54) Christian Science Monitor, 9 February 1954.

(55) New York Herald Tribune, 19 February 1953.

(56) Department of State Bulletin, 30 (5 April 1954) 512-13.

Dulles' press conference on 23 March 1954 was held before his meeting with Ely, who had been sent to Washington with word that Indo-China would be lost unless the United States intervened to save it. (57) After his press conference, Dulles met Radford and Ely and later discussed the problem with the President. What followed these conferences was a complete reversal of the attitude of the United States to the war in Indo-China. On 24 March 1954, Eisenhower indicated the shape of things to come in ~~the~~ U.S. policy. He stated that Indo-China was of "the most transcendent importance to the free world," (58) although, only a week back, he had considered it as "lying on the fringe or the periphery of our interests." (59) The logical conclusion was reached on 29 March 1954; Dulles speaking at the Overseas Press Club of America at New York said,

> Under the conditions of today, the imposition on Southeast Asia of the political systems of Communist Russia and its Chinese Communist ally, by whatever means, would be a grave threat to the whole free community. The United States feels that that possibility should not be passively accepted, but should be met by united action. These might involve serious risks. But these risks are far less than those that will face us a few years from now if we dare not be resolute today. (60)

This declaration of Dulles, approved in advance by Eisenhower, (61) stood in direct contrast to all the declarations

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(57) Chalmers M. Roberts, "The Day we Didn't Go to War," The Reporter, 10 (New York, 14 September 1954) 31.

(58) New York Times, 25 March 1954.

(59) Ibid., 18 March 1954.

(60) Department of State Bulletin, 30 (12 April 1954) 540.

(61) On 31 March, Eisenhower told his press conference that he had seen Dulles' speech before it was delivered and approved it. New York Times, 1 April 1954.

made by the United States on Indo-China before his fateful conference with Ely on 23 March 1954. On 7 April 1954, Dulles, in a broadcast, argued that his declaration of 29 March did not strike any new note in U.S. policy towards Indo-China, but was simply a reiteration of the policy outlined by Eisenhower on 16 April 1953. (62) It is, however, not possible to accept Dulles' comparison of the sense of his own speech made on 29 March 1954 with that of Eisenhower's made about a year earlier. What Eisenhower had said then was, that in case China sent her troops to assist Ho's troops, the Western Bloc would confront her. Eisenhower's speech of 16 April 1953, was, therefore, a warning to China against sending troops to Indo-China. In contrast to it, Dulles' plea to the allies for united action, as made on 29 March 1954, was occasioned not because the Chinese troops were supposed to be fighting on the side of Ho's troops — which possibility Eisenhower had made a condition for retaliation by the Western Bloc — but because a situation was likely to develop in Indo-China, which, according to earlier calculations, could not have developed without the active participation of the Communist Bloc troops in the war.

Although Dulles had no justifiable reason to compare his own speech of 29 March 1954 with that of Eisenhower of 16 April 1953, yet he could have justifiably claimed that his plan for united action was not a deviation from the general tenor of the

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(62) Department of State Bulletin, 30 (27 April 1954) 601. Eisenhower's speech of 16 April 1953, vide n. 12.

South-East Asia policy of the United States but its inevitable corollary. It had been the policy of the United States to contain the expansion of Communist rule within the borders of China. Since the outbreak of the Korean war, she had relied on her own military strength as well as that of her allies for the achievement of this aim. Her own forces in the northwestern Pacific had provided a safeguard against Communist expansion in that direction. France had held the fort in the direction of South East Asia. The function of France in Indo-China was not only to resist the further expansion of the rule of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam, but to exterminate it. Even on 23 March 1954, Dulles was confident that France would reach her goal in Indo-China. (63) When in the evening of the same day, he was informed about the impending collapse of French resistance in Indo-China, Dulles was caught unaware. It meant that a severe breach had occurred in the Pacific defence system of the United States. Dulles' plan for 'united action' in Indo-China was not a design for a new policy to replace the old, but meant to fill in the breach that had occurred in the military strategy for achieving an oft-repeated objective. His case before the Foreign Affairs Committee of the House of Representatives, that the United States must act in Indo-China to frustrate the "scheme" of the Communist Bloc, (64) rationalized his plan for united action better than his argument that it was a simple

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(63) Vide n. 56.

(64) Vide n. 9.

reiteration of an older policy. In form, it was a new policy in spite of Dulles' claims to the contrary; but in spirit, it was an inevitable outgrowth of a policy laid down four years earlier by Acheson, that the United States would meet Soviet thrusts everywhere and by all means. (65)

The Reactions to the Dulles Plan

Under the constitution of the United States, it is Congress which has the right to declare war. (66) It was, therefore, necessary for Dulles to sound Congress before taking any decisive step regarding his plan for 'united action' in Indo-China. On 3 April 1954, Dulles and Radford conferred with a group of Congressional leaders, consisting both of Republicans and Democrats. John McCormack, one of the group, said later, that at that meeting Dulles explained his plan for attack on the besiegers of Dien Bien Phu, and proposed to the Congressmen "to commit ourselves in Indochina even without any assistance from any other country." The Congressional leaders did not disagree with the rationale for united action, but advised Dulles to secure support for his plan from friends and allies with interests in the Pacific region. (67) The stand thus taken

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(65) Vide Chapter II, n. 82.

(66) See Section 8 of the Constitution of the United States of America, in D. W. Brogan, Government of the People (New York, 1933) Appendix I, 389-90.

(67) U.S. Congressional Records, 101, No. 32 (House of Representatives, 22 February 1955) 1655.

by the group meant that they would vote for his case in Congress, if it enjoyed the support of the allies.

The Reaction in South and South-East Asia

It is clear that in making out his case for united action in Indo-China, Dulles was convinced that the issue in Indo-China was primarily one between the Western Bloc and the Communist Bloc, and that other aspects of it were secondary to its primary character. The Communist Bloc, too, had the same understanding of the problem of Indo-China as had been evidenced by the recognition extended by its members to Ho Chi Minh's Government as the lawful government of Vietnam. (68) In the framework of Asian history, however, the struggle in Indo-China was primarily one between colonialism and anti-colonialism. The Governments of the newly independent South and South East Asian countries could not have afforded the luxury of taking such a stand on the problem of Indo-China as would be tantamount to ignoring the struggle between colonialism and nationalism in that area. Anti-colonialism was the most powerful force in the history of these countries; their leaders could not have ignored it without jeopardizing their own political existence. Nehru, U Nu and Sukarno did not create this force; each of them came forward to lead a given movement. They were capable of influencing the course of this movement, but not of changing its general nature.

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(68) Communist China recognized Ho's Government as the lawful Government of Indo-China on 20 January 1950. (The Hindu, 21 January 1950). Russia followed on 2 February 1950. (The Hindu, 3 February 1950).

Had they faltered in leading it, others would have replaced them. No political group other than the communists was likely to replace them in case they failed. Nehru, U Nu, and Sukarno - all of them were demonstrably non-communist. But on the issue of colonialism versus anti-colonialism, they could not be expected to pave the way for their rivals by taking a stand in favour of colonialism. Given their opposition to communism on the one hand and the requirements of their leadership on the other, there could hardly have been a more difficult problem than that of Indo-China in which to demonstrate their views on communism and colonialism. It is important to note that till Dulles expressed his intention to fight the communists in Indo-China, the non-aligned leaders of Asia had preferred to maintain a non-committal stand regarding Indo-China. They had supported the case for the independence of Indo-China and denounced the role of French colonialism; but at the same time, they had also refrained from recognizing Ho Chi Minh's Government. Nor, was there ever convened a conference on Indo-China, like that on Indonesia in January 1949, to organize support for the independence struggle in Indo-China.

It is in this background that the reactions of the Governments of the newly independent countries of South and South-East Asia should be examined. In the context of Asian history, Dulles' plan meant a plan to support an imperialist power like France against a nationalist movement triumphantly marching ahead under the leadership of Ho Chi Minh. When Dulles announced his plan, the old image of the United States as an

anti-colonialist nation had already evaporated from Asia. It came at a time when the United States was being considered the most arrogant of the powerful countries of the world. Various steps taken by the United States following the outbreak of war in Korea, like the neutralization of Formosa, the crossing of the 38th Parallel in Korea, the Japanese Peace Treaty, military aid to France and Britain to fight the communists in Indo-China and Malaya respectively, and the security pact with Japan, worked to tarnish the former image of the United States. The brusque treatment given to the protests of the Asian Governments against these steps led to the development of profound anti-U.S. feeling in Asia. Communist propaganda encouraged it; a statement made in February 1954 by Walter S. Robertson, U.S. Assistant Secretary of State for Far Eastern Affairs, that his Government was "undertaking to maintain for an indefinite period of years American dominance in the Far East," (69) further aggravated it. It reinforced the impression, of lately gaining ground in India, Burma and Indonesia that the United States would pursue ruthlessly her own interests in their part of the world, even without regard to the welfare and freedom of the countries of this region. (70)

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(69) Manchester Guardian, 25 February 1954.

(70) The arms aid pact between the United States and Pakistan had been responsible for this impression gaining ground in India. (For India's reaction to U.S. aid to Pakistan, see Sisir Gupta, India and Regional Integration in Asia (Bombay, 1964) 53-7; for Burma's reaction to U.S. stand on KMT troops issue, vide Chapter III, n. 80). In Indonesia, too, the impression among the people had been strong that the United States, though in a position to compel the Dutch to leave West New Guinea, were reluctant to do so.

The growing anti-Americanism in Asia was not an isolated trend but a manifestation of the deep-rooted anti-colonialism in these countries. It was incumbent on the ruling régimes in the newly independent countries of Asia to save their peoples from what they considered colonialist machinations. Robertson resented the "misinterpretation" being put on his statement. (71) Even if we appreciate Robertson's resentment, the fact remains that his statement lacked subtlety. The peoples of North America and Europe on the one hand and those of Asia on the other were living under two entirely different historical conditions. It would be useful to repeat here that communism in the Asian historical framework was not, as it was in Europe or North America, a subversive force but one of the powerful ideas being used by its followers for winning the allegiance of the Asian peoples. If the ruling régimes failed to represent the popular resentment and fears, the communists were waiting to replace them.

Robertson's statement thus raised the fundamental issue in the struggle between liberalism and communism in Asia. Its Asian significance lay in its being a challenge to imperialism. The issue that it raised therefore, was whether the non-communists in power could meet it or not. The communists were making promises in this regard. The non-communist ruling régimes, therefore, were constrained under the pressure of circumstances to denounce, what appeared to be them, American colonialism.

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(71) The Hindu, 17 March 1954.

On 28 February, the Indian Prime Minister, Nehru proclaimed on behalf of all Asians, in reply to Robertson that "Asians do not propose to accept American dominance." (72)

Dulles' statement of 29 March 1954 further aggravated anti-Americanism in Asia; following on Robertson's statement, it appeared as the beginning of the end. Since it was, in the context of Asian history, a logical development of Robertson's statement, Nehru's reply to Robertson had to catch up with it. On 24 April, Nehru denounced Dulles' statement as "a kind of unilateral declaration of the Monroe Doctrine over the countries of Asia." (73) A conference of the Prime Ministers of Ceylon, Burma, Indonesia, Pakistan, and India was held in Colombo from 26 April to 1 May 1954. The conference called for a ceasefire in Indo-China, withdrawal of French rule from Indo-China, and an agreement guaranteeing non-intervention in Indo-China, by China, Britain, the Soviet Union and the United States. (74) The Asian reply to Dulles' call for 'united action' in Indo-China was thus a counter-call for a ceasefire and the non-intervention in Indo-China. The antithesis between the two needs no comment.

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(72) Ibid., 2 March 1954.

(73) India, Parliamentary Debates, House of the People 4 Part ii (24 April 1954) 5579.

(74) R.I.I.A. Documents 1954, 167. The communique issued by the Colombo Conference proposed the same solution for the Indo-China problem which Nehru had proposed on 24 April 1954 in his speech to the Lok Sabha. (India, Parliamentary Debates, (House of the People, 4 Part ii, 24 April 1954) 5581-3.)

The hostile reaction to the Dulles plan, however, should not be taken to mean that the Asian Governments favoured the Communist Bloc in the Cold War. Nehru, leading what appeared to be then, the revolt of ~~the~~ Asia against the Western Bloc, was the most determined opponent of communism in Asia. (75) U Nu and Sukarno were also strong opponents of communism in their respective countries. But all of them were leaders of anti-colonialist movements and each of them was anxious to maintain his anti-colonialist thunder. Their anti-American utterances, therefore, appear to have been addressed primarily to their own peoples, who welcomed such utterances. But the communists promised to provide what the peoples wanted, if the non-communists failed to rise to the occasion.

It is significant that the Philippines which supported the Dulles plan "in principle," (76) proclaimed that the powers undertaking to fight the communists in Indo-China, must give a pledge to respect "the right of the Asian peoples to self-determination." (77) The Governments of Ceylon and Pakistan,

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(75) Vincent Sheean says, "But to suppose that Mr. Nehru has a weakness for communism is arrant nonsense." "The case for India" Foreign Affairs, 30 (October 1951-2) 85. Dulles himself, while on a tour of India between 20 and 23 May 1953, declared at a press conference that India was "acting according to its best judgment to promote democracy in the world." He added, "I have no doubt, whatever in my mind, that the government . . . in India are strongly opposed to totalitarianism and its spread." The Hindu, 21 May 1953.

(76) Statesman, 16 April 1954.

(77) The Republic of the Philippines, Official Gazette, 50 (April 1954) 1540.

though sympathetic to the plight of the United States, (78) nevertheless joined those of India, Burma, and Indonesia in denouncing colonialism. (79) Their reactions, therefore, showed that not only the Governments of India, Burma, and Indonesia but also the pro-American regimes in Ceylon, Pakistan, and the Philippines were mindful of the working of anti-colonialism in their respective countries, and of the probable impact of their unqualified acceptance of the Dulles plan on their respective domestic situations. The fact that the reactions of the Governments of India, Indonesia, and Burma to the Dulles plan were so bellicose, is to be attributed to the American patronage being given to Pakistan, Formosa and the Netherlands, in spite of protests of the Governments of India, Burma, and Indonesia.

Thailand was the only country in Asia which lent unqualified support to the Dulles Plan. (80) We have seen that Thailand was not keen upon aligning herself with any existing power bloc till she could afford to maintain such a stand. The rise of a powerful China produced a new situation for Thailand, for, the new régime in China was openly contemptuous of the ruling regime in Thailand. This fact brought her face to

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(78) Both the governments of Pakistan as well as Ceylon granted the transit and landing rights to the U.S. military aircrafts engaged in airlifting paratroops from Paris to Hanoi. (The Hindu, 28 April 1954). That the United States may request for similar facilities from India had been discussed in the Indian Parliament and Nehru had declared in the Council of States on 22 April 1954 that such a request, if made by the United States would be turned down. Ibid., 23 April 1954.

(79) See the communique of the Colombo Conference, vide n. 73.

(80) New Times of Burma (Rangoon), 11 April 1954.

to face with a powerful and hostile neighbour. (81) Her past experience of a policy of neutrality had not been satisfactory. She had also known that friendly countries, however powerful they might be, could leave Thailand to her own devices if not already committed to come to her assistance. (82) Since the rise to power of the Communists in China, the search for security had been the most powerful operation in the Thai foreign policy. The Thai Government was keen upon securing a situation in which the intervention of the Western Great Powers on its side in case of a war, was never left in doubt. The Dulles plan promised Thailand what she had been waiting for, hence her enthusiasm at it.

The Reaction of Britain and Australia to the Dulles Plan

The reaction of Britain and Australia to the Dulles Plan, though in the ultimate analysis, similar to those of the non-aligned countries, was, however, not predicated ~~for~~ on similar ~~reasons~~ desires. While the non-aligned countries resented the decision

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(81) For more detailed analysis of China as a factor in the Thai foreign policy, see Amry Vandenbosch & Richard A. Butwell, Southeast Asia Among the World Powers (Lexington, 1957) 163-5, 175-7, 178-9. Also see John Kerry King, "Thailand's Bureaucracy and the Threat of Communist Subversion," Far Eastern Survey, 23 (November 1954) 119.

(82) This refers to the Anglo-American reaction to Japan's move on Thailand during the second world war. For a detailed treatment of this topic, see J. Coast, Some Aspects of Siamese Politics (New York, 1953), 9-17.

of Dulles, Britain (83) and Australia (84) welcomed U.S. interestedness in the defence of South-East Asia. But they doubted if united action by the Allies in Indo-China, at that stage, could save it. They opined, therefore, that France should persist with a holding war till a settlement in regard to Indo-China could be arrived at, at the coming Geneva conference. They held that even partition of Indo-China should be agreed to, if that appeared as the only solution of the Indo-China problem. (85) The United States was not opposed to the principle of partition of Indo-China, as such, but was sceptical about its worth as a measure of peace with the communists. (86)

The reaction of Australia and Britain, however, was so categorically against the Dulles plan for 'united action,' that the United States soon changed the shape of her proposition. She now proposed that an ad hoc coalition, consisting of the United States, Britain, France, Australia, New Zealand, Thailand, the Philippines, and the three Associate States of Indo-China, should be formed immediately. This coalition should issue a

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(83) Anthony Eden, Memoirs (London, 1960) 91.

(84) Commenting on Dulles' speech of 29 March 1954, Casey said in the House of Representatives that "Australia cannot but welcome this American interest in preserving the security and independence of the nations of South-East Asia and the South Pacific." Current Notes, 25 (April 1954) 287.

(85) Eden, n. 83, 92. For Australia's stand, see Casey's statement in the Australian House of Representatives, Parliamentary Debates (New Series), House of Representatives, 4 (10 August 1954) 97.

(86) Ibid.

solemn declaration of their readiness to take concerted action under Article 51 of the U.N. Charter, against continued interference by China in the Indo-China war. The United States also proposed that simultaneously with keeping a watch on developments in Indo-China, the proposed coalition should also set about organizing a collective defence pact for South-East Asia. (87) On 4 April 1954, Eisenhower in a personal letter to Churchill, urged him to accept U.S. plan. (88) On 7 April 1954, Eisenhower, magnifying his government's concern for Indo-China, said at a press conference, that South-East Asia was like a "row of dominoes," Indo-China being the first in the row. Consequently, if Indo-China was to fall to the communists, "what would happen to the last one was the certainty that it would go very quickly." (89)

The United States, it would appear, had released her trump card by converting her plan for united action into a plan for a South-East Asia defence pact. Most of those proposed for the membership of the ad hoc coalition had been advocating the case for a South-East Asia-~~centric~~ based Pacific security pact; U.S. refusal to participate in the making of such a pact without the non-aligned powers of South and South-East Asia had been the biggest

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(87) Ibid., 92-3.

(88) James Shepley, "How Dulles Averted War," U.S. News and World Report, 40 (Washington, 27 January 1956) 131. This article is based on an interview given by Dulles, to its author, of the negotiations regarding united action in Indo-China. It was originally published in Life magazine on 16 January 1956 and was reproduced in U.S. News and World Report.

(89) The Hindu, 8 April 1954.

hurdle in its way. In order to neutralize India's continued opposition to the collective defence arrangements in Asia, Dulles proposed her exclusion from it, as also that of Formosa, Japan, and South Korea. (90) Dulles calculated that if the territorial scope of the proposed pact were confined to South-East Asia, India's opposition to it could be neutralized. Since many of the countries approached by the United States had been the champions for a collective defence arrangement for South-East Asia and the Pacific Dulles believed that he would obtain their support for his new plan.

Dulles' new plan met with the enthusiastic approval of Britain and Australia who had opposed his former plan for united action in Indo-China. Still there remained a fly in the ointment; Dulles wished to see the formation of an ad hoc coalition to precede the actual formation of the South-East Asia Collective Defence Pact. The purpose of this coalition would have been to warn China against continued interference in Indo-China. It, therefore, followed that if China decided to ignore its existence, the ad hoc body would go into action. Neither Britain nor Australia believed that China would take note of its existence. The result, therefore, would be war. Since they were ready to accept the partition of Indo-China, they felt that war would not be the right instrument for achieving that objective. They also felt that if France continued a holding war in Indo-China, which they believed she could do,

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(90) Eden, n. 83, 97.

any other measure, such as the proposed ad hoc coalition was unnecessary, and at the same time, dangerous, as it would further alienate the Asian Governments from the Western Powers. (91)

On 11 April 1954, Dulles reached London to talk the matter over personally with Anthony Eden, Britain's Foreign Secretary. (92) In his conversations with Eden, Dulles maintained his point, that an ad hoc coalition and the proposed South-East Asia pact were related issues, the former being the first step to the latter. Eden, on the other hand, sought to disentangle, what he considered, two different issues from each other. While he welcomed the proposal for a South-East Asia pact, he opposed Dulles' case for an ad hoc coalition. On 13 April, they issued a joint statement, agreeing "to take part, with other countries principally concerned, in an examination of the possibility of establishing a collective defence" for South East Asia and South Pacific. (93) From London, Dulles went to Paris, where a joint statement by Dulles and Bidault, similar to the Eden-Dulles statement, was issued on 14 April 1954. (94)

Dulles returned from his trip to London and Paris, convinced that France could carry on a holding war in Indo-China. Since he was not opposed to the partition of Indo-China as such, he was convinced by Eden that his plans either

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(91) Ibid., 93-4.

(92) For an account of the conversations, ibid., 95-6.

(93) Department of State Bulletin, 30 (26 April 1954) 622.

(94) Ibid.

for 'united action' or for an ad hoc coalition would not make the problem of the Western powers easier than it was. The communiques issued on his talks in London and Paris indicated that he had for the present agreed to give up his plan for action in Indo-China.

On 23 April 1954, Dulles reached Paris to attend a meeting of the NATO Council. From Paris, he was scheduled to proceed to Geneva where the Conference on Korea and Indo-China was to open on 26 April 1954. On 23 April 1954, however, he was shown a telegram which had been sent to the French Government by General Navarre. It said that the French troops would be constrained to give up their struggle against Ho's troops, if no assistance was rendered to them. Navarre asked for a massive air-strike to save Dien Bien Phu. (95)

Navarre's telegram upset Dulles' calculations regarding Indo-China. He felt that if the French were not assisted to hold Dien Bien Phu, they might abandon the struggle altogether. The consequences would be that the communists would come to negotiate at Geneva, with Dien Bien Phu in their pocket and the whole of Indo-China lying at their mercy. He believed that with a situation so favourable to them, the communists would not be content only with the northern half of Vietnam, but would ask for more and the Western powers would not be in a position to resist their claim.

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(95) Roberts, n. 57, 34. The account of Dulles' renewal of his case for 'united action' is based on the account of it given in Eden, n. 83, 100-6. Roberts' article is being used for verifying Eden's narrative.

Dulles immediately informed Eden, who was also in Paris, about the situation in Indo-China and proposed that the Western powers must resort to 'united action' to hold the communists in Indo-China. Eden was scheduled to fly to Geneva from Paris on 24 April; but after a conference with Dulles and Bidault, Eden returned to London for consultations with his Government regarding Dulles' appeal for 'united action.' (96) There were urgent meetings of the Cabinet, Service Ministers and Chiefs of Staff at the British Prime Minister's official residence. (97) The British Government, however, once again kept to its earlier stand regarding 'united action.' On 25 April, Eden left London for Geneva and conveyed the decision of his Government to Bidault, who was waiting for him at Orly airport in Paris. With this step Dulles' plan for 'united action' was finally extinguished.

The whole story of the negotiations regarding 'united action' suggests that it was Britain's uncompromising opposition to it that sealed its fate. But Eisenhower stated at a press conference on 29 April 1954 that "British advice had not affected what the United States should do in any specific instance for giving aid to France." (98) Eisenhower, thus, suggested that the decisive influence that constrained his Administration to change its plan regarding united action in Indo-China was not that of Great Britain, but came from some other sources. There

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(96) Roberts, n. 57, 34.

(97) The Times, 26 April 1954.

(98) Ibid., 30 April 1954.

is evidence which might be summoned to support the contention that within the administration also, the opposition to the plan for 'united action' was fierce. General Mathew Ridgway, then Chief of Staff of the U.S. Armed Forces, wrote, after his retirement, that ~~the~~ Army's analysis of the hazards involved in the proposition for 'united action' played a considerable part in the decision not to embark on the project. (99) McCormack also testified later that excepting Admiral Radford, no member of the Joint Chiefs of Staff favoured the case for the 'united action' in Indo-China. (100) As regards Dulles' revival of his case for 'united action' on the eve of the Geneva Conference, there is evidence to support the thesis that he put off his plan after discussions with his advisers, and that his decision had been taken before Eden returned with his Government's message regarding the plan and conveyed it to Bidault at Orly. (101)

Yet, Eisenhower's argument that Britain had not influenced U.S. policy regarding the war in Indo-China seems to be incredible for two reasons. In the first place, Dulles had taken his decision to resort to 'united action' in the face of the opposition of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. That they were against the plan for 'united action' had been conveyed to McCormack and other Congressional leaders on 3 April 1954, when Dulles and Radford had met them. The fact that Dulles pursued his case for

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(99) Mathew B. Ridgway, Memoirs (New York, 1956) 275-7.

(100) McCormack's statement in the House of Representatives, vide n. 67.

(101) Roberts, n. 57, 35; New York Times, 25 April 1954.

'united action' in Indo-China, in spite of the opposition of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, indicated that the Administration would have ordered its troops to fight in Indo-China if Britain had agreed to support the plan. The Congressional leaders too had agreed to support the case for 'united action,' if the Administration received the support of the allies. (102) In the second place, in the United States, as in other democratic countries, the civilian wing of the Administration firmly controls the military wing. Instead of any indication to the effect that the Joint Chiefs of Staff, being against the 'united action,' were determined to disobey the orders of the President in this instance, evidence is to the effect that they were poised for action and awaiting the orders of the President. In consultation with the French Command in Indo-China, the U.S. Pacific Command had prepared a blueprint for action in Indo-China known as "Operation Vulture." (103) This evidence suggests that the decisive influence in making the United States desist from resorting to armed action in Indo-China was not that of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, but of Britain. The Administration had not expected Congressional support for unilateral action in Indo-China, because the Congressional leaders whom Dulles had met on 3 April 1954, knew that the Joint Chiefs of Staff were against it. Any plan that Dulles might have had in his mind

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(102) McCormack, vide n. 67.

(103) Lancanster, n. 7, 300.

for unilateral action had been given up then and there. Since then, he had been pursuing a case for 'united action,' which was finally foiled by Britain.

It is, however, important to bear in mind, factors on which the reactions of Britain and Australia on the one hand, and those of the non-aligned countries of Asia on the other, against the Dulles plan were based. Unlike the non-aligned countries of Asia, Britain and Australia did not resent the decision of the United States to intervene in Indo-China; they opposed the contemplated step on the ground that it would not obtain the desired result. Their respective attitudes towards the next step proposed by the United States clearly demonstrated the antithesis between their views. Britain and Australia welcomed the decision of the United States to take no further risks as regards the defence of South-East Asia and the Pacific, and establish a collective defence machinery for the defence of South-East Asia. The non-aligned countries of Asia, however, opposed the latter with the same resolution as they had assailed the proposition for united action. Britain and Australia, while opposing the Dulles plan for united action, had at the same time agreed to join in the formation of a South-East Asia Collective Defence Pact, in spite of the criticism of the proposed step by the non-aligned countries of Asia.

Although the United States had given up her opposition to the case for a Pacific Pact and its older champions had, on their part, agreed to the U.S. point of view that the scope of

the proposed Pacific Pact should be limited to South-East Asia and the South Pacific to begin with, yet the task of forming the proposed pact had not become any easier than at any time in the past. The difficulty was not because of the opposition in Asia to the proposed step; in fact, as we have seen, agreement regarding it had been reached among interested powers, in spite of the opposition to it in Asia. The difficulties were to arise from the differing ideas about the nature of the proposed pact, held by the United States on the one hand and Britain and others on the other.

As far as the United States was concerned, her conditions for leading the formation of a Pacific equivalent of the NATO did not yet exist. There was not, in existence, any "effective plan for collaboration" (104) among the countries of Asia, nor any indication to the effect that the newly independent countries of Asia would join any organization of that nature. As a matter of fact, all indications on the Asian political scene were to the effect that such an organization, if formed, would be denounced in Asia.

But there was another strand, too, in U.S. Pacific policy whose disposition was as clear as her attitude towards the movement for a Pacific Pact. She had been determined, since the beginning of the 'Cold War,' to maintain a 'situation of strength' vis-a-vis the Communist Bloc. Since the Korean war,

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(104) Acheson, vide Chapter II, n. 36.

her policy had been to maintain it through a powerful defence machine; she had ruthlessly set aside the protestations of the non-aligned Governments of Asia against steps to that end. France had been depicted as playing a vital part in its working. The collapse of the French defences in Indo-China, therefore, meant the breakdown of a vital part of the U.S. defence machine in the Pacific. The United States was interested in finding a replacement for this broken part of her defence-machine. Her case, from 'united action' through an 'ad hoc coalition' to 'South-East Asia Collective Defence Pact' appeared, as it were, the pre-requisitions for the replacement for the broken part. When 'united action' was not available, the United States asked for the 'ad hoc coalition' which appeared like requisitioning a temporary replacement, till a permanent replacement in the shape of a formal 'South-East Asia Collective Defence Pact,' could be obtained. There was thus a causal relationship between the collapse of French defences in Indo-China and U.S. acquiescence in the proposition for a Pacific Pact.

Though the older advocates of the case for a Pacific Pact, welcomed the decision of the United States to form the proposed pact jointly with them, they were also eager to establish a Pacific Pact which would as much express their own fears and desires, as those of the United States. In the following chapter, the course and the consequences of this fundamental difference between the United States and her allies regarding the nature of the proposed pact is recounted.

Chapter Five

THE BIRTH OF S.E.A.T.O.

In the preceding chapter, it was shown that even though the United States had become far more eager to establish a Pacific Pact than its older proponents and they, too, had agreed to the U.S. view that the scope of the proposed Pacific Pact should be initially confined to South-East Asia and South Pacific, yet the problem of establishing the proposed pact had not thereby become easier than in the past. As the matter of executing the agreement proceeded further, it transpired that the United States had not necessarily moved away from her frequently stated position on the issue of a Pacific Pact. Her proposals for united action, the ad hoc coalition as well as the collective defence pact, though qualitatively far removed from each other, were variants of the same equation. Each was similarly conceived as a replacement for the broken part of the U.S. defence machine in the Pacific region. None of them was conceived as the design for a new over-all defence and political policy. To her, the acceptance of her suggestion for a South-East Asia alliance by the older proponents of a Pacific Pact meant, therefore, their agreement to her own proposition of it.

But this was not so; the older advocates of the case for a Pacific Pact felt that the United States had come round to

realize the need for a Pacific Pact as had been proposed by them.

Consequently, the agreement that had been reached between the United States on the one hand and the older proponents of a Pacific Pact on the other, soon turned out to be misconceived. Yet, each side was so dedicatedly given to the cause of a formal agreement between the two, for the defence of South-East Asia, that each was alike unwilling to let the opportunity slip. As a result, the South-East Asia Collective Defence Treaty was signed on 8 September 1954 at Manila. Inevitably it bore the strain of differences between its founders. In this chapter, the circumstances of its birth are commented on.

The Anglo-U.S. Wrangle Over the Nature of the Proposed Pact

The Cause and Nature

The Eden-Dulles talks of April 1954 had led to two concrete results. In the first place, they had agreed to establish in time, jointly with other interested countries, a collective defence pact for the defence of South-East Asia and the South Pacific. In the second place, they had also agreed to refrain from taking any such action as would seal the fate of the Geneva Conference in advance. (1) Neither Eden nor Dulles was dissatisfied with the outcome of the talks.

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(1) U.S.-U.K. statement 13 April 1954, Department of State Bulletin, 30 (26 April 1954) 622. The part of the statement dealing with the proposed Geneva conference said, "It is our hope that the Geneva conference would lead to the restoration of peace in Indochina."

Dulles, for his part, was only interested in finding a replacement for the broken part of the American Pacific defence machine, so that it might be switched into action in time. Although Dulles had agreed not to disturb the proceedings at Geneva, and he adhered to the promise fairly if not helpfully, yet he never rated the chances of success of the Geneva conference high. (2) Partly for this reason and partly for its own sake, Dulles wanted to get his defence machine repaired, so that it might not be unworkable when the need for its use arose. He, therefore, wished that while the Geneva conference might go ahead, those interested in the establishment of the proposed collective defence pact for South-East Asia, should set about it expeditiously. (3) Since Eden and Bidault had agreed to his suggestion for a South-East Asian alliance, he believed that the United States might pursue it without delay. He returned from his European tour, convinced that although Britain had opposed his case for united action and an ad hoc coalition, she had yet

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(2) Dulles' statement of 20 April 1954, Department of State Bulletin, 30 (3 May 1954) 669. Before leaving for Geneva, Dulles said, "Ever since the Berlin agreement to seek peace in Indochina, the Communist forces have stepped up the intensity of their aggression. . . . This is not a good prelude to Geneva." See also a statement of similar import made by Dulles before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee on 4 June 1954, Department of State Bulletin, 34 (23 January 1956) 123.

(3) Dulles understood the outcome of his talks in London and Paris as the following: "It was a matter of common knowledge that if there should be breakdown of the Geneva talks then the British and the French, were prepared to go ahead with us on the programme of 'united action.' It involved, if necessary a common military effort there with whatever weapons would be appropriate." Department of State Bulletin, 34 (23 January 1956) 123.

agreed to his proposition for the defence of South-East Asia by agreeing to join the proposed pact. (4) In fact, having observed the reactions to his plan for united action, Dulles had reconciled himself to the prospective loss of that part of Indo-China to the Communist Bloc which had either already fallen or might fall in the meantime, under the control of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam. (5) He was genuinely convinced that by pursuing his own plan for a South-East Asia alliance, he would not be acting contrary to the promise given to Eden. He returned to Washington on 15 April 1954; on 17 April, he sent invitations to the envoys of Britain, France, Australia, New Zealand, Thailand, the Philippines, and the three Associate States of Laos, Cambodia and Vietnam, to meet him on 20 April 1954 to discuss preliminary matters concerning the proposed pact. (6)

Eden was especially satisfied with his talks with Dulles. His Government was one of the old proponents of the idea of a

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(4) Statesman, 17 April 1954. Back at Washington on 15 April 1954, Dulles told the pressmen, "I am satisfied . . . Chances of a 10-nation pact for South East Asia have been enhanced by my talks at London and Paris."

(5) At a press conference, on 11 May 1954, Dulles said, " . . . they are extremely important and that the problem of saving South-East Asia is far more difficult if they are lost. But I do not want to give the impression either that if events that we could not control . . . should lead to their being lost, that we should consider the whole situation hopeless, and we should give up in despair. We do not give up in despair." Department of State Bulletin, 30 (24 May 1954) 782.

(6) New York Herald Tribune, 18 April 1954.

Pacific Pact. He, therefore, welcomed the decision of the United States to form, jointly with others, a collective defence pact. He considered his agreement with Dulles regarding the establishment of a South East Asia alliance as a new and highly significant matter which had to be carefully pursued. To this end, he felt, it was necessary to make an objective appraisal of the situation in South-East Asia and of the abiding interests of its prospective members. Since the Geneva conference was scheduled to deal with one of the most significant sectors of South-East Asia, Eden preferred to await its results. He told the House of Commons that the nature and shape of the proposed pact would "certainly be influenced by what happens at Geneva." He also said that all the Commonwealth governments" including, of course, the Government of India" would be consulted as "the matter develops." (7) He felt that the haze over South-East Asia cast by the confusion prevailing over Indo-China, must be lifted, and that Britain, as also other members, should take note of her interests in a clearer atmosphere. Eden also believed that if the negotiations designed to lead to the formation of the proposed pact were immediately launched, the fate of the Geneva conference would be sealed in advance. Although he was not sure if the coming Geneva conference would lead to a settlement of the Indo-China problem, he was nevertneless determined to make a bid for it. He was sure that he had Dulles' support

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(7) U.K. Parliamentary Debates, House of Commons, 526 (14 April 1954) cols. 969-75.

for the contemplated bid; (8) so, when Dulles invited the British envoy Sir Roger Makins, as also the envoys of eight other countries, Eden cabled instructions to him to protest against the contemplated meeting, as it was being held in spite of "our agreement in London." (9)

Thus, within a week of the talks with which both of them had professed satisfaction, Eden and Dulles had fallen out regarding what they had agreed to. Yet, neither of them was prepared to attribute it to any misunderstanding. Dulles ascribed it to "a change of heart" on the part of Great Britain, (10) and Eden, to a tendency in the United States "to think the time past when they need consider the feelings or difficulties of their allies." (11) In spite of the accusations they levelled against each other, it would be fair to attribute their differences to misunderstanding on the part of both. The fact that the United States was not contemplating any change in the broader aspects of her Pacific policy caused the misunderstanding. Dulles did not see any reason to wait for the dust to settle in South-East Asia; the broken part of his Pacific defence machine had to be replaced, irrespective of what happened at Geneva. Eden, on the other hand, felt that

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(8) See Eden's account of his conversations with Dulles, Anthony Eden, Memoirs (London, 1960) 95-7.

(9) Ibid., 98.

(10) New York Times, 12 June 1954.

(11) Eden, n. 8, 99.

Dulles had agreed to the old proposition for a Pacific Pact; unlike Dulles, therefore, he preferred to wait for the dust in South-East Asia to settle down, so that an objective appraisal of the situation in South-East Asia might be made. When Eden and Dulles met in Paris on 23-24 April 1954, they knew that their respective positions on the question of a Pacific Pact were as far removed from each other, as they had ever been. (12) On 27 April 1954, Churchill declared, in the House of Commons, that Britain would not take any step towards the establishment of the proposed pact "until the outcome of the Geneva Conference is clearer." (13)

The British stand on the question of the proposed pact greatly annoyed the public and the Government of the United States. They were determined to carry on the work of repairing the Pacific defence machine with a note of defiance to the Communist Bloc. To the United States, it was unimaginable that the Communists should go to Geneva with their dominant position in Indo-China unchallenged. On 2 May 1954, in a public statement W. F. Knowland, the Republican chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, urged the Administration, "to act at once on forming an anti-Communist coalition" and not "surrender to another nation, the power for its Prime Minister to say what the United States should do." (14) Soon, the Government met halfway

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(12) Ibid., 103.

(13) U.K. Parliamentary Debates, House of Commons, 526 (27 April 1954) col. 1693.

(14) Manchester Guardian, 3 May 1954.

the demand thus being made; on 5 May 1954, in a press release from the White House, Eisenhower was quoted, as saying that conversations among the powers interested in the proposed pact were "actively proceeding" and most of the nations concerned have shown "affirmative interest." (15) On 7 May, Dulles confirmed this at a press conference, and added that "good progress" was being made at the talks. (16)

Soon, however, it became known that the statements made by Eisenhower and Dulles were designed to put pressure on Britain with an eye to constrain her to revise her existing attitude towards the establishment of the proposed pact. (17) On the same day as Eisenhower was quoted saying that talks in regard to the proposed pact were actively proceeding, Selwyn Lloyd, Britain's Minister of State for Foreign Affairs, told the House of Commons that no discussions concerning the proposed pact had been arranged among the allies. (18) On 10 May, Selwyn Lloyd was confronted with Eisenhower's statement to the contrary as confirmed by Dulles. He successfully came through the

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(15) Department of State Bulletin, 30 (17 May 1954) 740.

(16) Ibid. (17 May 1954) 743.

(17) A writer terms the diplomacy resorted to by the United States as the diplomacy of 'Fait Accompli.' Charles O. Lerch, "The United States, Great Britain and the SEATO: A case Study in the Fait Accompli," Journal of Politics, 18 (Florida, 1956). He defines it as "the technique of deliberately exerting pressure upon others by taking a significant policy step without warning or prior consultation." 460.

(18) U.K. Parliamentary Debates, House of Commons, 527 (5 May 1954) col. 369.

ordeal, (19) but only to be contradicted by developments which followed. On 16 May 1954, it was reported that the United States was having separate talks with France regarding the proposed pact. (20) In the House of Commons Churchill regretted, the holding of the U.S.-French talks "as reported in the press," but kept to his old stand of awaiting the results of the Geneva conference. (21) On 19 May, Eisenhower told a press conference that "given cooperation in other quarters," the United States might undertake to form the proposed pact without Britain. He said that Britain's membership would not be "indispensable" if Australia, New Zealand, and "some Asian countries" agreed to co-operate with the United States in this regard. (22) Churchill, still, did not yield. Instead, he agreed with the view expressed by a member in the House of Commons that "the recent moves in U.S. policy were inconsistent with the spirit of the Western alliance." (23) It was obvious that Britain was not contemplating submission to pressure applied by the United States.

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(19) Ibid. (10 May 1954) col. 834. Selwyn Lloyd threw aside what appeared to be a big political controversy in the following words, "It is clear that the President was referring to informal and exploratory conversations. It is equally clear that on each occasion I referred to this matter I referred to more formal discussion attended by representatives of a number of states."

(20) New York Times, 16 May 1954.

(21) U.K. Parliamentary Debates, House of Commons, 527 (17 May 1954) cols. 1692-3.

(22) New York Times, 20 May 1954.

(23) U.K. Parliamentary Debates, House of Commons, 527 (20 May 1954) col. 2291.

Australia, New Zealand and the Anglo-U.S. Difference

On the issue of the nature of the proposed pact Australia and New Zealand held the same view as Britain. They also wanted to base it on an objective assessment of the situation in South-East Asia. On 2 May 1954, taking advantage of the presence of the foreign ministers of Australia and New Zealand at Geneva, Dulles requested for a meeting of the ANZUS Council. At the meeting Australia and New Zealand agreed, as Britain had done previously, to examine with others "the possibility of establishing a defence pact for South-East Asia and the West Pacific." (24) But, again like Britain, they preferred to await the results of the Geneva conference, in order to have a clearer view of the situation in South-East Asia. On 5 May 1954, Casey, Australia's Foreign Minister, said that the proposed pact would remain in "suspended animation until the situation in Indochina has been fully discussed." (25) Clifton Webb, New Zealand's Foreign Minister, also held a similar view. (26)

Thus while following the same policy as Britain, Australia and New Zealand were not in a position to afford a wrangle with the United States over the question of the nature of the proposed pact, nor could they give company to Britain over that matter, beyond a certain limit. It has been noted previously, that the relationship between Australia and

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(24) The Hindu, 3 May 1954.

(25) Statesman, 7 May 1954.

(26) Ibid., 6 May 1954.

New Zealand on the one hand and the United States on the other, was based on the hard experiences of Australia and New Zealand during the war. The Second World War had demonstrated that Britain was no longer capable of looking after their security; the principle of "the recognition of leadership of the United States in the Pacific," which Evatt referred to, as being basic to the operation of Australia's foreign policy, (27) was based on this fact. Consequently, it was difficult for them to join issue with the United States over a scheme for the security of the Pacific region. As regards the issue of the proposed pact, it was still more difficult. Since the end of the Second World War, Australia had been working for the conclusion of a defence arrangement which would commit the United States to the defence of Australia, New Zealand, and South-East Asia. With the conclusion of the ANZUS Treaty, they were halfway to the goal; the proposed collective defence pact for South-East Asia and the Western Pacific held out the prospect of reaching the goal. It was, therefore, inconceivable that Australia and New Zealand would take any step that would annoy the United States and make her abandon the plan out of despair.

Although for reasons of security, Australia and New Zealand had elected to remain closer to the United States than to Britain, they still felt closer to Britain in sentiment. It had been quite a task for them to keep these two countries

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(27) Vide Chapter II, n. 14.

reconciled in the operation of their own foreign policies. The proposed South-East Asia alliance was designed to have both the United States and Britain as members. They, therefore, keenly seized an opportunity which they had long been looking for. When, after the return of Dulles from his European mission, a dispute seemingly over the question of timing for the establishment of the proposed pact, developed between the United States and Britain, Australia immediately set herself to the task of resolving it. At the ANZUS Council meeting held at Geneva on 2 May 1954, Casey proposed to Dulles, and later also to Eden, that military representatives of the United States, Britain, France, Australia, New Zealand should meet to discuss the military situation in Indo-China. (28) In doing so, Casey had two objectives in view. He believed that if such a conference was held, the United States would appreciate the problem in Indo-China better and refrain from taking any such step as would prejudice the chances of success of the Geneva conference. In the second place, he also believed that such a conference would bring home to Britain the need for a collective defence pact for South East Asia. Casey obviously assumed that differences between Britain and the United States on the issue of the proposed pact pertained merely to the timing of its conclusion. His proposal for a conference of military representatives was designed to resolve such differences.

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(28) Australia, Commonwealth Parliamentary Debates (New Series) (House of Representatives) No. 4, 10 August 1954, 97-8.

Before arrangements for convening the proposed Five-Power Military Conference could be finalized, Anglo-U.S. wrangle assumed serious proportions, to the utter disappointment and embarassment of Australia and New Zealand. Eisenhower's proposal of 19 May 1954 posed before them the problem of electing either Britain or the United States as their leader. Arising in the context in which it did, it meant for them a problem of electing either one of them in preference to the other. Clifton Webb's reaction to Eisenhower's call was typical of the feelings of Australia and New Zealand. On 20 May, he said in Washington that he could not even "conceive of a satisfactory South-East Asia alliance which did not include Britain." (29) Yet, he resented (30) his statement being interpreted to mean that New Zealand would not join the proposed pact without Britain. (31) In the end, however, their efforts to arrest deterioration in Anglo-U.S. relations bore fruit. (32) On 22 May 1954, it was announced in Washington that a conference of the military representatives of the United States, Britain, Australia, New Zealand, and France would be held in Washington "in the next few days or two weeks." (33)

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(29) New York Times, 21 May 1954.

(30) The Hindu, 23 May 1954.

(31) New York Times, 21 May 1954.

(32) Webb was in Washington at that time. On 20 May, he met Dulles. (New York Times, 21 May 1954). In Britain, too, the Australian and New Zealand High Commissioners contacted the Foreign Office. It, therefore, seems to be a fair conclusion that they worked for reconciliation between Britain and the United States.

(33) New York Times, 23 May 1954.

The Five-Power Military Conference

The proposed Five-Power Military Conference was, however, hardly a measure capable of resolving the Anglo-U.S. wrangle. The United States was not determined, as was being alleged, to disrupt the proceedings at Geneva, nor was Great Britain reluctant to join the efforts to form the proposed pact. The issue between them was essentially political and pertained to the character of the proposed pact. Soon after the announcement that a conference of military representatives was to be held, it became known that the proposed conference would not deal with the cause of the trouble. On 25 May 1954, Churchill told the House of Commons that the proposed conference was directed "to immediate practical issues and is quite different from the question of collective defence organization for South East Asia." (34) On the other hand, Dulles told a press conference that the proposed talks were not "in any sense exclusive," but only one in a series of discussions "with relations both to the political aspects and the military aspects of a possible collective action in relation to South-East Asia." (35) The difference in approach soon manifested itself. Following the agreement to hold the Five-Power Military Conference, the United States proposed that Thailand and the Philippines, as

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(33) New York Times, 23 May 1954.

(34) U.K. Parliamentary Debates, House of Commons, 528 (25 May 1954) col. 208.

(35) Department of State Bulletin, 30 (7 June 1954) 864.

two Asian countries which had agreed to join the proposed pact, should be invited to send representatives to the proposed military talks. (36) Britain however held to her own point of view. In response to a communication from the United States proposing an invitation to Thailand and the Philippines, Britain replied that the proposed military conference was a session of the Five-Power Staff Agency and was not a conference preparatory to the proposed pact. (37) As a result, Thailand and the Philippines, were not invited.

Conscious of the need to nip Anglo-U.S. differences in bud and not sharpen it by taking sides, Australia and New Zealand held a position between the British stand on the one hand and that of the United States on the other. On 26 May Casey said at Melbourne that the holding of military talks should not indicate the failure of the Geneva talks." (38) On the same day, Sydney Holland, the New Zealand Prime Minister, said at Wellington, that "New Zealand is not to be committed in any way at the military talks." At the same time, however, Holland said that the political discussions regarding the proposed pact "would depend a great deal on what transpires

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(36) Statesman, 27 May 1954.

(37) Ibid., 29 May 1954. The Five-Power Staff Agency had been in existence since January 1953, and its terms of reference covered South-East Asia. Collective Defence in South East Asia: The Manila Treaty and Its Implications. A Report by a Study Group of Royal Institute of International Affairs (London, 1956) 3.

(38) Statesman, 27 May 1954.

at this conference." (39) Thus, Australia and New Zealand, while regarding the proposed military talks as prelude to the proposed pact, were also determined to await the results of the Geneva Conference before going in for the proposed pact. (40)

The Five-Power Military Conference began its proceedings on 3 June 1954 and continued till 11 June. No communiques were issued, excepting the one immediately after the beginning of its sessions, which said that conversations at the conference "would not commit anyone to any particular line." (41)

The Eisenhower-Churchill Meeting

In the meantime, the Geneva Conference was heading to a climax. The situation in Indo-China had been fully discussed. By the second week of June, it became necessary to decide whether the conference should continue or disperse. On 10 June 1954, Eden asked the delegates to admit failure, if they believed that no progress towards the settlement of the problem could be made. (42) On 16 June, however, it transpired that the conference might, after all, attain success. On that day, the Communist side made some genuine concessions on the points in dispute. The Western side pursued them. By 19 June, the Conference seemed well-set for a successful conclusion. On

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(39) Ibid.

(40) Ibid.

(41) New York Herald Tribune, 4 June 1954.

(42) Great Britain: Documents Relating to the Discussion of Korea and Indochina at the Geneva Conference. Command 9186, (June 1954) 167.

the same day, almost all the delegation leaders left Geneva, leaving the Conference to be carried on at a lower level till they returned.

Once the discussion of the situation in Indo-China had been completed in Geneva, the British Government decided to design measures to meet situations arising from either the success or the failure of the Geneva Conference. In the meantime, General Hardinge, who had led the British delegation to the Washington Five-Power Military Conference, returned to London and reported to Churchill on the military situation in South-East Asia. (43) On 15 June 1954, Churchill announced that he would go to Washington for talks with the U.S. Government and Eden would accompany him. He added that "decisions" regarding South-East Asia could no longer be delayed. (44) It was reported that in the official circles in Britain, Churchill's proposed visit to Washington was seen as a "new phase" of decisions on how to meet the Communist menace in South-East Asia. (45)

In the United States, however, the primary significance of Churchill's proposed visit seems to have been missed. Dulles felt that it was due to the exhaustion of the "possibilities of Geneva." (46) There was general jubilation at the news.

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(43) Statesman, 14 June 1954.

(44) Ibid., 17 June 1954.

(45) Ibid.

(46) Department of State Bulletin, 30 (28 June 1954) 990.

Eisenhower told the new French Government, headed by L. Mendes-France who had replaced Joseph Laniel on condition that he would try to secure a settlement of the Indo-China problem by 20 July, that the decision to forge a united front in South-East Asia "represented on our part a momentous and grave decision." (47) It does not seem to have been realized, that the British leaders were coming to Washington to confront the U.S. thesis about the South-East Asian alliance with their own.

On 25 June 1954, Churchill and Eden left for Washington. Before that, Eden reported to the House of Commons on the proceedings at Geneva and the coming confrontation with the Americans. In his speech, he laid stress on three points. (48) In the first place, he said that steps must be taken to guarantee the settlement that might emerge at Geneva. To this end, he suggested "a reciprocal arrangement in which both sides take part, such as Locarno." In the second place, he said that there should also be established "a defensive alliance such as NATO is in Europe." In the third place, he said that any defence system for South-East Asia must have the understanding of the Colombo Powers.

This statement by Eden made two points clear. In the first place, he reiterated the old British stand that any

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(47) Statesman, 20 June 1954.

(48) U.K. Parliamentary Debates, House of Commons, 529 (23 June 1954) cols. 432-3.

system of collective defence of South-East Asia must be based on an objective appraisal of the situation in South-East Asia. It should have its own inner compulsions and not be merely a manifestation of those of any existing defence system. In the second place, he stated the type of alliance, given the conditions in South-East Asia, that Britain would prefer.

The difference between these two points must be made clear. The first was, in fact, Britain's condition for joining a collective defence pact; the second concerned Britain's own plan for the defence of South-East Asia. On this point, Britain felt that the settlement that might be reached at Geneva, should be recognized and respected, and a South-East Asian equivalent of NATO should be promoted, to guarantee the security of the interests of its members. The first, therefore, had the character of being sacrosanct, while the second represented the British view of the prospective collective defence system and was, therefore, the subject of discussion.

Again, the main significance of the Eden Plan was missed in the United States. In that country, his case for a Locarno-type agreement to guarantee the Indo-China settlement was picked up and denounced. (49) Twelve members of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, in a letter to Eisenhower, urged rejection of Eden's plan as it was designed to guarantee the gains made by the Communist Bloc in South-East Asia. (50) A further

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(49) Christian Science Monitor, 24 June 1954; New York Times, 24 June 1954; New York Herald Tribune, 24 June 1954.

(50) New York Times, 27 June 1954.

manifestation of the Congressional protest against the Eden Plan was the passing of an amendment in the House of Representatives to the Mutual Security Act of 1954, to the effect that military assistance would be withheld from any Government "committed by treaty to maintain Communist rule over any definite territory of Asia." (51) No suggestion from any public source came for U.S. Government on the real point that was to be discussed: whether it should have its own logic as Britain suggested (52) or should be a mere part of the existing U.S. defence machinery in the Pacific, as the U.S. government seemed to suggest.

The Eisenhower-Churchill meeting was duly held during 26-29 June 1954. Two communiques were issued; the first, issued on 28 June 1954, said that they had agreed "to press forward with plans" to meet the situation resulting from either the success or the failure of the Geneva conference. (53) Explaining it, Churchill said that preparatory work relating to the proposed pact would begin "now, immediately, whether or not an agreement

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(51) Congressional Records, 100 (House of Representatives, 30 June 1954) 8892.

(52) Speaking in the House of Commons on 23 June 1954, Eden said, "The idea of a pact for South-East Asia and the Pacific is really not a new one. It had been canvassed for many years. . . . It is quite wrong to suppose that it suddenly sprang into the light of day a few weeks ago, fully armed, like Minerva from the head of Jupiter. It really was not so. Its relevance to current events must not be exaggerated. It could be a future safeguard, but it is not a present panacea," vide n. 48.

(53) Department of State Bulletin, 31 (12 July 1954) 49.

it reached at Geneva." (54) An official Anglo-U.S. Study Group was set up to build up the road to the contemplated goal. (55) The second, issued on 29 June 1954, said that they would not be parties to any treaty that would "confirm or prolong . . . the unwilling subordination . . . of formerly sovereign states now in bondage." (56)

The communiques, however, provided no indication as to the decision on the real issue in the Eisenhower-Churchill confrontation. These did not say whether the proposed Pacific Pact would be merely a replacement for France in ~~the~~ U.S. Pacific defence machinery, or would be a complete system within itself. The decision "to press forward with plans" for a South-East Asia alliance was by no means a new note struck at the meeting. The United States had always been eager to do so, and Churchill had made it clear long before that he would agree to begin the talks in this respect once the situation in Indo-China became "clearer"; (57) by June, it had become so. Britain, then, became as eager as the United States already was, to prepare to meet the situation resulting from the Geneva conference. The decision of the Washington meeting, therefore, cannot be said to

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(54) Statesman, 30 June 1954.

(55) Collective Defence in South East Asia: The Manila Treaty and Its Implications. A Report by a Study Group of the Royal Institute of International Affairs, n. 37, 3.

(56) Department of State Bulletin, 31 (12 July 1954) 49.

(57) Vide, n. 13.

have settled their differences. However, it made it clear that the proposed pact would be established regardless of Anglo-U.S. differences as to its character.

In another respect, however, the Eisenhower-Churchill meeting took a final decision. It was regarding Eden's suggestion for a Locarno-type agreement meant to guarantee the settlement that might emerge at Geneva. Eisenhower and Churchill decided against such a guarantee: that was the sense of the second communique issued at Washington. The Locarno idea suggests a situation whose maintenance is guaranteed by both sides to the dispute; they decided against creating such a system of guarantees. Yet, even in this respect, the British cannot be said to have completely lost their case. Two remarks made by Churchill significantly pointed to the British success, though only partial, in this respect. On 29 June 1954, Churchill said at Washington that the Western Powers should give "a good try to peaceful coexistence." (58) This remark, made after his meeting with Eisenhower, indicated that his hosts had agreed not to disturb the settlement that might be reached at Geneva. Later, on 12 July 1954, Churchill told the House of Commons that the United States "fully appreciated" the role of the Colombo Powers in the Asian situation. (59) Keeping in mind the fact that the Colombo Powers had called for peace and non-intervention

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(58) Statesman, 30 June 1954.

(59) U.K. Parliamentary Debates, House of Commons, 530 (12 July 1954) col. 44.

in Indo-China, Churchill's House of Commons statement confirmed the import of his earlier statement in Washington.

After the Eisenhower-Churchill meeting, work on the proposed pact was started. On 30 June 1954, the ANZUS Council met at Washington and agreed "on the need for immediate action to bring about the early establishment of collective defence for Southeast Asia." (60) On 7 July 1954, the Study Group began its work "to decide on organization, procedures, and other such matters connected with negotiations for a South East Asia pact." (61)

Factors that Influenced the Makers of SEATO

Though the Eisenhower-Churchill meeting was adjourned without resolving the differences between the two Governments regarding the character of the proposed pact, it made it certain that the settlements which might be reached at Geneva, as well as the views of the Colombo Powers would be taken note of, during the making of the proposed pact. At this point, it is necessary, therefore, to discuss the nature of these two factors and the extent of their impact on Britain and the United States, who had designed the strategy of the proposed pact.

The Geneva Settlement

The Geneva settlement on Indo-China, as finally agreed to on 21 July 1954, consisted of two broad features. In the first place, agreements were signed between the parties to the

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(60) Department of State Bulletin, 31 (12 July 1954) 50.

(61) Statesman, 9 July 1954.

dispute on the question of the cessation of hostilities. As regards Cambodia, it was agreed that the insurgents should be demobilized. The Cambodian Government pledged not to take any reprisal against the former insurgents. (62) As regards Laos, it was agreed that the French Union troops as well as the insurgent troops might maintain their establishments, but the French troops were to be concentrated in Seno and Mȧkong Valley and the insurgent troops in the north-eastern provinces of Phongsaly and Samneua. The number of French military personnel was not to exceed 3,500; the number of insurgent troops was fixed at 3,000. (63) Regarding Vietnam, it was provided that the French and the Communist troops were to regroup respectively on the southern and northern sides of a provisional demarcation-line running from east to west in "the general neighbourhood of the 17th parallel." A demilitarized zone on either side of the demarcation line was established, to preclude any armed incident which might lead to the resumption of hostilities. (64)

It is apparent that the strategy of the Geneva conference regarding the cessation of hostilities in Laos and Vietnam was to remove the troops of the parties so far away from each other,

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(62) Great Britain, Further Documents relating to the discussion of Indo-China at Geneva June 16 to July 21, 1954. Command 9239 (August 1954). Document No. 3. Agreement on the cessation of Hostilities in Cambodia, Articles 5, 6, 13.

(63) Ibid., Document No. 4. Agreement on the Cessation of Hostilities in Laos, Articles 1, 6, 8 and 14, 18-22.

(64) Ibid., Document No. 5: Agreement on the Cessation of Hostilities, Article I, 27.

that the resumption of armed conflict would not normally be possible. In order to ensure that the provisions of the agreements were carried out in an atmosphere of peace and mutual understanding, the Agreements for each state provided for a Joint Commission consisting of the parties to the dispute to execute the agreement, an International Supervisory Commission to supervise their execution, and prohibition of the introduction of fresh troops, armaments, and military personnel and the establishment of new military bases. (65)

The second feature of the Geneva settlements consisted of declarations made by the parties to the dispute and the interested powers, promising not to take steps which might cause trouble. These declarations might be divided into three categories. In the first place, France promised to respect the independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of Cambodia, Laos, and Vietnam, and withdraw the French troops still left in these countries, if and when requested to do so by the Governments concerned. (66) In the second place, the Governments of Cambodia and Laos promised to refrain from joining any military alliance, unless the need for such an alliance was considered inescapable. (67) The division of Vietnam was provisional.

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(65) Ibid. See, Articles 7, 11, 12, 13 and 14 of the Agreement on Cambodia, 13-5; Articles 6, 7, 25, 26, 27, 28 of the Agreement on Laos, 204; Articles 16, 17, 19, and 30-4 of the Agreement on Vietnam, 32-6.

(66) Ibid., Documents No. 10 and 11, 42.

(67) Ibid., Documents No. 6, 8, 7, and 9, 40-2.

The agreement on Vietnam provided for the holding of a general election in 1956 to unify the country. Till then, the two parties were obliged "to ensure that the zones assigned to them do not adhere to any military alliance and are not used for the resumption of hostilities or to further an aggressive policy." (68) The Democratic Republic of Vietnam had signed the agreement, and therefore became a party to all its provisions. (69) The representative of South Vietnam did not sign the agreement, but declared at the Conference that his Government would not "use force to resist the procedures for carrying the cease-fire into effect." (70) In the third place, the Conference issued a "Final Declaration" on behalf of all its members. This declaration in addition to taking note of the declarations made by the parties to the dispute, said that they would respect the independence and territorial integrity of the Indo-Chinese states and refrain from interference in their internal affairs. They also agreed to consult each other, if and when required, in the interest of the preservation of peace in Indo-China. (71) The United States dissociated herself from the 'Final Declaration,' but promised

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(68) Ibid., Article 19 of the Agreement on Vietnam, 33.

(69) Ibid., Article 27 of the Agreement on Vietnam, 35.

(70) Ibid., 7.

(71) Ibid., Document No. 2: "Final Declaration of the Geneva Conference . . ." 9-11.

"to refrain from the threat or the use of force to disturb" the settlements arrived at. (72)

The foregoing narrative should leave us in no doubt as to the strategy of the Geneva conference regarding the preservation of peace in Indo-China. Though it was not said so in so many words, the sense of the settlement was the neutralization of the new Indo-Chinese states from the Cold War. Britain understood it as such (73) and Dulles himself told a Senate Committee that "the degrees to which those nations themselves can participate militarily in a pact, let us say, is rendered in doubt by the armistice terms." (74)

The Colombo Powers and Situation in Asia

In the preceding chapter, the attitude of the Colombo Powers to the problem of Indo-China has been noted. It has been observed that they could not have afforded to take a stand other than the stand they took on that issue and the other issues related to it. It has also been noted that India, Indonesia, and Burma particularly were in such a position, that it was incumbent on their leaders to denounce the steps that the United States was taking to reinforce her position near their borders. Two developments, preceding the establishment of SEATO, specially helped them to stick to their own points of

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(72) Ibid., 7.

(73) Observer (London), 25 July 1954. Also see Eden, n. 8, 140-1.

(84) Statesman, 8 August 1954.

view. The first was the effect of Chou En-lai's visit to Delhi and Rangoon during the recess at Geneva. The second was the impact of the Geneva Conference on the situation in Asia.

Chou's Asian Visit. During the recess at Geneva, Chou En-lai, Prime Minister and Foreign Minister of China, visited Delhi and from there, went to Rangoon. At a press conference in New Delhi, Chou declared that "revolutions cannot be exported; at the same time outside interference with the common will expressed by the people should not be permitted." (75) On 28 June 1954, a joint communique on the talks between Chou and Nehru was issued. According to it, they endorsed the five principles governing their agreement on Tibet, namely, non-aggression, non-interference, respect for territorial integrity, equality, and peaceful co-existence, as those on which their relationship would be based. They also called on their countries to make these the guiding principles of "international relations generally." They also expressed their hope for a settlement in Indo-China which should "aim at the creation of free, democratic, unified, and independent states which should not be used for aggressive purposes or be subjected to foreign intervention." (76) From New Delhi, Chou went to Rangoon, where, after talks with U Nu, a similar statement on behalf of Chou and Nu was issued. (77)

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(75) The Hindu, 28 June 1954.

(76) Towards Peace and Better Understanding (The Publication Division, Government of India, 1955) 5-7.

(77) The Hindu, 1 July 1954.

Chou's visit to New Delhi and Rangoon had a tremendous impact on the international relationships of the Asian countries. With the Communist Government of China pledged to maintain 'Five Principles' as the guiding principles of her foreign policy, the leaders of non-aligned Governments of South and South-East Asia felt relieved of what had been a perpetual worry, for, it meant that Communist China would not assist the Communist movements in their countries. For the first time, they could be reasonably sure of dealing with the Communist problem without any danger of provoking the Chinese Communist intervention in their internal affairs. Reports about the great economic experiments being made in China also convinced them that the assurances given by Chou En-lai were genuine and true.

The advantage thus gained from Chou's visit by the non-aligned Governments was, however, not in the nature of an ex-parte decree. While Nehru's purpose in inviting Chou to Delhi and urging him to visit Rangoon, where Nu was still facing a difficult Communist movement, (78) was to secure a public assurance from him that China would not interfere in the internal affairs of other countries. Chou's motive in accepting Nehru's invitation seems to have been to make use of anti-colonialism in Asia to the advantage of his own country as well as to that of the Communist Bloc. It was obvious that the non-Communist leaders in power in the countries of South and South-East Asia

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(78) Ibid., 28 June 1954; Statesman, 28 June 1954.

still enjoyed their people's confidence and could not be displaced by any means, so long as they could keep to their stand regarding their countries' internal affairs and external affairs. Consequently, by supporting them, he was not foregoing any possible advantage. Chou En-lai conducted his visit with great statesmanship; aware of the recrudescene of anti-westernism in the Asian countries in the wake of the Indo-China crisis, Chou repeatedly laid stress on the need to promote a fraternal Asian community to fight western imperialism in Asia. (79) In so conducting himself, Chou deprived the Communists in Asian countries of nothing that they had and succeeded in further working up anti-Western feelings in Asia. It was the obligation of the leaders of these countries to give vent to the roused anti-Westernism of the peoples they led.

The Geneva Settlements. The Geneva Settlements provided for all that the Colombo Powers had desired. It put an end to French Colonial rule in Indo-China. It also provided for a cease-fire and worked out a technique for the neutralization of the Indo-Chinese states from the Cold War. It was, therefore,

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(79) The following extract from one of Chou's several utterances during his visit is typical of the speeches made by him: "All the peoples of Asia want peace. The menace of peace of Asians comes now from outside, but Asia today is no longer the Asia of yesterday. The age when outside forces could decide at will the fate of Asia has gone for ever. We are confident that the hope of peace-loving nations and peoples of Asia will frustrate the scheme of war-mongers." The Hindu, 27 June 1954.

natural that the Colombo Powers, having been given almost all that they had asked for, should enthusiastically approve of its results. On 3 August 1954, a statement representing the reaction of all the Colombo Powers, was released by the Ceylon Ministry of External Affairs; it said that the Colombo Powers regarded the agreements arrived at at Geneva as "a notable contribution to the consolidation of peace in South East Asia" and extended their "firm support to them." (80)

It will be long debated whether the results of the Geneva conference were favourable to the Western Bloc or to the Communist Bloc. Ho Chi Minh got "a good deal less than he might have militarily hoped for," (81) and the Western Bloc lost almost half of Indo-China to the Communist Bloc, even though it had used all the practical means at its disposal to save it. The results of the Geneva Conference, however, were favourable to the non-aligned countries of South and South-East Asia. The Conference had not only led to the cessation of war in Indo-China but with Chou's pledge to uphold the 'Five Principles' in the background, it had also laid the foundation for a 'Peace Area.' Under given conditions, these countries were obliged to follow a policy of non-alignment. With the settlements concluded at Geneva, there was a chance, that the pattern of international relationship in South-East Asia might no more be a sub-system to the existing Cold War between the two power

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(80) The Hindu, 5 August 1954.

(81) Survey of International Affairs 1954 (London, 1957) 72.

constellations, and that the non-aligned powers, constrainedly so, might not have to undergo the ordeals of escaping from the vortex of the Cold War. Even before the settlement regarding Indo-China had been reached, Nehru's adviser on foreign affairs, V. K. Krishna Menon, had said that "any proclamation, which spoke of collective action in South-East Asia was an incipient and embryonic infringement of our 'Peace Area' approach." (82) Menon later played a unique role at Geneva and his contribution to the successful conclusion of the Conference was second to none. (83) At a stage when the contemplated 'Peace Area' appeared as an accomplished fact, any talk about an anti-Communist collective defence system was sure to annoy Nehru and others following a similar policy.

Britain, the United States, and the Colombo Powers

The United States, however, had never been on record as having respected the feelings of Asians on questions on which she had already made up her mind. In the matter of a collective defence pact for South-East Asia, she was particularly sensitive and not amenable to any suggestion to the contrary.

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(82) Statesman, 19 April 1954.

(83) India was not a member of Geneva Conference, but Menon reached Geneva towards the later part of May 1954. His function at the Conference was officially described as "confined to taking soundings." (The Times, 31 May 1954). He called himself "a mere tourist, a bystander." (Statesman, 20 July 1954). But it is generally agreed that he was a tireless intermediary in the private top-level meetings at which the real progress occurred.

She was anxious to fill in the breach that had occurred in her defence system by the collapse of French defences in Indo-China, as soon as possible. Apart from that, the United States was ready to convince the non-aligned Asian Powers, that the proposed measure was not meant to be used against them. She was, however, not prepared to await a change in their attitude to the proposed measure.

Britain's attitude was different. She would have preferred to await the cooling-off of passions in Asia; but the United States was determined to push ahead with the plan for a South-East Asia Collective Defence Pact without waiting for anything. Moreover, as it was also certain that others interested in the conclusion of the proposed pact would join it if the United States so desired, there was a chance that the proposed pact might come off, even without Britain. She was not ready to forego a chance of association with a collective defence pact meant for such a significant area as South East Asia. In fact, she had been one of its oldest advocates and had resented her own exclusion from the ANZUS Treaty of 1951. Now that such a chance had come, Britain was determined to seize it; but she was alike determined to mould the proposed pact after her own analysis of the situation in South-East Asia. She was aware of the role that neutrals played in the politics of Asia and the Pacific, and therefore believed that no anti-Communist defence system could have a reasonable chance of successful operation unless it enjoyed the support or, at least,

the understanding of the neutrals. In order to win their sympathy for the proposed pact, Britain was reported to have suggested to the United States that the proposed pact must provide for means to deal effectively with "the complex economic, social, and cultural problems of the area." Britain believed that if a case for the proposed pact could be made out on these grounds, the neutrals would not only give up their opposition to it but might also be tempted to join it. (84)

The United States had no objection to the British plan. Her primary concern was "to erect a dyke around Vietnam and draw a defence line" whose transgression by the Communist Bloc was to be prohibitive. (85) The United States was determined that military strength should be the main attribute of the proposed pact, and had been relentlessly pursuing this objective. She had not been unaware of the socio-economic problems on which Communism tended to grow in the countries of South and South-East Asia, nor was she so now. The Senate Foreign Relations Committee had, in fact, suggested that the proposed pact should have a socio-economic programme together with the military one. (86) Dulles himself told a press conference on 23 July 1954

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(84) New York Times, 21 July 1954.

(85) Dulles' Testimony before a Senate Appropriations Committee, Statesman, 8 August 1954.

(86) The Committee's case for a socio-economic programme for the proposed pact was made as follows: "Millions of people who reside within a 600-mile radius of Communist China will not turn Communist if we give them faith, if we strengthen them militarily and economically, and if we give them a basis for believing in our support." Statesman, 17 July 1954.

that "the problem (in South-East Asia) was not merely one of deterring open armed aggression" but of preventing the Communists from making use of "economic dislocations and social injustice" to their own ends. (87) The United States had never underestimated the role of the neutrals in the Pacific region. Although she had disdained their protests against several steps she had taken to maintain or reinforce her power in the Pacific region and was determined to do so again, yet,as on all other previous occasions, (88) she was ready to go all the way, to win their sympathy and confidence, except by dropping her plan for a collective defence pact for South-East Asia. Britain's plan regarding the socio-economic programme for the proposed pact was welcomed by the United States, and an understanding was reached between them that Britain should solicit the sympathy of the neutrals for the proposed pact. (89)

After this Anglo-U.S. understanding had been arrived at, Eden wrote to the Colombo Powers asking for their views regarding the proposed pact. (90) India, Indonesia, Ceylon and Burma stuck to their decision to remain non-aligned. (91) In fact,

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(87) Department of State Bulletin, 31 (2 August 1954) 164.

(88) See Dulles' view on the role of the Asian Governments in the Pacific Affairs, Chapter III, n. 96, n. 116.

(89) Eden, n. 8, 143.

(90) For the text of Eden's note, ibid., 144.

(91) Ibid.

India lamented the determination of the Western powers to proceed with their plan (92) and Indonesia resented it. (93) Ceylon, however, kept "an open mind" on the subject. (94) Only Pakistan sent a favourable reply to Eden's note and ultimately decided to send her representative to the talks originally proposed to be held at Baguio, (95) but finally convened at Manila.

The response of none of the Colombo Powers to Eden's note was unexpected. Since the preceding events, while sharpening the edge of anti-colonialism, had also served the purposes of these Powers, they seemed to see no point in agreeing to form an anti-Communist defence system that would only serve to renew the emphasis on the Cold War. Pakistan, however, took a line different from her other Colombo companions. Since the grant of U.S. arms aid, Pakistan, had not only been firmly in U.S. camp, but had also been playing up communist danger. Still it would be unfair to attribute to U.S. influence Pakistan's response to Eden's note; her decision to join the proposed pact seems to have been entirely

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(92) See Nehru's Address on 7 August 1954 at a meeting of the Pradesh Congress Chiefs, The Hindu, 8 August 1954.

(93) See a press statement of Dr. Tobing, the Indonesian Information Minister, on 6 August 1954, Hindustan Times, 8 August 1954.

(94) See a Press Note issued by the Ceylonese Ministry of External Affairs on 13 August 1954, Statesman, 14 August 1954. Also see Sir John Kotelawala's statement in the Ceylonese House of Representatives, Ceylon, Parliamentary Debates, House of Representatives, 20 (7 September 1954) cols. 49-50.

(95) Statesman, 15 August 1954.

her own. (96)

Never before had Pakistan required U.S. help and sympathy so desperately as she did during the year 1954. In March of that year, a general election had been held in the province of East Bengal; the Muslim League party which had been in power there as in all other provinces as well as at the Centre seemingly had been eliminated from the East Bengal political scene. (97) Autonomy for East Pakistan and abolition of Indo-Pakistan visa had been among the salient features of the programme of the victorious United Front, a coalition of three parties. (98) The rout of Muslim League in the East Bengal elections was followed by widespread demand for holding fresh elections all over Pakistan and resignation of the Muslim League ministry at the Centre.

The Muslim League party in power at the Centre appeared as being face to face with two formidable problems - first, to save a nation that looked like being on the verge of disintegration and second, to regain prestige which to all appearances it had lost. In May 1954, the Governor-General dismissed the United Front ministry of East Bengal and imposed Governor's rule on that province. Mohammad Ali, then Prime Minister of Pakistan,

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(96) Initially the United States did not seem to have even thought of including Pakistan in the proposed alliance. She was not one of those approached by the United States for a joint warning to China (Vide ~~Chapter IV~~, n.9) Later, when Pakistan was invited, other Colombo Powers were also invited. These facts indicate that the United States was reluctant to include Pakistan alone in the arrangements.

(97) Of 309 candidates elected, only 10 were from among the Muslim League candidates. Nurul Amin, then Chief Minister of East Bengal, was among those defeated at the polls.

(98) Keesing's Contemporary Archives 1952-4, 13514.

complained that this extreme step had been necessitated by the spread of "pseudo Bengali nationalism" that had been encouraged by the United Front government as well as the communists. (99) Several hundred of communists and alleged fellow-travellers were sent to prison on the ground that their freedom endangered security of the state.

Though the Central Government of Pakistan had for the time being succeeded in suppressing what had been alleged to be a separatist movement in East Bengal, it still required a rallying point for national integration. Since the inception of Pakistan, leaders of Pakistan had been resorting to verbal campaigns against India for rallying their people together. (100) The growing stalemate in the Indo-Pak relations was on hand of Muslim League leaders of Pakistan. (101)

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(99) Ibid., 13747.

(100) Commenting on Pakistan's general foreign policy, Hans J. Morgenthau says the following: "Pakistan is not a nation and hardly a state. It has no justification in history . . . or the consciousness of those who make up its population. They have no interest in common save one: fear of Hindu domination. It is to that fear, and to nothing else, that Pakistan owes its existence and thus for its survival as an independent state." "Military Illusions," The New Republic, 134 (Washington, 19 January 1956) 15. A noted authority on Pakistan affairs has the following comment to make, "The idea that a country has a foreign enemy is easy for the mass of the people to understand, and it also provides a powerful stimulus to unity. For Pakistan, India has filled this role." Callard, Keith C., Pakistan, A Political Study (London, 1957) 17.

(101) Since the dismissal of the Nazimuddin cabinet by the Pakistan Governor-General and his appointment as Prime Minister, Mohammad Ali had sought to improve his country's relations with India. In November 1953, it became known that Pakistan had been negotiating a pact with the United States for arms aid. Since then, the Indo-Pak relations took a turn for the worse.

But in order to use it effectively they had to take steps which would convince their people that these measures would bring India to her knees.

The Government of Pakistan saw in the proposed pact a solution of her problems: it could be used for preventing secession of East Bengal and at the same time, could be cited before their people as an achievement that strengthened Pakistan vis-a-vis India. India's opposition to the proposed pact had caused considerable annoyance to the United States; people of Pakistan, therefore, could be led to believe that the United States would teach India a lesson by taking Pakistan's side on the Indo-Pakistan dispute.

In June 1954, Zafrullah Khan visited Washington; according to the Karachi correspondent of a famous U.S. daily, Khan had offered Pakistan's services in the creation and maintenance of security in South-East Asia. (102) Although this statement cannot be verified, yet it was true that Government began to emphasise the communist subversion problems it faced specially in the province of East Bengal and even professed fears that "threat of a communist attack on this seven year old country . . . is not remote." (103)

Pakistan's positive response to Eden's note was, then, most natural. That Pakistan's membership of the proposed pact would be solely an anti-Indian act had been further emphasised by Pakistan's ambassador to Communist China at a Peking reception. (104) In the

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(102) New York Times, 11 July 1954.

(103) Ibid., 11 July 1954; Dawn (Karachi), 5 July 1954.

(104) In his speech, the ambassador assured his guests who included Prime Minister Chou En-lai that Pakistan was interested in "further developing the happy and harmonious relations now subsisting between the two countries." Survey of China Mainland Press (Hongkong) 1954, No. 869, 21.

context of the prevailing pattern of world politics, Pakistan's intention to join the proposed anti-Chinese defence system on the one hand, and that of consolidating friendly relations with China on the other hand, appeared to be mutually contradictory, but such a policy fitted well into Pakistan's own pattern of foreign policy in which rivalry with India was the basic factor. (105)

It has been argued that the response of both Ceylon and Burma to Eden's note was equivocal. (106) In fact, Sir John Kotelawala, Ceylon's Prime Minister, took such a stand as would justify this remark in the case of Ceylon. Having received Eden's note, Kotelawala proposed a meeting of the Colombo Powers to consider a joint reply to it. (107) Burma (108) and Pakistan (109) agreed to it and India (110) and Indonesia (111) reacted against it. Given Kotelawala's personal views about Communism, (112) and his

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(105) A Pakistani authority on Pakistan's foreign policy has made the following observation, "Robert Schuman, former Prime Minister of France, once observed that since 1871 the foreign policy of his country had been continuously dominated by one main preoccupation, that of ensuring her security and independence from her neighbour, Germany. Unfortunately, the foreign policy of Pakistan has in a similar manner been dominated by considerations of security and independence from its neighbour India." K. Sarawar Hussain, Pakistan and the United Nations (New York, 1960) 50.

(106) For the view that Burma was favourably disposed towards the SEATO, see, Christian Science Monitor, 10 September 1954; Sunday Times, 12 September 1954.

(107) The Hindu, 5 August 1954.

(108) Burma's reply, ibid., 7 August 1954.

(109) Pakistan's reply, ibid., 8 August 1954.

(110) India's reply, ibid., 10 August 1954.

(111) Indonesia's reply, ibid., 7 August 1954.

(112) For his views about the intentions of the Communist Bloc, see his autobiography, An Asian Prime Minister's Story (London, 1956).

Government's 'open mind' on the subject of an anti-Communist collective defence, it becomes apparent that Ceylon did not wholly disapprove of the proposed pact. But such an attitude is to be ascribed more to Kotelawala's personal views than to any trend away from non-alignment in Ceylon. Opinion within Kotelawala's own party and among the public was reportedly against such a pact. (113) The proposed alliance came in for severe denunciation at the hands of the opposition in the Ceylonese House of Representative. (114)

The contention that Burma's attitude, too, was equivocal assumes that there existed a link between the violent activities still being carried on by the Communists in Burma, and Nu's acceptance of Kotelawala's suggestion to play host to the Colombo Powers to consider a joint reply to Eden's note. As against this contention, the facts are that Burma's support for the proposed pact had been solicited by the United States but had not been obtained. (115) K. K. Chattur, India's Ambassador in Burma, had also disclosed that Burma would do "everything in her power to prevent the formation of the proposed pact." (116) Even in his letter to Kotelawala, accepting his suggestion to play host to the Colombo Powers, U Nu had told him that Burma would not in any case join the proposed pact. (117) To link the Communist problem in

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(113) The Hindu, 10 September 1954; Christian Science Monitor, 18 October 1954.

(114) Ceylon, Parliamentary Debates, House of Representatives, 19 (9 August 1954) cols. 1138-9; (12 August 1954) cols. 1511-12; 20 (7 September) cols. 48-51.

(115) Statesman, 18 May 1954.

(116) Amrit Bazar Patrika (Calcutta), 25 July 1954.

(117) Vide n. 108.

Burma to Nu's acceptance of Kotelawala's suggestion does not appear to be a convincing attempt. Not only Nu, but also Sukarno and Nehru were anti-Communist. But non-alignment was their most dynamic weapon to deal with the Communists. It is, therefore, inconceivable that at a time when anti-Colonialism had gained further strength, providing the Communists with new opportunities, Nu would abandon his hold over it to the Communists by joining, or even tacitly supporting, a West-sponsored collective defence pact. That he agreed to play host to the Colombo Powers might be ascribed to his desire to demonstrate to the world the solidarity of the non-aligned powers.

In any case, it was clear that excepting Pakistan, all the other Powers would oppose the proposed pact, if and when formed.

Impact of the Asian Situation on Britain and the United States

The situation obtaining in Asia at that time considerably influenced the views of Britain and the United States, regarding the form and the purpose of the proposed pact. It was obvious to them that conditions in South and South-East Asia were far from ripe for the emergence of an equivalent of NATO. There was neither a common frontier which the proposed pact would protect nor, ~~with~~ was there an effective Asian military core to it with Pakistan, Thailand, and the Philippines as its only likely Asian members. The United States was as reluctant as she had ever been, to agree to the establishment of a unified military command of the proposed defence organization, unless the Asian Governments participated in it. Although the attitude of the non-aligned

Governments of South and South East Asia did not affect her determination to push ahead with her plan for a collective defence for South-East Asia, it certainly influenced her in favour of a simpler pact which would be sufficient to restore her defence machine to working order.

Though not in agreement with the U.S. conception of the proposed pact, Britain was nonetheless obliged to agree to its formation. The situation in Asia militated against all schemes for a collective defence pact, but the United States was determined to push ahead. Britain would have probably preferred to defer its formation but she was also not ready to forego a chance of associating herself with a collective defence pact for South-East Asia, which was sure to be established, irrespective of what she felt about it. Since the United States was also in favour of having a pact, which would not further annoy the non-aligned Governments of Asia, Britain's view about the form of the proposed pact tallied with that of the United States.

The Anglo-U.S. agreement was reflected in the unanimous report of the Anglo-U.S. Study Group on this matter. It recommended that the proposed pact should not have a unified military command. It also recommended that the obligations of its membership should be so designed as not to conflict with the existing relationships among its prospective members and the non-aligned Governments of Asia; to this end, it recommended that the members' obligations to render help to another member in case of an armed attack should not be automatic, but should be left to each member to determine. (118)

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(118) New York Times, 13 August 1954.

In the meantime, the United States and Britain also agreed that the jurisdictional scope of the proposed collective defence pact should not extend north of what is considered South-East Asia. (119)

A draft text of the proposed pact, (120) reported to have been leaked from the State Department, revealed the final Anglo-U.S. view of the proposed pact. It had three salient features: in the first place, it did not provide for a unified military command for the proposed South East Asia Collective Defence Organization, and also left the nature of the action to be taken by its member in case of a threat of attack or actual attack, to be determined by the constitutional processes of the member Governments; in the second place, it specified Communist aggression as the only instance in which the anti-aggression clauses of the treaty could be invoked; in the third place, it provided that the Council, which was to be established under its terms, might "arrange with states which were not parties to the treaty for cooperation in giving effect to the promotion of economic stability and well-being."

It is clear that the shape and content of the proposed pact, as envisaged in the draft text, represented a compromise between the British view that the treaty should be based on the situation in South East Asia and U.S. view that it must primarily be designed

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(119) A British Foreign Office spokesman said on 16 August 1954 that the United States had asked for the inclusion of Formosa in the area to be guaranteed by the proposed pact. But Britain held that Formosa was not a part of either South-East Asia or South-West Pacific and hence should not be included within the treaty area. Statesman, 18 August 1954.

(120) For the draft text of the treaty, reported to have leaked from the State Department, see Christian Science Monitor, 30 August 1954.

to meet probable Communist aggression in the area under its jurisdiction. Britain was primarily concerned with obtaining the understanding and co-operation of the non-aligned Governments of South and South-East Asia for the proposed pact. The absence of a military command of its own, would make it less provocative;(121) incidentally, this conformed to U.S. military strategy also. (122) Similarly, the absence of an automatic military obligation was as consistent with the British view that the membership of the proposed pact should not impair the existing relationship among the members of the treaty and the non-aligned powers, as it was with the U.S. view to the same effect, and the desire of the U.S. Congress not to give the Administration a blank cheque in respect of war and peace. (123) To Britain, however, it was the latter aspect of the proposed pact that was of real significance. Britain

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(121) That Britain wanted to have as non-provocative a treaty as possible is clear from a press conference statement of Douglas Dodds-Parker, Under-Secretary in the Foreign Office, who toured India, Indonesia and Burma to discuss the proposed pact with the Governments of these countries. At the end of his tour, he held the view that "if the organization to be established at Manila is non-provocative, I see no reason why we should not get their support." Times of Indonesia, 31 August 1954.

(122) The U.S. military strategists were reported to be opposed to the stationing of a sizable unit of the U.S. troops in South-East Asia. The Hindu, 19 August 1954. Also see New York Herald Tribune, 16 August 1954. Later, in his opening speech to the Manila Conference where the SEATO was born, Dulles said, "so far as the United States is concerned, its responsibilities are so vast and so far flung that we believe we best serve by developing the deterrent of mobile striking power, plus strategically placed reserves." Manila Conference Proceedings (Manila, 1954) 43.

(123) The Times, 4 September 1954.

believed that the proposed organization might, in course of time, culminate into a full-fledged Pacific Pact as envisioned by herself and many others, if it sought and received co-operation of the non-aligned powers.

The Anglo-U.S. view of the proposed pact, however, was far removed from the idea of it as held by the Philippines, Australia, New Zealand, Thailand, and Pakistan. The Philippines and Australia were among the earliest advocates of a Pacific Pact and were, therefore, justifiably elated to see their vision taking shape. The Philippines now urged a comprehensive collective defence system with two distinctive characteristics. She pleaded that the proposed pact should be an equivalent of the North Atlantic Treaty for military purposes, and of the Marshall Plan for economic purposes. (124) Thailand also held the same view. (125) R. G. Menzies, Australia's Prime Minister, also looked forward to the birth of "a great defensive organization" with "binding commitments." (126) New Zealand's Defence Minister, D. Macdonald, said on 12 August 1954, that New Zealand was "vulnerable in several ways to precipitate action," and would, therefore, try for a Pacific equivalent of NATO. (127) Pakistan, which had decided to attend the conference on the proposed pact scheduled to be

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(124) See the gist of the Philippine draft of the treaty. Statesman, 24 August 1954.

(125) New Times of Burma, 19 August 1954.

(126) Australia, Commonwealth Parliamentary Debates (New Series) (House of Representatives) No. 4, 5 August 1954, 67, 69.

(127) Statesman, 12 August 1954.

held at Manila, without making any prior commitment as to whether she would join the formation that might emerge, (128) was also in favour of a pact with "teeth." (129)

The United States, however, did not appear as being amenable to these suggestions. Australia, New Zealand, and Thailand were anxious to secure U.S. commitment for the defence of South East Asia. Although they preferred far more elaborate machinery to that end, yet in the face of stiff U.S. determination, they were obliged to acquiesce in the U.S. proposition of it. Only the Philippines indicated that she was reluctant to secure a duplicate promise of assistance from the United States. (130) Her military experts held the view that, given the Anglo-U.S. thesis on the proposed pact, the forthcoming pact would be of no use to her unless it guaranteed the security of Formosa. (131) On 4 September 1954, Dulles reached Manila to represent the United States at the meeting of the U.S.-Philippine Council (132) and also at the Manila Conference. At the convocation of the U.S.-Philippine Council, Dulles declared that the U.S. Seventh Fleet had standing orders

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(128) Ibid., 15 August 1954.

(129) Statement of Zafrulla Khan, Pakistan's Foreign Minister on 4 September at Bangkok. Statesman, 5 September 1954.

(130) Times of Indonesia, 11 August 1954.

(131) Manila Times, 2 September 1954.

(132) The U.S.-Philippine Council was a body established on 15 June 1954 at a meeting of Dulles and Romulo "to provide facilities for discussions of matters of mutual concern arising under the United States-Philippine Mutual Defence Treaty." Department of State Bulletin, 30 (28 June 1954) 973.

"to protect Formosa from invasion by Communist aggressors." He further said that if the Philippines were to be attacked by the Communists, U.S. forces would "automatically react" against the aggressors. (133) In addition to these assurances, the Philippines also extracted from Dulles a promise for materials to equip four divisions. (134)

The United States thus made it clear that under the conditions existing in Asia then, she would not go in for more than a simple anti-Communist coalition which might be invoked in time of communist aggression in the treaty area. Britain, too, did not feel that conditions in Asia permitted more elaborate machinery than the one desired by the United States. Other countries were not resourceful enough to press forward their respective points of view and sustain them in the face of the stiff determination of their more powerful allies.

The South-East Asia Collective Defence Treaty

The Conference to formally draft the collective defensive pact for South-East Asia opened at Manila, on 6 September, and the South East Asia Collective Defence Treaty was signed on 8 September 1954. Delegates from the United States, Britain, France, Australia, New Zealand, Thailand, the Philippines, and Pakistan joined the conference. Each delegation, except those

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(133) Manila Times, 5 September 1954.

(134) The Times, 4 September 1954.

of Britain and France, was led by the Foreign Ministers of the governments concerned. The British delegation was led by the Marquess of Reading, Minister of State of Foreign Affairs, and the French delegation was led by Guy La Chambre, Minister of State. The leader of each delegation signed the treaty signifying the acquiescence of the government he represented, although constitutional ratifications, if and where required, had to be obtained. The case of Pakistani delegate was an exception: he signed it "for transmission to my government for its consideration and action." (135)

The speeches made at the opening session of the Manila conference reflected the points of agreement as well as of disagreement among the delegates. All the delegations were agreed that the threat to the peace and stability of South-East Asia came primarily from International Communism. There was also agreement on the point that the danger of International Communism did not merely derive from the military strength and aggressive policies of the Communist Bloc, but also from the social and economic conditions prevailing in the countries of South-East Asia. Again, there was general agreement at the conference on the need for securing the understanding and sympathy of the non-aligned Governments for the emerging pact and leaving the door of the organization to be established open to them. (136)

It was however, not the agreed views but the discordent notes sounded at the conference that was fundamental to the

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(135) Manila Conference Proceedings, n. 122, 80.

(136) See the opening remarks of the Chief Delegates, Manila Conference Proceedings, 23-43.

treaty signed. The United States suggested that the danger of Communism was the only threat to the freedom and security of South-East Asia and should be specified as such. (137) U.S. suggestion inevitably irked Zafrullah Khan, the Pakistani Foreign minister; he refuted the wisdom of attempting "to make provision against aggression only of a particular variety." (138) Again, the Thai delegate, Prince Wan Waithayakon, proposed that the undertakings of the members should be "as near as possible to that of NATO," (139) while the United States counselled against it. (140)

The text of the South-East Asia Collective Defence Treaty(141) as signed on 8 September 1954, recorded the points of agreement as directly as those of disagreement. It provided for resistance to "armed attack" and prevention of "subversive activities directed from without." The parties also undertook "to cooperate with one another in the further development of economic measures, including technical assistance, designed both to promote economic progress and social well-being." The treaty also provided for the admission of new members. It also established a Council to provide "for consultation with regard to military and any other planning as the situation obtaining in the treaty area may from

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(137) Dulles' opening remarks, ibid., 43.

(138) Zafrullah Khan's opening remarks, ibid., 34.

(139) Wan Waithayakon's opening remarks, ibid., 36.

(140) Vide, n. 137, 42.

(141) See the text of the South-East Asia Collective Defence Treaty as signed at Manila, The Manila Conference Proceedings, n. 122, 76-80.

time to time require." The members also unanimously designated "the States of Cambodia, Laos, the free territory under the jurisdiction of the State of Vietnam," as states and territory entitled to the benefits of the treaty both in respect of security and economic measures. (142)

As regards the commitments of the members under the treaty, it was stipulated that in case of an armed attack each member would provide assistance to the other, "in accordance with its constitutional processes," and that they would consult together, if the security of any one of them is threatened in any way "other than armed attack." On behalf of the United States, however, it was said that her "recognition of the effect of aggression and armed attack . . . apply only to Communist aggression." The disagreement between the United States and other members of the treaty as regards the purpose of the treaty was thus duly recorded.

Before the treaty was signed, Eden had said, that the proposal to establish a South East Asia Collective Defence Pact should be seen as a culmination of long efforts made to that end, and not merely as a reaction to the collapse of French defences in Indo-China. (143) Speaking in the Australian House of Representatives on 10 August 1954, Casey said that "the prospective South-East Asia Treaty Organization is no longer

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(142) Protocol to the South-East Asia Collective Defence Treaty, ibid., 84.

(143) Vide n. 52.

related, even indirectly, to the fighting that was until recently taking place in Indochina" and urged upon others to look upon it as "a collective defence of long-term nature and not as an alliance reached hastily for possible use in the Indochina fighting." (144) Casey, thus, seemed to impress upon the others that with the cessation of fighting in Indo-China, the causal relationship between the prospective pact and the Indo-China war would not exist.

As against these views, we have the known attitude of the United States on the subject of a Pacific Pact and her view of the South-East Asia Collective Defence Treaty. The United States had firmly held to the view that she would not either lead a movement for a Pacific Pact, or join one, if it was established against the wishes of the countries of the Pacific region. Yet, whenever she had found it necessary to take a certain step for strengthening her own position vis-a-vis the Communist Bloc, she had done so in spite of the protestations of most of the non-aligned countries of South and South-East Asia. Her emphatic stand, as evidenced by the "U.S. understanding" appended to the South-East Asia Collective Defence Treaty, that her obligation under the treaty might be invoked in case of a communist threat only, was meant to impress upon the non-aligned countries that her views on the subject of a Pacific Pact had not undergone any fundamental change, and that the present pact was just another step to strengthen her position in the Pacific region

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(144) Australia, Commonwealth Parliamentary Debates (New Series) (House of Representatives) 4, 10 August 1954, 101.

vis-a-vis the Communist bloc. (145)

Neither of the views stated above can be taken as the right perspective on the treaty signed at Manila. Its provisions regarding economic co-operation, social welfare, and general concern for the security and prosperity of the Asian peoples, as well as those of the Pacific Charter, (146) signed at the behest of the Government of the Philippines and supported strongly by the United States, indicated what could be made of SEATO, if the Asian countries decided to join it. The South-East Asia Collective Defence Treaty and the Pacific Charter together laid the foundation of a great defensive organization which could fully meet the requirements of the peoples of this region. At the time of their signing, the atmosphere in South and South-East Asia was not conducive to the emergence of a defence organization contemplated by almost all of its members. But the United States was not prepared to wait for a change for the better, and the others interested in joining the South-East Asia Treaty Organization were not ready to miss an opportunity to establish a collective defence pact under the U.S. leadership.

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(145) In a broadcast to the nation, Dulles said, "The United States was in a special position at Manila. . . . For the others, the pact was not only an anti-Communist pact but also a regional pact. . . . We stipulated on behalf of the United States, however, that the only armed attack in that area which we would regard as necessarily dangerous to our peace and security would be a Communist armed attack." Department of State Bulletin, 31 (27 September 1954), n. 122, 431.

(146) "The Pacific Charter," The Manila Conference Proceedings, n. 122, 88.

The treaty signed at Manila did not actually establish a great regional organization but was a blueprint for one and was designed to tempt the remaining Asian Governments into joining it. For the present, however, the treaty merely established an anti-Communist coalition as required then by the United States. When it was established, only its anti-communist voice, in spite of the contrary view of the treaty taken by some of its members, (147) was audible. Others looked hopefully at its future; the United States alone was satisfied with it in its present form, as it was "the latest link" in strengthening her "security chain in Asia and the Pacific." (148)

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(147) See the closing remarks of the leaders of the various delegations at the Manila Conference, ibid., 49-65.

(148) Eisenhower's Message to Congress, 33 (12 September 1954) 429.

Chapter Six

C O N C L U S I O N S

The preceding chapter marks the end of the discussion about the origins of SEATO. The South East Asia Collective Defence Treaty, as signed at Manila on 8 September 1954 and ratified in due course by its signatories, established, what has since been called, the South-East Asia Treaty Organization (SEATO). In this chapter, it is proposed to review the survey made in the form of answers to the two following questions:

(i) What force did SEATO represent in the history of South-East Asia?

(ii) Was it the right instrument for serving the purpose of its makers?

As to the first question, we have before us two contradictory answers. Robert Trumbull of New York Times wrote that it signified "the accomplishment of a historic alliance between the East and the West," and constituted "a negation in the global sense of Kipling's philosophy that 'East is East and West is West and never the twain shall meet'." (1) As against this contention, we have the reaction of Ali Sastroamidjojo, Indonesia's Prime Minister, to the effect that it was an anti-Asian alliance. On the eve of the Manila

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(1) New York Times, 9 September 1954.

Conference, Sastroamidjojo proposed that an all-Asian pact, with Communist China too as a member, should be concluded, to resist the implementation of SEATO's anti-Asian designs. (2)

Again, there were contradictory views expressed about the probable impact of SEATO's formation and its working in the future. In the report on the Manila Treaty which he submitted to President Eisenhower, Dulles referred to it as "the bulwark of peace and security in the Pacific area." (3) As against this view, the Burmese Chamber of Deputies unanimously passed a resolution condemning it as being "directed against peace in South-East Asia." (4)

In the first two chapters, the aspects of the case for co-operation between what Trumbull has designated the East and the West have been fully examined. It has been held that the desire for co-operation on both sides was genuine and also practicable as borne out by the successful launching of the Point-4 and the Colombo Plan. At the same time, it has also been seen, that it was not possible to form an anti-Communist East-West alliance. Attempts were made but to no avail. It was conclusively proved that the ruling nationalist regimes in the newly independent countries of South and South-East Asia were neither in a position to nor willing to give up their non-alignment. Historical conditions in Asia, as has been shown

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(2) Ibid., 5 September 1954.

(3) R.I.I.A. Documents 1954 (London, 1957) 166.

(4) Statesman, 17 September 1955.

throughout this study, appeared to make non-alignment as between the two power blocs the only wise policy for them.

SEATO was not based on ignorance of the forces at work in South-East Asian history. It followed the decisive failure of earlier attempts at an anti-Communist alliance between the East and West, and was professedly an anti-Communist alliance. It was not born with the consent, either express or tacit, of most of the Asian Governments; it was forged against their "studied opposition." (5)

As a matter of fact, the conclusion of SEATO, far from being the accomplishment of an alliance between the East and the West, marked the highest stage of discord between them. One of the major objectives of U.S. policy had been to create situations of strength vis-a-vis the Communist Bloc. In respect of South-East Asia, too, U.S. policy ~~was turned to~~ had been designed with the same end in view. Following the outbreak of the Korean war, application of the policy of the 'situation of strength' in several cases had been deeply resented by the Asians. As has been seen in the third, the fourth, and the fifth chapters of this thesis, the United States, even though sensitive to their reactions, nevertheless implemented it. SEATO was thus the latest manifestation of the policy of the 'situation of strength'. Moreover, it was created at a time when most of the countries of South and South East Asia felt, no reason for it existed. Its formation, as far as the relationship between the East and the West was concerned, further worsened it.

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(5) Eastern Economist (New Delhi), 17 September 1954.

The creation of SEATO, therefore, might have been a historic event, but not for the reason that Trumbull gives. It was not a negation of Kipling's philosophy as he saw it. Its emergence, in the face of widely prevalent resentment against it in Asia, might be picked up by Kipling's followers as an argument in favour of their case.

At another end to Trumbull's view of the SEATO, and further away from the facts, is the opinion of Sastroamidjojo, who alleged that SEATO was an anti-Asian organization. Before examining this allegation, we must be clear as to the meaning of the two other epithets - non-Asian and un-Asian - used to depict its nature. It was non-Asian in the historical sense. Its form, content, and even the timing of its birth, as we have seen were determined in the West, and five of its eight members were non-Asian. Again, it was un-Asian in the sense of personality: it did not reflect the working of the Asian mind under the given circumstances.

Whether it is non-Asian or un-Asian does not necessarily make it anti-Asian. At no point in the evolution of the situation leading to its birth, was there any suggestion to that effect. On the other hand, events preceding its conclusion, speeches made at the Manila Conference, the Pacific Charter proclaimed by the SEATO powers and the text of the South-East Asia Collective Defence Treaty itself, reveal the anxiety of its guardians not to lose the confidence of the Asians and to develop, if possible, a system of collaboration with them.

Regarding its impact on South-East Asia, too, two contradictory views have been recorded. Behind them, there lie differing understandings of the situation in Asia. The Burmese view of SEATO is based on the assumption, that after the Geneva settlements there did not remain any further ground for the continuation of the struggle for power between the two power blocs. In this argument, SEATO, following close on the heels of the Geneva Conference, caused in South-East Asia the beginning of a new struggle for power between the two power blocs. (6) As against this, Dulles based his view of it on the assumption that the Communist Bloc was expansionist, and that the weak and small nations of South-East Asia, left to their own resources, would never be able to resist its expansion. In this argument, the reason for the establishment of SEATO was that its existence would make up for the lack of strength of these small nations and thus help in the maintenance of peace in South-East Asia, and the independence of the countries of the region.

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(6) Jawaharlal Nehru also took the same view of the impact of the conclusion of the SEATO. In a statement made on 29 September 1954, he said, "I have often wondered what was the special urge, the special drive towards having this Manila Conference and this South East Asia Treaty that emerged from it? . . . Was the peace of South-East Asia or the Pacific threatened suddenly? Why was that particular time chosen, just after the Geneva Treaty? I have been unable to find the answer. . . .

. . . has this Manila Treaty relaxed tension or increased them? . . . I confess, I neither see any lessening of tension nor any advance towards peace. In fact, the reverse." Military Alliances: Excerpts from Prime Minister Nehru's speeches to Parliament 1954-56 (Lok Sabha Secretariat, Delhi, 1957) 1.

SEATO's arrival on the South-East Asian scene bred tension, but it did not cause war. The non-aligned powers of Asia blamed the members of SEATO for causing tension; but the Western Powers have since been claiming that the existence of SEATO forced the Communist Bloc to revise its designs regarding South-East Asia.

It is obvious that both these arguments are equally specious and do not explain the real nature of SEATO. The only point on which its makers and critics are equally agreed is that it brings the formidable power of the West to bear upon the South-East Asian scene. The disagreement is regarding its effect.

It must be borne in mind, that South-East Asia is a cluster of small and weak states. The socio-political conditions existing in these countries further add to their weakness. Even though the Burmese contention that the Communist Bloc was not expansionist is accepted, it remains true that the Western Powers were not concerned with it. Large Communist parties in the countries of South-East Asia were working under favourable socio-economic conditions. With the experience of Vietnam to guide them, where the Communists seized power by taking advantage of the conditions within the country, the Western Powers would never have given up such a strategically significant region like South-East Asia, which, they felt, was vulnerable. In any case, they would have introduced their strength on the South-East Asian scene.

Though the decision to form SEATO, made in the face of formidable opposition in South and South-East Asia, cannot, however, be attributed to any mental quality typical of its makers. The cause for SEATO must be sought in the nature of the international power mechanism of our times on the one hand, and its working in South East Asia on the eve of ~~the~~ SEATO's birth, on the other. The Geneva Conference did not put an end to the Cold War altogether. Given its continued existence, the peculiar socio-political conditions in the countries of South-East Asia and the weakening of ~~the~~ Western defences after the collapse of the French resistance in Indo-China, the establishment of a power system, whose existence could make the Communist Bloc realize the existence of the strength of the Western Bloc in South-East Asia was the most natural phenomenon. It was an instrument designed to hold the Communist Bloc in check, in this sense, it was an instrument manufactured by one bloc for use under certain conditions against its rival.

The phenomenon of SEATO, therefore, must be explained in relation to the nature and working of the international power mechanism. It is the spirit, that it introduced in South-East Asia, which ought to be taken into account. It was the spirit of defiance and challenge flung by the Western Powers at the Communist Bloc.

The coming of SEATO was deeply resented by the non-aligned Governments of South and South-East Asia. It was resented, not simply because it was a Western instrument, but because it was destined to intensify the struggle for power in South-East Asia

between the two power constellations. As we have seen throughout this study, the non-aligned Governments had reason to resent the continuation of the struggle for power in South-East Asia and had constantly worked to break the vicious circle of power. The emergence of SEATO aroused a fresh wave of anti-colonialist feeling in the countries of South-East Asia. The Communists had an agreeable circumstance to work under and the non-aligned Governments had extremely difficult situation to face. Their criticisms of SEATO do not reveal fear, but disappointment and anger.

The author of this study has held that the appearance of SEATO in South-East Asia, was a natural development. The question which follows this contention pertains to the form of SEATO. The promoters of SEATO had established a system of collective security alliance, even though conditions for an anti-Communist alliance did not exist, either among the countries of South and South-East Asia or between them on the one hand and the Western Powers on the other. That they still preferred to promote a regional alliance to project their power on the South-East scene must be attributed to their understanding of the situation in South-East Asia. It was clear to them, that no system of resistance to communism could work in South-East Asia, unless it had the confidence and sympathy of the non-aligned powers of the region. SEATO's charter was carefully drafted with an eye to win their confidence and co-operation. It was felt by its makers that the working of SEATO, in its present form,

would not be impeded by the non-aligned powers, and in course of time, the latter might even join it.

The Asian members' view of SEATO was far removed from the Western view of it. They took it as an organization with enormous resources. From the beginning, they asked to exploit its potentialities, whether or not the non-aligned powers joined it.

As time passed, it became obvious that the non-aligned countries of Asia would not join SEATO; so, it also became certain that its potentialities would never be exploited. In the eyes of its Asian members, SEATO seemed to have lost its practical value. Its economic potentialities remained unexploited in the face of the opposition of its members. (7) The Laotian crisis of 1961-2 further exposed its futility as a political and military alliance. The lesson was brought home to its members that conditions for an East-West alliance did not yet exist. Pakistan, which had joined the alliance primarily out of rivalry with India, turned to China, lately India's enemy, and Thailand sought, and received from the United States, unilateral

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(7) The farthest that the non-Asian members of SEATO went to concede the demand of its Asian members was in the form of authority given to the Permanent Economic Committee of SEATO "to discuss on a technical and advisory basis relevant economic problems of member countries, bearing in mind the established functions of other international agencies." Final Communique of the Sixth Meeting of the Council of South-East Asia Treaty Organization SEATO: Record of Progress 1959-1960 (A SEATO Publication, Bangkok, 1960).

Nai Pote Sarasin, SEATO's Secretary-General, felt that this resolution had broadened SEATO's "economic activities," for, "any proposal submitted by members in the future would be eligible for discussion." Hindustan Times, 4 June 1960.

assurance of assistance in case of Communist aggression on her. (8) That the United States conceded to the Thai request was a public admission of failure of SEATO.

It would thus appear that while the appearance in South-East Asia of spirit which the makers of the SEATO introduced through it, was inevitable, SEATO, was not the right medium to bring it into operation.

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(8) New York Times, 3 March 1962.

APPENDIX

THE SEATO CHARTER AND THE PACIFIC CHARTER

[1] The Signing of the Southeast Asia Collective Defence Treaty, The Protocol to the South East Asia Collective Defence Treaty and the Pacific Charter: Proceedings, (Conference Secretariat, Manila Conference of 1954, 8 September 1954) [7]

A. South-East Asia Collective Defence Treaty, Manila, 8 September 1954

The Parties to this Treaty,

Recognising the sovereign equality of all the Parties,

Reiterating their faith in the purposes and principles set forth in the Charter of the United Nations and their desire to live in peace with all peoples and all governments,

Reaffirming that, in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations, they uphold the principle of equal rights and self-determination of peoples, and declaring that they will earnestly strive by every peaceful means to promote self-government and to secure the independence of all countries whose peoples desire it and are able to undertake its responsibilities,

Desiring to strengthen the fabric of peace and freedom and to uphold the principles of democracy, individual liberty and the rule of law, and to promote the economic well-being and development of all peoples in the Treaty area,

Intending to declare publicly and formally their sense of unity, so that any potential aggressor will appreciate that the Parties stand together in the area, and

Desiring further to co-ordinate their efforts for collective defence for the preservation of peace and security,

Therefore agree as follows:

Article One

The Parties undertake, as set forth in the Charter of the United Nations, to settle any international disputes in which they may be involved by peaceful means in such a manner that international peace and security and justice are not endangered, and to refrain in their international relations from the threat or use of force in any manner inconsistent with the purposes of the United Nations.

Article Two

In order more effectively to achieve the objectives of this Treaty, the Parties, separately and jointly, by means of continuous and effective self-help and mutual aid will maintain and develop their individual and collective capacity to resist armed attack and to prevent and counter subversive activities directed from without against their territorial integrity and political stability.

Article Three

The Parties undertake to strengthen their free institutions, and to co-operate with one another in the further development of economic measures, including technical assistance, designed both to promote economic progress and social well-being and to further the individual and collective efforts of governments toward these ends.

Article Four

1 - Each Party recognises that aggression by means of armed attack in the treaty area against any of the Parties or against any State or territory which the Parties by unanimous agreement may hereafter designate, would endanger its own peace and safety, and agrees that it will in that event act to meet the common danger in accordance with its constitutional processes.

Measures taken under this paragraph shall be immediately reported to the Security Council of the United Nations.

2 - If, in the opinion of any of the 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 in any way other than by armed attack or is affected or 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.

3 - It is understood that no action on the territory of any State designated by unanimous agreement under paragraph 1 of this Article or on any territory so designated shall be taken except at the invitation or with the consent of the Government concerned.

Article Five

The Parties hereby establish a Council, on which each of them shall be represented, to consider matters concerning the implementation of this Treaty.

The Council shall provide for consultation with regard to military and any other planning as the situation obtaining in the treaty area may from time to time require. The Council shall be so organised as to be able to meet at any time.

Article Six

This Treaty does not affect and shall not be interpreted as affecting in any way the rights and obligations of any of the Parties under the Charter of the United Nations or the responsibility of the United Nations for the maintenance of international peace and security.

Each Party declares that none of the international engagements now in force between it and any other of the Parties or any third party is in conflict with the provisions of this Treaty, and undertakes not to enter into any international engagement in conflict with this Treaty.

Article Seven

Any other State in a position to further the objectives of this Treaty and to contribute to the security of the area may, by unanimous agreement of the Parties, be invited to accede to this Treaty.

Any State so invited may become a Party to the Treaty by depositing its instrument of accession with the Government of the Republic of the Philippines. The Government of the Republic of the Philippines shall inform each of the Parties of the deposit of each such instrument of accession.

Article Eight

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

The Parties may, by unanimous agreement, amend this Article to include within the treaty area the territory of any State acceding to this Treaty in accordance with Article Seven or otherwise to change the treaty area.

Article Nine

1 - This Treaty shall be deposited in the archives of the Government of the Republic of Philippines. Duly certified copies thereof shall be transmitted by that Government to the other signatories.

2 - The Treaty shall be ratified and its provisions carried out by the Parties in accordance with their respective constitutional processes.

The instruments of ratification shall be deposited as soon as possible with the Government of the Republic of the Philippines, which shall notify all of the other signatories of such deposit.

3 - The Treaty shall enter into force between the States which have ratified it as soon as the instruments of ratification of a majority of the signatories shall have been deposited, and shall come into effect with respect to each other State on the date of the deposit of its instrument of ratification.

Article Ten

This Treaty shall remain in force indefinitely, but any Party may cease to be a Party one year after its notice of denunciation has been given to the Government of the Republic of the Philippines, which shall inform the Governments of the other Parties of the deposit of each notice of denunication.

Article Eleven

The English text of this Treaty is binding on the Parties, but when the parties have agreed to the French text thereof and have so notified the Government of the Republic of the Philippines, the French text shall be equally authentic and binding on the Parties.

Understanding of the United States of America

The United States of America in executing the present Treaty does so with the understanding that its recognition of the effect of aggression and armed attack and its agreement with reference thereto in Article Four, Paragraph 1, apply only to Communist aggression, but affirms that in the event of other aggression or armed attack it will consult under the provisions of Article Four, paragraph 2.

In witness whereof, the undersigned Plenipotentiaries have signed this Treaty.

Done at Manila, this eighth day of September 1954.

Protocol regarding Articles 4 and 3

The Parties to the South-East Asia Collective Defence Treaty unanimously designate for the purposes of Article Four of the Treaty the States of Cambodia and Laos and the free territory under the jurisdiction of the State of Vietnam.

The Parties further agree that the above-mentioned States and territory shall be eligible in respect of the economic measures contemplated by Article Three.

This Protocol shall enter into force simultaneously with the coming into force of the Treaty.

B. The Pacific Charter, Manila, 8 September 1954

The Delegates of Australia, France, New Zealand, Pakistan, the Republic of the Philippines, the Kingdom of Thailand, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, and the United States of America;

Desiring to establish a firm basis for common action to maintain peace and security in South-East Asia and the South-West Pacific;

Convinced that common action to this end, in order to be worthy and effective, must be inspired by the highest principles of justice and liberty;

Do hereby proclaim:

First, in accordance with the provisions of the United Nations Charter, they uphold the principle of equal rights and

self-determination of peoples and they will earnestly strive by every peaceful means to promote self-government and to secure the independence of all countries whose peoples desire it and are able to undertake its responsibilities;

Second, they are each prepared to continue taking effective practical measures to ensure conditions favourable to the orderly achievement of the foregoing purposes in accordance with their constitutional processes;

Third, they will continue to co-operate in the economic, social and cultural fields in order to promote higher living standards, economic progress and social well-being in this region;

Fourth, as declared in the South-East Asia Collective Defence Treaty, they are determined to prevent or counter by appropriate means any attempt in the treaty area to subvert their freedom or to destroy their sovereignty or territorial integrity.

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