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The evolution of the U.S. Containment Policy in Asia.

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THE EVOLUTION OF THE U. S. CONTAINMENT POLICY IN ASIA

Submitted to the Department of Political Science at the University of Windsor in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts.

by

Richard John Pilliter B.A.

Faculty of Graduate Studies
1969
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ABSTRACT

Containment is a policy most often associated with the Truman Doctrine, the Marshall Plan and NATO and of course the prevention of Soviet expansionism. The policy's success in Europe has often overshadowed the fact that it has also been the foundation of America's Asian policy since the outset of the Korean War. A study of the evolution of the United States Asian containment policy shows that it has created rather than solved problems in American relations with Asia. The present tragedy in Vietnam, a product of the policy, is the prime example.

Containment was formulated as a policy for Europe, based on the conditions in Europe. It was hastily extended to Asia to cover the Korean War and was continued in the post-Korean War period without proper consideration for Asian needs and wants. The differences in opinion between American policy-makers and many Asian leaders concerning these vital factors has greatly handicapped the policy. The fact that American official rhetoric, originally a device used to "sell" the policy to the American public, became at times the basis for actual policies, has further hindered the containment policy.
In Asia, containment has evolved into an open-ended commitment to defend every nation against communist pressures regardless of the fact that the cost was at times out of proportion to the American interest involved. American policy-makers have overextended the principles of containment, valid in Europe, and misapplied them in Asia. As a result, Americans now find their country in a catastrophic situation in Vietnam, and their efforts to achieve a balance of power in Asia complicated.
PREFACE

The United States today faces many serious foreign policy issues; Vietnam, the Middle East and the questionable status of NATO in Europe to mention but a few. The most pressing and divisive issue, of course, is the war in Vietnam. Yet, while the debate has centered on Vietnam, many leading Americans are questioning almost all aspects of American policy in Asia. The debate on Vietnam has come to express the "even more basic divisions and doubts about American purposes and interests in Asia generally." Thus numerous questions have arisen, such as: What is America's Asian policy; what are its objectives; do the objectives reflect the national interest of the United States; has the policy been successful; if so, why is the United States involved in the Vietnam War; if the policy has been unsuccessful, why?

These questions are difficult ones, and some may have no single absolute answer, but the Vietnam War has brought out the need to at least attempt to find the answers.

In order to begin to answer some of the questions, it is necessary to go beyond Asia as the area of study. For example, to understand the basic underlying principle in America's Asian policy for most of the postwar period—containment, it is necessary to begin at its roots in Europe.

The study of American policy in Asia is clouded by the overriding ambiguity of Asia's relation to the U.S. national interest. While America has since the days of the Open Door Policy and the acquisition of the Philippines always expressed an interest in Asia, American leaders have failed to clearly define what this is. It has been said that "beneath the confusion, reversals of policy and moralistic generalities which have made up the surface of the Asiatic policy since McKinley, one can detect an underlying consistency which, however vaguely, reflects the permanent interests of the United States in Asia. This principle is ... the maintenance of the balance of power."

However, since Hans J. Morgenthau made this claim in 1951, it may be asked today whether the containment policy in Asia has been based on this principle; and, if so, whether the policy has been able to achieve the maintenance of the balance of power.

It will be the purpose of this thesis to analyse

the evolution of containment as a policy for Asia. Chapter I is an introductory chapter which discusses the concept of containment itself in its original European context. This is done in order to convey what is meant by the term "containment" and also to provide the basis of a comparison with containment as it evolved as an Asian Policy.

The following chapter deals with the Korean War. Korea, as will be shown, is the place where containment was first applied in Asia. However, the war's importance goes beyond the fact that it marked the beginnings of containment in Asia; for it was during the Korean War and at its conclusion that perceptions were acquired by American leaders which were to serve as guide lines for the containment policy up to and into the Vietnam War.

Next there is a chapter devoted to a general discussion of the instruments of containment at work in Asia between the Korean War and the Vietnam War.

And finally, Vietnam is used as a case study of containment. While the United States has admittedly made many mistakes in its specific Vietnam policy, I will attempt to prove to the reader that the failures in Vietnam are representative of the failures in the entire Asian containment policy.

James Burnham writing in 1953 on containment said that "to review the record of the containment policy is not to perform an autopsy but to diagnose the conditions of a
still breathing organism." I believe that his words are still valid today, but ponder the question whether it might not better serve American interests if this were not so.

\footnote{3James Burnham, \textit{Containment or Liberation}, (New York, 1953), p. 72.}
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TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT iii
PREFACE v
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS ix

CHAPTER I. The Concept of Containment: 1
Europe 1947 - 1949

CHAPTER II. Containment Extended To Asia: 30
The Korean War

CHAPTER III. Containment In Asia 1954-1963 67
1. Legacy of the Korean War 68
2. Growing Involvement In Indochina 69
3. The Republican Version of Containment 75
4. Asian Attitudes Towards U.S. Policy 79
5. Pre-SEATO Negotiations 83
6. SEATO 87
7. Instruments of the Containment Policy 93
8. U.S. China Policy 95
9. Foreign Aid In Asia 105

CHAPTER IV. Vietnam 117
CONCLUSION 169
BIBLIOGRAPHY 177
VITA AUCTORIS 188
THE CONCEPT OF CONTAINMENT
Europe 1947 - 1950

It is clear that the United States cannot expect in the foreseeable future to enjoy political intimacy with the Soviet Regime. It must continue to regard the Soviet Union as a rival, not a partner in the political arena.

... the United States (warrants) entering with reasonable confidence upon a policy of firm containment, designed to confront the Russians with unalterable counter-force at every point where they show signs of encroaching upon the interests of a peaceful and stable world. 1

These words are taken from George Kennan's famous article, "The Sources of Soviet Conduct" which appeared in Foreign Affairs July, 1947. It marks the first time the word "containment" is used to refer to American foreign policy objectives. Twenty-two years later, containment is still a most appropriate word to describe American foreign policy objectives, although its present ambiguous meaning has brought the United States into the Vietnam War.

Mr. Kennan's article while it is responsible for naming the United States postwar policy, it does not mark the actual beginnings of the policy. Actually the initial

1 George Kennan, "The Sources of Soviet Conduct", Foreign Affairs, xxv, No. 4, July, 1947, pp. 566-82.
program of the containment policy was the Truman Doctrine (March, 1947) which preceded the Kennan exposition. The famous writing of Mr. Kennan was not an official statement of U.S. policy, but an academic endeavor to describe the realities of the then existing Soviet-American relations, with a personal suggestion of how the United States could meet the situation.

The Truman Doctrine was to usher the United States into a position of international involvement to an extent previously unknown in that nation’s history, outside of the two World Wars. Some students of American foreign policy have claimed that it was inevitable that the United States become a dominant force in international affairs after World War II. This assumption seemed to be based on the fact that the power positions of the nations of the world had altered as a result of World War II and the United States had emerged from this shuffle as the strongest nation on the face of the globe. However, while it may have appeared inevitable to most of the world leaders and some American statesmen at that time, it was not inevitable to the majority of the American people.

The United States in the immediate postwar years (1945 to mid-1946) had entered into a phase that Gabriel Almond describes as "utopian romanticism". It was a time

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in which most Americans believed that a lasting peace had at last been secured and thus there was no reason why the world would not settle back into normalcy and order. Few Americans among the general populace were in the mood to pay attention to world problems at the close of World War II. For those few who were concerned about the problems of a bankrupt and devasted Europe, and the possible consequences of atomic weaponry, they believed that such problems could be adequately resolved by the United Nations through programs of relief and rehabilitation and peaceful negotiations.

While the Truman Administration was dismayed in the immediate post-war period by the expansionist tendencies displayed by the Soviet Union, most Americans did not realize that the Soviet actions would complicate the cooperation both nations had enjoyed in their war-time alliance. They could not foresee the future problems of negotiating with the Soviet Union that were to occur in the United Nations. Instead, many Americans retained an image of the Soviet Union as the land "of the heroic Soviet people", a nation lead by Joseph Stalin, a great patriot, whom Americans viewed as "a tough bargainer- but still a bargainer." With this perception of the Soviets, the American people had little reason to conclude, that the Soviet Union had

3 Ibid., p. xiii.
4 Ibid., p. xiii.
embarked upon a policy for world domination.

The belief in the lasting nature of the peace won by the allies and their preoccupation with the settling of domestic problems lead the American public to demand a speedy demobilization. In the eight-month period, May, 1945 to March, 1946, the United States reduced its armed forces from 3.5 million to 400,000 men. This program was carried out despite the continual warnings from the British Government that deliberate and unilateral disarmament was exceedingly dangerous until the Soviet Union had been made to live up to its Yalta obligations. When the Truman Administration seemingly disregarded the British warnings, former Prime Minister Churchill appealed directly to the American public. Churchill had little immediate success in changing the American people’s attitude, but in the process he did coin the phrase "iron curtain", a phrase that has since come to dominate the American imagination.

Thus, if one was to draw conclusions based on the temper of the American people at that time, one would not reasonably conclude that the United States was on the threshold of a new phase in its foreign policy.

Many men in the Truman Administration and some U.S. Congressmen, however, did not share their constituents' optimism. These men maintained a watchful eye on the Soviet

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post-war actions and were becoming increasingly concerned by them. Their decision to act, however, was not prompted by a direct Soviet action, but rather came in response to a decision by Great Britain.

In February, 1947, the British government informed the United States that Britain could no longer afford to continue the economic and military burden of insuring Greek independence. Greece at the time was in the midst of civil war between the conservative government and the Greek Communists. All intelligence reports indicated that with the British withdrawal, "the Communist insurgents would succeed in seizing control 'within a matter of weeks' unless the Government of Greece received prompt and large-scale aid." Truman believed if the Communists were successful in Greece, it would only be a matter of time before Turkey and Iran would also crumble before the Soviet power. The possible results of a Communist victory in Greece had even wider implications than these nations losing their independence. Britain had long theorized that Russian control of Greece and the Dardanelles would constitute a threat to the European balance of power. If this balance was to be upset, the very security of Europe would be threatened, and it had

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always been an assumption of American foreign policy that European security was vital for its own security. It had been a proven fact that when the European balance had been disrupted, as it had twice in the previous three decades, the United States had found itself in war. Truman interpreted the Greek crisis in such a way that the maintenance of the pro-Western regime in Greece was essential if vital American interests were to be secured.

Britain's admission that it could no longer meet the task of preserving Greek independence, placed before the United States the cold fact of a bipolar world. Then Undersecretary of State Acheson in explaining the Greek crisis to a bipartisan group of Congressional leaders stated:

Only two great powers remain in the world, the United States and the Soviet Union. ... and it was clear that the Soviet Union was aggressive and expanding. For the United States to take steps to strengthen countries threatened with Communist subversion ... was to protect the security of the United States. ... 8

Acheson concluded that the Truman Administration had no real alternative but to meet this perceived Soviet threat in Greece. In stating the Administration's position, the Undersecretary said that America had a choice, either to act "with energy" to meet the situation or lose by default. 9

America's decision to meet the challenge posed by


9Ibid., p. 41. Also see Truman, op. cit., p. 105.
"Soviet expansion", was stated in President Truman's message to Congress on March 12, 1947. The message contained a request for a Congressional appropriation of $400 million for economic and military aid to Greece and Turkey. In explaining the necessity for such aid, Truman did not identify America's direct interest in Greece and Turkey or their importance in the maintenance of the European balance of power. Instead, Truman's request was explained in terms of "a vague and indeterminate commitment to the support of freedom everywhere." Underlying the President's message seemed to be the acknowledgment of a long-held American belief, that they were a chosen people and the time had once more come for the United States to save the world, as it had been compelled to do in the previous World Wars. Explicit in the message was the acknowledgment of a basic conflict between the United States and the Soviet Union. Truman defined this conflict in broad ideological terms. In his Congressional message he stated:

At the present moment in world history, nearly every nation must choose between alternative ways of life. One way of life is based upon the will of the majority and is distinguished by free institutions, representative government, free elections, guarantees of individual liberty, freedom of speech and religion and freedom from political oppression.

The second way of life is based upon the will of a minority forcibly imposed upon the majority. It relies upon terror and oppression, a controlled press and radio, fixed elections, and the suppression

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President Truman, in announcing his administration's global commitment to support freedom, went far beyond the immediate crisis in Greece. It is at this point that "the Truman Doctrine merges into the policy of containment." The containment policy, as expressed in the Truman Doctrine, gave the impression, either intentionally or unintentionally, that the United States had embarked upon a "Holy Crusade" against communism. Such an impression was instrumental in aligning Congressional support and the support of the American people for this "new" policy. Truman, in appealing to America's human emotions, brought before the American public a sense of danger and moral obligation, that a "factual" explanation of the Greek civil war by itself could not have accomplished. The American people's previous reluctance to become involved in world affairs was transformed into support for a policy of involvement, because they felt such a policy was necessary if the American way of life was to be preserved. This messianism or crusading spirit was not an innovation in American foreign policy; it had been periodically evident in previous policies. However, since the Truman Doctrine, this emotionalism has


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come to be a dominant aspect of American foreign policy, often times obstructing American decision-maker's perception of a situation.

The immediate programs of the containment policy were not of the same vague general nature and the "open-ended" commitment Truman expressed. On the contrary, the principal programs of the containment policy up until 1950, the Marshall Plan and NATO, which followed the Truman Doctrine, were designed specifically to fortify Western Europe economically and militarily, so that, that area would be able to resist a Soviet threat.

In 1947 "the picture of Europe was one of mammoth slow-moving crisis."\(^\text{13}\) W.W. Rostow in his book *The United States In The World Arena* writes that

> There was a growing awareness (on the part of the Truman Administration) that something big had to be done in Europe to avoid a disaster to the American interest; that a substantial program of economic aid addressed constructively to the problems of economic recovery was required to deal with the multiple threats to the Eurasian power balance. \(^\text{14}\)

The Truman administration had become especially concerned with the internal situations in France and Italy. In both these nations domestic communist parties had shown increased strength. The American policy-makers feared that unless the internal instability of these nations and all of


Western Europe was corrected the Communist would exploit the crisis, and Western Europe would fall under Communist control from within. Although the Truman Administration was fully aware of the potential external threat the Soviet Union posed to Western European security, they maintained that the economic instability of the region posed a much more immediate threat.

President Truman reasoned that the rise in communist appeal in France and Italy was due, for the most part, to the increasing despair among their working classes. This despair was caused by these nations' inability to rebuild their economies after the War. Hunger, poverty and desperation, not ideological beliefs, were considered by U.S. policymakers, to be the conditions which laid Western Europe internally vulnerable to Communist domination. American leaders held the belief that once these internal problems were rectified, Western Europe would be able to insure its own security. However, the United States recognized the fact that the countries of Western Europe were not able to solve their internal problems alone; American assistance would be necessary. In a response to Western Europe's needs, the Truman Administration devised a program of economic assistance.

The assistance program, known as the Marshall Plan, was named after the then American Secretary of State, George Marshall. The program offered economic aid to all nations who were willing to cooperate and to take the initiative in
determining their respective needs. The Marshall Plan was intended to be a program directed toward the countries of Western Europe, but Secretary Marshall in announcing the program was careful in his choice of words, so as not to exclude the countries of Eastern Europe and its leader, the Soviet Union, from possible participation. Marshall, in his initial announcement of the program, declared, "Our policy is directed not against any country or doctrine, but against hunger, poverty, desperation and chaos." The announcement of the Marshall Plan was worded in such a way that it could be interpreted as an American effort to heal the split between Communist and non-Communist Europe through economic assistance and collaboration. Marshall was keenly aware of the political repercussions that a verbal restriction on participation would have brought about. Had the program been limited to just the Western European countries, the United States would have been vulnerable to verbal attacks from the restricted nations. America could then have been accused of reinforcing the division of Europe and intensifying the cold war. Additionally, a program which distinctly excluded the Soviet dominated Eastern European nations from participation might have alienated the Communist workers in France and Italy, whose numerical strength was in part responsible for the program's being. "One of the purposes of the Marshall Plan had been to gain the political allegiance

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15 Graebner, op. cit., p. 44.
of the working class" and thus "render them immune to the blandishments of Communism."\textsuperscript{16}

Marshall never really anticipated Russian or East European participation in the program. Noting the Congressional feeling of animosity toward the Soviet Union, he fully realized that participation by the Soviet Union or its satellites in the program would have insured the assistance program's defeat in the Congress. The American Congress, in fact, had become so anti-Soviet that a program which would assist this "Soviet enemy" could have been interpreted as being an act of treason. However, since Russian refusal to participate in the program seemed assured,\textsuperscript{17} Marshall felt that in extending an open invitation to all nations, the Soviet Union, in refusing, could be accused of continuing and aggravating the cold war.

Russian refusal to participate in the Marshall Plan seemed inevitable due to the program's construction. The United States had devised the program in such a way, that had the Soviet Union decided to participate, it would have had to disclose information concerning its economy as well as allowing the United States some control in its future economic planning and that of its satellites. Russia, if it had participated would have found itself to be involved

\textsuperscript{16}Spanier, op. cit., p. 44.

\textsuperscript{17}Truman, op. cit., p. 114-115.
in a program that was assisting the stabilization of European capitalism and thus such an offer was naturally declined by the Soviet Union. In stating its reason for refusing to participate in the assistance program, the Soviet Union claimed that the Marshall Plan "would represent an intolerable interference in the internal affairs of the European countries," and therefore was no more than a plan to increase United States imperialism.\(^{18}\) The Soviet's vocal denunciation of the program, assured Congressional approval for the Marshall Plan.

The Marshall Plan was eagerly welcomed by the countries of Western Europe, especially Great Britain and France. In all, seventeen nations of Western and North Western Europe participated in the program.\(^{19}\) The United States asked the participating countries to present a plan for their common needs that were necessary for recovery. The plan, the members devised, became the basis of the Organization for European Economic Cooperation. The members of the Organization pledged to "cooperate in reducing tariffs and other barriers to trade and to promote with vigor the development of productivity through (the)


\(^{19}\) Austria, Belgium and Luxembourg, Denmark, France, Greece, Iceland, Ireland, the Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Sweden, Turkey, the United Kingdom, Western Germany and Trieste.
efficient use of the resources at their command."\textsuperscript{20} In the first four year period (1948 to 1952) American assistance through the program amounted to $13 billion.\textsuperscript{21}

Marshall Plan aid was a massive success in restoring economic stability to Western Europe. By 1950, that area was already exceeding its pre-war production rate by 25 percent.\textsuperscript{22} The "dollar gap", a term used in the post-war years to describe Europe's inability to obtain enough dollars for the purchase of commodities required for its economic recovery, was soon reduced from $12 billion to $2 billion.\textsuperscript{23} The economic assistance provided through the Marshall Plan enabled the countries of Western Europe to establish a stable economic basis from which future progress and social reform would be possible.

American policy-makers made the Marshall Plan the cornerstone of their new containment policy. In assisting Western Europe rebuild its economy, American policy-makers felt the end product would be the strengthening of free institutions in these countries, which they believed was a necessity, if Western Europe was to meet the internal threat of communism. The importance the United States placed on

\textsuperscript{20}Spanier, op. cit., p. 42.
\textsuperscript{21}Truman, op. cit., p. 119.
\textsuperscript{22}Spanier, op. cit., p. 43.
\textsuperscript{23}Ibid., p. 43.
strengthening free institutions abroad was stated in the preamble of U.S. Public Law 472, April 3, 1948. The preamble described the Law, of which the Marshall Plan was a part, as an act

... to promote world peace and the general welfare, national interest and foreign policy of the United States, through economic, financial and other measures necessary for the maintenance of conditions abroad in which free institutions may survive and be consistent with the maintenance of the strength and stability of the United States. 24

President Truman, on signing this Law, called it America's answer to the challenge facing the free world."25

American policy-makers were to find, however, that a program of financial assistance alone was not a sufficient instrument for deterring the Communist threat in Western Europe.

In February, 1948, the Soviets engineered a coup d'etat in Czchoslavakia. News of this event was received with great alarm by American leaders but Western European leaders were even more concerned because of their proximity to the area. To some members of the West, Truman and Churchill in particular, the event resembled Hitler's actions concerning Czchoslavakia prior to World War II. 26

Four months later, in June, 1948, the Russians imposed a

24Burnham, op. cit., p. 52.

25Ibid., p. 52.

26Edmund Sallman states that in "reviewing the evidence of the Czchoslovak coup d'etat twenty years
blockade on West Berlin. The Soviet's attempt to dislodge the West from Berlin, following closely behind the "fall" of Czechoslovakia to Communism, instilled such a sense of insecurity in Western Europe, that a heavy strain was put on their economic recovery programs. The peoples of Western Europe, faced with what they considered to be a Soviet threat to their security, began to despair. They feared that Soviet power would one day come to dominate the entire European continent. Therefore, many Europeans felt that the sacrifices they were asked to make to achieve economic stability were in vain, for they would not be able to reap the benefits of such a recovery, if they were under Soviet domination. It became apparent to Western European leaders that economic recovery could not be achieved, until their nations were militarily secured.

afterward, it is evident that in the elections of 1946 the Communists and their left-Socialist puppets had an absolute majority in the Czechoslovak parliament of 50.8 per cent (and a commanding one of 55.67 in the key provinces of Bohemia and Moravia). While there is some suggestion that this majority would have been reduced in the forthcoming elections, in 1948, the majority of political activists in Czechoslovakia were in the Communist Party or its satellite organizations; the population was apathetic and, if may be, even generally approving the coup." Edmund Stillman, "The Political Issues: Facts and Fantasies" in Can We Win In Vietnam? by Frank E. Armbruster, Raymond D. Gastil, Herman Kahn, William Pfaff and Edmund Stillman, (New York, 1968), p. 143 fn. Also see Edmund Stillman, "The Fall of Czechoslovakia", The New York Times Magazine, February 18, 1968.
Five European nations, noting their need for military security, took the initiative and formed a military alliance. In March, 1948, Great Britain, France, the Netherlands, Belgium and Luxembourg signed the Brussels Pact, a collective defense alliance. According to the provisions of the alliance the contracting parties pledged to come to the assistance of any member country that was attacked, with military and any other aid in their power to produce.

President Truman immediately announced America's approval of the Brussels Pact. In speaking to the Congress Truman said, "The determination of the free countries of Europe will be matched by an equal determination on (the part of the United States) to help them to do so." However, for all its good intentions, the alliance, because of the individual military weaknesses of its members, was an ineffective force if faced by a Soviet challenge. If Western Europe was to be militarily secured, an alliance in which the United States was a member would be necessary. The United States was the only nation in the world which had the military strength to successfully meet a Soviet attack.

Following the Brussels Pact, the United States

\[27\text{Davids, op. cit., p. 413.}\]
Senate passed the Vandenberg Resolution which went on record as being in favor of regional arrangements of collective security based on continuous and effective self-help and mutual aid.\(^{28}\) The Congress overwhelmingly approved the resolution, a factor which was to greatly assist the Truman Administration in forming a similar security alliance.

Although Congress had approved the basic premise of a security alliance, the Truman Administration realized that it was still not prepared at that time to accept American membership in a purely military alliance during peace time. Thus, the Administration faced a dilemma; the needs of Europe were military, and yet, there was some Congressional disapproval of a strictly military alliance. In its final draft for a collective defense alliance, American policy-makers attempted to skirt the problem of Congressional opposition by emphasizing the common heritage and civilization shared by the United States and Western Europe and the need of continuing cooperation between the two while de-emphasizing the basic military structure of the alliance.

The resulting alliance is known as the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO).\(^{29}\) After some heated debating,

\(^{28}\)Ibid, p. 422.

\(^{29}\)The original members of NATO were Belgium, Canada, Denmark, France, Great Britain, Iceland, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway, Portugal and the United States. Greece and Turkey joined in 1952 and West Germany in 1954.
the U. S. Senate in April, 1949, ratified the alliance. The heart of the alliance is found in Article 5 in the text. It states:

The parties agree that an armed attack against one or more of them in Europe or North America shall be considered an attack against them all; and consequently they agree that, if such an armed attack, each of them in exercise of the right of individual or collective self-defense recognized by Article 51 of the Charter of the United Nations will assist the Parties so attacked by taking forthwith individually and in concert with other Parties, such action as it deems necessary, including the use of armed force, to resolve and maintain the security of the North Atlantic Area. 30

Despite the claims made by the advocates of NATO that the alliance was of a unique nature, it was basically an old-fashioned military alliance. While the text of the alliance was so worded that cooperation could be extended beyond the military sphere, there was no doubt among the contracting parties that the alliance's primary function was military. There seems to be two main reasons why the Truman Administration intentionally blurred the dominant military aspects of the alliance; first, the need to gain Senate approval of the alliance and secondly, the Administration's reluctance "to abandon their high idealistic way for a descent into power politics."31 American


policy-makers refused to admit that NATO was essentially a "traditional device, one strictly in the European tradition, worked essentially by European rules." Although the United States refused to concede this fact, it was this very same fact that made the alliance possible and initially successful. American officials spoke of NATO as an alliance "embodying the concept of containment," which it indeed did, however, "they might more accurately have said the Western Powers had put together in NATO a balance of power coalition, hopeful of holding a military line in Europe."^33

NATO, with its basic military orientation, was in fact to make the division between East and West more pronounced. Although NATO, prior to the Korean War, had not yet evolved into its present complex structure, with a unified command structure, and there were then no American military bases in Europe outside of Germany, the alliance made it quite clear to the Soviets that the United States was willing to meet, "by force if necessary," a Soviet challenge, at every point where the Soviet Union showed signs of encroaching upon West European interests. American leaders firmly believed that such a commitment would deter the Soviet Union from launching an attack on Western Europe. The Truman Administration viewed NATO as

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33 Ibid., p. 133.
an instrument which would assist the United States in avoiding all-out war.

During the 1948-1949 period, the West envisaged its greatest security danger "in terms of an overt Soviet attack in Europe that might lead to global war." NATO's defense strategy was, therefore, based on this assumption, and thus relied on the United States' strategic air-defense, the only Western defense which could overcome the Soviet combat power. In 1949, after the Soviet Union exploded its first atomic device, the NATO strategy was seriously questioned. Nonetheless, the strategy remains the same today, although conventional weapons and combat forces have been added to the defense structure. NATO marked the beginning of the military aspect of the containment policy, an aspect which for the most part has dominated the policy ever since.

The policy of containment in its initial years (1947-1949) was essentially a policy designed to meet the threat of Soviet expansion into Western Europe. For President Truman and the members of his administration a Communist threat and a Soviet threat were identical and they used the terms interchangeably. In announcing the containment policy Truman said the United States must support the cause of freedom everywhere against the evils of Communism, yet his early policy suggests that Truman

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\[34\text{Davids, op. cit., p. 423.}\]
really meant the United States would support any nation, faced with a Communist threat, that was considered vital to European security and thus vital to American security. This interpretation seems valid if one compares the American response to the Communist threat in Europe to the American response to Communist activity in China during the same period.

China, after World War II, was engulfed in a civil war. The Nationalist regime, under the leadership of Chiang Kai-shek, a wartime ally of the United States, had been greatly weakened by the effects of the extended war with Japan. On the other hand, the strength of the Communists had increased. Though probably of marginal significance the Soviet Union lent military support to the Communists by placing at their disposal surrendered Japanese arms.\textsuperscript{35} By early 1949, it became apparent to the Kuomintong that it would be defeated by the Communists, unless it received massive outside assistance, which the American leaders rightly interpreted to mean American intervention. The Truman Administration refused, and indeed, was, because of demobilization, in no position to give that degree of assistance, though it had already supplied substantial military and economic aid to the Nationalists. In the fall of 1949, Chiang Kai-shek was forced to flee from Mainland China to the island of Formosa. Mao Tse-tung, leader

\textsuperscript{35} Tang Tsou, \textit{America's Failure In China 1941-50}, (Chicago, 1963), pp. 330-331.
of the Communist forces claimed victory and on October 1, 1949 formally announced the establishment of the People's Republic of China.

The news of a Communist victory shocked and enraged many Americans. They could not believe that their "long-time friends," the Chinese, were to be ruled by a Communist regime. Heavy demands were placed on the Administration to explain how such an event had been allowed to occur. Some American Congressmen, especially the so-called "China bloc", demanded to know what policy the Administration intended to pursue in regards to the new regime on mainland China. The Administration replied that because they believed the situation in China was still unstable, their immediate policy would be one of "wait and see." The Government of the United States had just recently taken upon itself heavy commitments in Europe and was not prepared, at that time, to do the same in Asia. American policy-makers, therefore, intended to keep a watchful eye on the Chinese situation and any further developments that might occur, and when they felt the situation had stabilized itself, they would make a decision as to what policy to pursue there.

During World War II, American policy-makers anticipated a friendly China which after the war would become the "mainstay of a new emerging balance of power in the Far East."36

To further this desire, the United States initiated actions which conferred upon China the status of a great power. It was primarily through the efforts of the American Government that China was awarded one of the five permanent seats on the United Nations Security Council; China was thus granted equal status on that Council with the Soviet Union, Great Britain, France and the United States.

However, despite America's war-time efforts to make China a leading Asian power, they were for naught, for China was not even a unified nation in the immediate post-war years. The United States, during the waning years of World War II and up until 1947, supported the Nationalist regime politically, economically and within limits militarily, in an effort to establish peace in China. In 1947, President Truman sent George Marshall to China in an attempt to mediate a settlement in the Chinese civil war but Marshall's efforts failed. Marshall in explaining his failure to achieve a settlement, stated the main obstacle had been a lack of cooperation by both parties. Marshall's report indicated that the Nationalist regime was in need of reform and that the United States could do little to settle the struggle between the two factions. Further reports brought out the fact that Chiang Kai-shek's Government was corrupt, inefficient and reactionary. This type of Government "did not provide a

37 *Truman, op. cit.*, p. 62.
politically effective instrument through which to carry out the social and economic reforms China needed," if China was to be a stable nation, let alone an effective leader in Asia.

By late 1948, Secretary of State Marshall in effect abandoned the Kuomintong regime, although his policy was not one of total or prompt disengagement.40 Because of some Congressional opposition to its China policy and in order to insure full authorization of its Economic Recovery Program, the Truman Administration was forced to accept a heavy Congressional appropriation for aid to Chiang under the Marshall Plan.41 Such action was to complicate later attempts by the United States to disengage itself from the Chinese civil war, for it tied American policy to the Kuomintang.

During 1948, and early 1949, the position of the Nationalist regime steadily deterioriated to the point that a Communist victory seemed assured. On July 30, 1949, in anticipation of an imminent Communist victory, the United States State Department issued a "White Paper" on United States relations with China. In this document the Administration's position was summed up thus:

\[\text{39 Spanier, op. cit., p. 80.}\]
\[\text{40 Tang Tsau, op. cit., pp. 492-493.}\]
\[\text{41 Ibid., p. 493.}\]
The unfortunate but inescapable fact is that the ominous results of the civil war in China was beyond the control of the United States. Nothing that this country did or could have done within reasonable limits of its capabilities could have changed that result; nothing that was left undone by this country has contributed to it. It was the product of internal Chinese forces, forces which this country tried to influence but could not. A decision was arrived at within China, if only a decision by default. 42

After the People's Republic of China came into existence, the Truman Administration continued its efforts, which began in earnest in January, 1949 to disengage itself from the Kuomintang regime, despite some heated Congressional objection. In January, 1950, Truman stated:

The United States Government will not pursue a course which will lead to involvement in the civil conflict in China. Similarly, the United States Government will not provide military aid or advice to the Chinese forces on Formosa. 43

In addition to disengaging itself from the immediate conflict in China, the Administration felt it could do little else but sit and wait, until the conflict was resolved. The probability of extending formal recognition to the People's Republic of China, while the Nationalists remained in power on Formosa, was remote. The Truman Administration was already under heavy Congressional attack because of its China policy, and any official proposal to recognize the Communist regime would only intensify the furor of its opponents, who

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were already accusing the Administration of selling Chiang Kai-shek "down the river." Under these circumstances the Administration's only recourse was to wait until the Communists gained control of Formosa, which they believed was inevitable.44 Once the Communist had control of the mainland and Formosa the civil war would end and China would be a unified nation under one government. American policy-makers hoped that as soon as this had taken place, recognition would follow in due time.45 However, before such a situation was to occur, the Korean War broke out, and as a result American policy toward Formosa was drastically altered.

The United States' policy toward China, during the period 1947-50, was based on the realities of the situation as viewed by the Truman Administration. A policy of containment was not pursued in China, although such a policy was being pursued in Europe, because Truman did not believe a policy of containment could be successful in China. American policy-makers stated that all their information indicated nothing short of a full-scale American intervention would have saved the Nationalist regime, and it was questionable whether even such an intervention would have been successful.46

46 Ibid., p. 107.
The United States faced an entirely different situation in China then it did in Europe. In Europe there was every indication that American objectives, the economic recovery and military security of the region, could be achieved, whereas in China no such assurance offered itself. In Western Europe, most of the people viewed Communism as an external force that was seeking domination. In China, however, according to Dean Acheson "the foreign domination had been masked behind the facade of a vast crusading movement which apparently (was seen by) many Chinese to be wholly indigenous and national."\(^{47}\) Under these circumstances a policy of containment would have been to no avail. The policy of containment to function successfully, had to have the people's support in resisting Communism; this was not the case in China.

The Containment Policy, therefore, for all intents and purposes, during the period 1947-1949, was a policy that applied exclusively to Western Europe. Its objective was the security of Western Europe which involved the stemming of Soviet expansion in that area. In practice, containment was a regional policy, based on a balance of power concept rather than an ideological conflict despite the rhetorical flourishes. The concept of an ideological conflict seems to have been introduced in an attempt to obscure the reality of a balance of power strategy, a strategy condemned and

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\(^{47}\) The China White Paper, op. cit., p. xv.
detested by a large segment of the American people and blamed for causing the First World War.

The globalization of containment in terms of operational commitments as well as rhetoric was to begin with the outbreak of the Korean War.
CONTAINMENT EXTENDED TO ASIA:
The Korean War

The decision by President Truman and his advisers to disengage the United States from the Chinese Civil War, made it clear that his administration intended to make the security of Western Europe the prime objective of their efforts. In order to meet the heavy demands of their European commitment, American policy-makers, felt that the U. S. commitment in Asia had to be limited.¹ In early 1950 the Truman Administration made their desire to limit American commitments in Asia known publicly in a series of announcements. Early in January, 1950 Truman announced the United States would not protect the island of Formosa. Secretary of State Dean Acheson on January, 12, 1950, in a speech before the National Press Club, amplified Truman's earlier announcement. In this speech Acheson defined the United States defense strategy in the Far East. He stated:

(The United States) defensive perimeter runs along the Aleutians to Japan and then goes to the Ryukyus. ²

¹Davids, op. cit., p. 436.
The Philippines because of its special relationship was accorded special mention in the American strategy. The "defensive perimeter" defined by the then Secretary of State, noticeably excluded both Formosa and South Korea. Some critics of the Truman Administration later claimed that this statement of American security interest in Asia, excluding South Korea, encouraged the North Koreans to attack, because it led the latter to believe that the United States would make no response. Acheson's speech, however, merely reflected the Truman Administration's belief that the next war would be a world-war and that Europe was likely to be its site. Under such circumstances Formosa and South Korea were not considered to be strategically important to the United States.\(^3\) In no way did Acheson insinuate that the areas omitted from the "defensive perimeter" were to be automatically forfeited to the Communists. On the contrary, he made it perfectly clear that any Communist aggression in the area should be met, but that it would have to be met by the nation attacked and the United Nations. Further on in the speech Acheson had stated:

> It must be clear that no person can guarantee these areas against military attack. But it must also be clear that such a guarantee is hardly sensible or necessary within the realm of practical relationships. Should such an attack occur - one hesitates to say where such an armed attack could come from - the initial reliance must be on the people attacked to

resist it and then upon the commitments of the entire civilized world under the Charter of the United Nations which so far has not proved a weak reed to lean on by any people who are determined to protect their independence against outside aggression. 4

The North Korean attack on South Korea, June 24, 1950, caused American policy-makers to reevaluate their stated position in the Far East. In early 1950 the United States had primarily thought of Korea in terms of its strategic significance in the context of America's military concept of "total-war." The military leaders concurred, with the policy-makers' belief that the next war involving the United States would be a global war, in which case "Korea would be of relatively minor importance." 5 American military strategists had further concluded that Korea in a global war, would be almost impossible to defend in any event. 6 The security of South Korea thus was viewed primarily from the point of military strategy, with the political significance of its security never seriously considered. No thought was given to the possible repercussions on American policy if the Communists were to expand its control over South Korea, because American policy-makers never anticipated an isolated Communist attack but rather thought in terms of a global confrontation. The invasion of South Korea led to a re-appraisal by American policy-makers of both the situation

6Ibid., p. 7.
of South Korea and their Asian policy in general.

The United States originally viewed the attack on South Korea as the first explosion in a far greater conflict. In the spring of 1950, American intelligence reports had claimed "that the Communists in many parts of the world were preparing a pattern of conquest for (that) summer." Based on the information they had received the aggression in Korea was viewed by American decision-makers as merely a first step in a greater Communist onslaught. Inherent in the United States' interpretation of the North Korean attack was the assumption that the Kremlin was ultimately responsible for the aggression. This interpretation rendered the political importance of South Korean security in American policy unquestionable. The Truman Administration felt that the Kremlin was using Korea as a testing site, in which American determination and will power

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For a statement of the opposite view, see Wilbur H. Hitchcock, "North Korea Jumps the Gun," Current History, March, 1951, pp. 136-144.
to resist Communist military expansion was being tested.\textsuperscript{10}

The Administration felt if the U.S. failed to make an appropriate response to the situation, there would be far-ranging repercussions. Truman and his advisers concluded that if the United States did not meet this Soviet challenge, the Soviets would succeed:

\textit{... in demonstrating to the world their (Soviet) own strength and resolution, and conversely, American fear and unreliability; in disintegrating the Western alliance; in forestalling the creation of a situation of strength in the Pacific; and in frightening the leaders of the neutralist nations of Southeast Asia and the Middle East. The resulting power vacuums would provoke further acts of aggression and render World War III inevitable ... }\textsuperscript{11}

Korea, therefore, was regarded by American decision-makers as an extension and related to the "dangerous conflict of Russo-American power politics" in Europe. In viewing the North Korean aggression in this context, President Truman, his political advisers and his military advisers were in complete agreement - the Soviet challenge had to be met.\textsuperscript{12}

The first action the United States took was to alert the Security Council of the United Nations of the North Korean aggression. The American desire to see U.N. participation in meeting the Korean situation seems to have been

\textsuperscript{10}Spanier, \textit{The Truman-MacArthur Controversy And The Korean War}, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 29; Tang Ts\u{u}u, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 557.

\textsuperscript{11}Spanier, \textit{Ibid.}, p. 29.

three fold: first, the aggression was thought to be a direct challenge to the whole system of collective security,\textsuperscript{13} and thus it fell under the auspices of the United Nations. It was also consistent with the earlier stated position of the United States, that any Communist aggression in an area not included in the United States' "defensive perimeter" should be met by the United Nations. Secondly, the United Nations was already involved in Korea. Ernest Gross, American deputy representative at the United Nations stated, "the North Korean attack was an 'invasion upon a state which the United Nations, itself, by action of its General Assembly, had brought into being. It is armed aggression against the Government elected under United Nations supervision.'\textsuperscript{14} And finally, the "American depreciation of power and unwillingness to recognize and accept power as a factor in human affairs (made) it psychologically necessary to rationalize actions in the international arena in terms of ideological objectives and universal moral principles."\textsuperscript{15}

On June 25, 1950, the United Nations Security Council adopted a resolution, drafted by the United States, which declared,

\begin{align}
\text{\textsuperscript{14}Spanier, The Truman-MacArthur Controversy And The Korean War, op. cit., p. 39.} \\
\text{\textsuperscript{15} Ibid., p. 40.}
\end{align}
that the action of the North Korean forces constituted "a breach of the peace," called for "the immediate cessation of hostilities," called upon the North Korean authorities "to withdraw forthwith their armed forces to the thirty-eighth parallel," requested the United Nations Commission to submit its recommendations and to keep the Council informed of the execution of the resolution, and called upon all Members "to render every assistance to the United Nations in the execution of this resolution and to refrain from giving assistance to the North Korean authorities."

This U.S. resolution made it clear that the desired objective in Korea was the re-establishment of the status quo ante bellum. American leaders pessimistic about the probability of North Korean compliance with the U.N. resolution, undertook some unilateral action in meeting the Korean crisis. In a press statement on June 26, it was announced that American arms and equipment would be sent to the South Korean forces from American bases in Japan. On the following day, June 27, President Truman announced additional American action. The President declared that American naval and air forces had been ordered "to give the Korean Government troops cover and support" and the Seventh Fleet had been ordered into the Formosa Straits to neutralize the island of Formosa. The Seventh Fleet was to prevent, if

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16 Goodrich, op. cit., pp. 105-106. The resolution was passed by a 9 to 0 vote with Yugoslavia abstaining. The Soviet Union's representative was absent at the time, in a protest, which had begun in early January, against the Council's refusal to unseat the Chinese Nationalist representative.


necessary, "both a Chinese Communist invasion of the
island and Nationalist forays toward the mainland." In
addition, Truman announced he had directed that the Ameri­
can forces in the Philippines "be strengthened and that
military assistance to the Philippine Government be accel­
erated," and similarly, "the acceleration of American
military assistance to the forces of France and the Associa­
ted States in Indochina." A U.S. military mission was
also ordered to Indo-China to work with those forces.

The decision to neutralize Formosa, was explained
by Truman as an effort "to prevent Communist action that
might enlarge the area of conflict." While this was
the intention of the action, in effect it "enlarged the
struggle in Asia from one of resisting North Korean aggres­
sion to one of frustrating the ambitions of Red China with
respect to Formosa." The American action with respect

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21 Ibid., p. 339.
22 Rees, op. cit., p. 23. Tang Tsou, suggests that a
memorandum on Formosa, by MacArthur prior to the North
Korean aggression, which stressed the strategies interests
of the United States in denying Formosa to the Communist
might have had some influence on Truman's decision although
the degree of influence cannot be determined, (Tang Tsau, op.
cit., pp. 559-561). Goodrich observed: "It is quite
possible that the neutralization of Formosa was a condition
set by the Joint Chiefs for their consent to the State Depart­
ment's proposal to come to the assistance of the Republic of
Korea with armed forces." (Goodrich, op. cit., p. 111.)
23 Davids, op. cit., p. 439.
to Formosa, with its possible consequences alarmed many U.N. members. They felt the United States had not presented any concrete evidence "that the action was necessary to the attainment of the limited objective set forth in the Security Council's resolution."  

Some U.N. members feared that Truman's decision to connect the question of Formosa to the Korean crisis might broaden the scope of the action and be a gratuitous offence to Communist China.  

However, in view of the importance of whole-hearted American support for U.N. efforts to meet the North Korean aggression, disgruntled members could do little but voice their fears to each other and the United States, though their disagreement with American action regarding Formosa was to create "serious rifts in the conduct of the Korean War."  

Communist China's response to the presence of the Seventh Fleet in the Formosa Straits was immediate. Chou En-lai, Prime Minister as well as Foreign Minister of Communist China, on June 28th, denounced American action "as armed aggression against the territory of China in total violation of the United Nations Charter."  

While the Peking regime

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24 Goodrich, op. cit., p. 110.
25 Ibid., p. 110.
26 Davids, op. cit., p. 439.
was infuriated there was no indication at that time that Communist China would actively support the North Koreans in their fight against the American "imperialists." However, it is quite evident that the neutralization of Formosa was the first in a series of developments which subsequently led to the Chinese Communist intervention in the Korean War. The final decision by the Chinese to enter the war was not based on the Formosa question, but having been frustrated by the United States in their desire to gain control of Formosa, the Peking regime later became more concerned with events in Korea.\footnote{28}{Communist China's decision to enter the Korean War is discussed later in this chapter.}

The American main effort in meeting the North Korean aggression was carried out in the name of the United Nations. While this was done for reasons already mentioned,\footnote{29}{Vide Supra, p. 35.} it is quite clear that the United States had been willing, if it had had no alternative, to act unilaterally in meeting the Communist challenge in Korea. This is supported by the fact that President Truman announced that American naval and air support would be given to ROK forces\footnote{30}{Abbreviation for Republic of Korea. Hereafter referred to as ROK.} ten hours before the U.N. resolution was passed endorsing American action and providing for an international military effort

\begin{itemize}
\item \footnote{28}{Communist China's decision to enter the Korean War is discussed later in this chapter.}
\item \footnote{29}{Vide Supra, p. 35.}
\item \footnote{30}{Abbreviation for Republic of Korea. Hereafter referred to as ROK.}
\end{itemize}
to aid South Korea.\textsuperscript{31} Undoubtedly, had the United Nations decided not to act in Korea, the course of American action taken would have been altered, but the fact remains the United States would have made the commitment anyway. Arnold Wolfers states that even with U.N. participation, the character of the action in Korea must be judged by the decisions and acts of the United States and its associates. It would seem permissible, in fact, to concentrate on the conduct of the United States because the other nations which made contributions to the defense of South Korea might conceivably have done so as friends and allies of the United States ... \textsuperscript{32}

On June 27th President Truman, hoping that American action had convinced the Kremlin of American determination to meet the challenge in Korea, sent a note to the Soviet Government in an effort to bring a quick halt to the Korean crisis. The message asked the Soviets to disavow any responsibility for the aggression and "to use its influence with the North Korean authorities to withdraw their invading forces."\textsuperscript{33} The Kremlin did not comply with the American request but it is doubtful it was because they questioned American determination. In fact before the Soviets did

\textsuperscript{31} Referring to U.N. resolution passed on June 27, Truman's announcement came at 12 noon, the U.N. resolution was passed at 10:45 P.M. (Goodrich, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 113).


\textsuperscript{33} Spanier, \textit{The Truman-MacArthur Controversy And The Korean War}, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 32.
reply to the Washington petition the U.N. had also reinforced its earlier resolution in passing a second resolution on the Korean crisis recommending "that members of the United Nations furnish such assistance to the Republic of Korea as may be necessary to repel the armed attack and restore international peace and security in the area." The Soviet reply on June 29th, stated "that it considered the events in Korea to be part of the internal affairs of Korea, and declared Soviet opposition to foreign intervention in the domestic concerns of other nations." The Soviets therefore opposed both American action and U.N. policy.

Washington was relieved by the Soviet note, despite the fact that the Soviets were clearly opposed to American policy. Acheson interpreted the Soviet reply to mean that the Soviet Union, itself, would not interfere in Korea. That ended the Truman Administration's fear that the attack on Korea was merely a Soviet diversionary act. Prior to

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36 Ibid., p. 33.


that time, President Truman had displayed a great reluctance
to commit American ground forces to Korea, despite General
MacArthur's insistence that ground forces were necessary
if the Republic of Korea was to be saved. Truman, in his
Memoirs recalls his reluctance at the time:

I wanted to take every step necessary to push the
North Koreans back behind the 38th parallel. But
I wanted to be sure that we would not become so
overly committed in Korea that we could not take
care of such other situations as might develop. 39

However, once Truman, greatly influenced by Acheson's
evaluation of Soviet intent, was convinced that the Soviets
did not intend to become directly involved in Korea, he
immediately followed MacArthur's recommendation and dis-
patched U.S. ground forces.

American response to the North Korean aggression
signalled the beginning of the active pursuance of the
containment policy in Asia. While there was the need to
meet the aggression if the validity of concept of collective
security established in the United Nations was to be pre-
served, American decision-makers seemed to have based their
Korean decision in the context of the East-West power struggle.
Up until that time the containment policy had been based on
the belief that this struggle was to be carried out in
Europe. After the North Korean aggression, while Europe
still remained the primary center of the struggle as for

39 Truman, Memoirs Vol. II, op. cit., p. 341. The
"other situations" that Truman referred to were primarily
in Europe. Ibid., p. 341.
most American leaders were concerned, the U.S. came to believe that the power struggle could be won or lost in secondary theaters, which for the United States meant Asia.  

Again referring to Truman's Memoirs it states:

We let it be known that we considered the Korean situation vital as a symbol of the strength and determination of the West. Firmness now (in Korea) would be the only way to deter new actions in other parts of the world. Not only in Asia but in Europe, ... the confidence of people adjacent to the Soviet Union would be adversely affected in our judgment, if we failed to take action .... If, however, the threat to South Korea was met firmly and successfully, it would add to our successes in Iran, Berlin and Greece a fourth success in opposition to the aggressive moves of the Communists. And each success, we suggested to our allies, was likely to add caution to the Soviets in undertaking new efforts of this kind.  

It is apparent then, that Truman had come to believe that if containment was to be successful in Europe, it would have to be a global policy as announced initially in the Truman Doctrine. This conviction differed from the President's previous position with regard to the Chinese Civil War. The Korean War, for the United States, therefore, became first a war to contain communist expansion and second, a war to uphold the principle of collective security. American policy-makers, however, did not make a clear distinction between the two.

\[\text{40}^\text{Brown, op. cit., p. 59.}\]

\[\text{41}^\text{Truman, Memoirs, Vol. II., op. cit., pp. 339-340.}\]
By the time U.S. forces reached South Korea, the military situation had deteriorated to the point where the North Koreans seemed assured of victory. The arrival of the U.N. forces had no immediate effect in "turning the tide" of the war in South Koreans' favor. Only after some weeks of continual battle and "brilliant" military strategy on the part of General MacArthur, Commander of the U.N. forces in Korea, did the military situation swing in favor of the allies. Finally, by September, 1950, the U.N. forces had successfully driven the North Korean forces back beyond the thirty-eighth parallel. Once the thirty-eighth parallel had been secured by the U.N. forces, the question of whether or not to cross the parallel came to the forefront.

This was a delicate question involving matters of both military tactics and political policy. Tactically it was impossible to achieve a complete defeat of the North Korean forces if the United Nations forces were not allowed to cross this line. Politically, there were other considerations.

In the early days of the Korean War, the political objective of the United States and the United Nations had

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42 Goodrich states: At the end of 1951, close to two-thirds of the total force in Korea under the United Nations Command had been contributed by the United States. (Goodrich, op. cit., p. 117).

43 Rees, op. cit., Chapter V.

44 Tang Tsou, op. cit., p. 569.
had been the restoration of the status quo ante bellum. Geographically this meant the re-establishment of the thirty-eighth parallel as the boundary between North and South Korea. This objective had been achieved by the end of September, 1950. Accordingly the next logical step would have been the establishment of a truce, followed by negotiations, in which the parties involved would have confirmed the boundary between the two Korean regimes. This was not to occur.

With the repercussions of a divided Korea before them, and noting the past record of failures by the United Nations to unite Korea through negotiations, American leaders, as early as the beginning of August, pondered the thought of going beyond the parallel and completely crushing the aggressor. Starting in August, 1950, American officials in public statements began to speak more and more of a united Korea rather than a restoration of the status quo. American Ambassador to the United Nations, Austin, in a debate in the Security Council on August 17, "declared that the General Assembly in adopting its resolutions on Korea in 1947, 1948 and 1949" had sought the establishment of a united and independent Korea, and the U.N. should not turn from these objectives.\textsuperscript{45} Austin ended his speech saying: "The opportunity is here. The place is here. The time is at hand. Only the word and the deed are lacking."\textsuperscript{46}

\textsuperscript{45} Ibid., p. 570.
\textsuperscript{46} Ibid., p. 570
These sentiments were reinforced in early September by Secretary of State Acheson, who said that crushing the North Korean aggression was not the end of the United Nations' objective.\footnote{Department of State Bulletin, September 18, 1950, pp. 450-51.} Two days later, Dean Rush, then U.S. Assistant Secretary of State for Far Eastern Affairs, in reviewing the general lines of America's Far Eastern Policy stated that "the United Nations must have an opportunity to give effect to its long-standing policy in favor of a free and united Korea along the lines set forth in the resolutions of the General Assembly over the past three years."\footnote{Ibid., p. 467.}

The shift in the United States political objectives in Korea cannot be explained with any certainty in terms of one event or factor. However, it does appear that the optimism of General MacArthur that a united Korea was possible militarily without any serious threat of enlarging the conflict, was extremely influential. Of a much lesser influence, yet still a factor, were the repeated warnings from the South Korean government that it would not be satisfied with any agreement or settlement that left Korea divided. Additionally of course was the underlying traditional belief that the objective in any military conflict was total victory.

Although American officials took the lead in express-
ing this "new" objective to be sought in Korea, they were not alone. Secretary-General Lie, stated that "it would not be enough" to bring about the withdrawal of the North Koreans to the thirty-eighth parallel and that 'the aim of the United Nations (was) and must be a united and independent Korea in which all of the people of Korea are able to freely seek a government of their own choosing!"

On September 11, 1950 Truman made the decision to extend military operations beyond the thirty-eighth parallel. Truman, on that day, approved a Joint Chiefs' directive which authorized General MacArthur,

... to conduct the necessary military operations either to force the North Koreans behind the 38th parallel or to destroy their forces. If there was no indication of a threat of entry of Soviet or Chinese Communist elements in force, the National Security Council recommended that General MacArthur was to extend his operations north of the parallel and to make plans for the occupation of North Korea. However, no ground operations were to take place north of the 38th parallel in the event of Soviet or Chinese Communist entry. 50

Later in September another directive was transmitted to MacArthur which authorized him to conduct military operations north of the thirty-eighth parallel. This directive contained specific restrictions to be observed in carrying out this operation. As in the first directive, MacArthur was authorized to cross the parallel only if at the time there was no indication that the Soviets or Chinese Communists intended


\[50\] Truman, Memoirs Vol. II., op. cit., p. 359.
to counter such operations. MacArthur was further instructed, ...

that under no circumstances were any of his forces to cross the Manchurian or U.S.S.R. borders of Korea, and, as a matter of policy, no non-Korean ground forces were to be used in the provinces bordering on the Soviet Union or in the area along the Manchurian border. Similarly, support of his operations north or south of the 38th parallel by air or naval action against Manchuria or the U.S.S.R. territory was specifically ruled out. 51

The General Assembly adopted a resolution on October 7, 1950, (despite doubts expressed by some Asian and Arab nations, especially India), which in effect "placed the seal of the United Nations' Approval on the Unified Command's proposal to complete the destruction of the North Korean armed forces and pacification of North Korea." 52 While the General Assembly's authorization was of substantial value, in that it justified the American position, the real decision had already been made in Washington. MacArthur had sent the first South Korean troops across the parallel on October 1, six days before the U.N. resolution.

The United States decision to meet the North Korean aggression really meant that the area of "containment" had been expanded to include the Far East. Yet, although the area of containment was expanded, Europe maintained its primacy in American policy planning. While the military conflict centered in the Korean peninsula, the United States, nonetheless increased its military commitments to Western

51 Ibid., p. 360.

52 Goodrich, op. cit., pp. 133-134.
Europe during the war. This action was in keeping with the American belief, that Europe, not Korea, was the ultimate target of the Communist "conquest." Many of the decisions of the Truman Administration concerning Korea in fact were based on what they believed was necessary in the maintenance of Western European security. For Truman and his advisers the Korean crisis paralleled the Greek crisis in 1947, in that it constituted a challenge of wills between East and West.\footnote{Spanier, The Truman-MacArthur Controversy And The Korean War, op. cit., p. 33.}

The influence of the theory of containment was even evident in the United States' military conduct of the Korean War. America's original objective in Korea was to achieve the re-establishment of the border dividing the two Koreas, prior to the outbreak of the conflict. At the same time the United States wished to prevent the conflict from escalating into a possible atomic confrontation between the two superpowers. In order to prevent this possibility the concept of limited war was introduced in Korea. General Ridgeway in his book *The Korean War* describes the concept of limited war:

A limited war is not merely a small war that has not grown to full size. It is a war which the objectives are specifically limited in light of our national interest and our current capabilities. \footnote{Ridgeway, op. cit., p. 245.}
The traditional concept of war was inadequate in Korea because it was open-ended - "it had no clearly delineated geographical, political and military goals beyond 'victory'". In that sense it is a war "that may escalate itself indefinitely, as wars will, with one success requiring another to insure the first." That is exactly what the world wished to avoid in Korea.

Even after the United States expanded its objective in Korea, the concept of limited war was maintained, despite the violent objection of General MacArthur. However, the Truman Administration, their allies and even the Soviet Union apparently realized that to pursue the traditional concept of war in the atomic age might prove to be suicidal. Otherwise, the Korean War may have meant "the turning back of civilization by several thousand years, with no one left capable of signaling the victory."

When the Truman Administration decided it would attempt to unify Korea, the policy of containment was temporarily abandoned. Containment, in essence, was a policy to maintain the "status quo"; the unification of Korea, on the other hand, meant a change in the ante bellum Korean

55 Ibid., p. 245.
56 Ibid., p. 245.
57 Ibid., p. 245.
The concept of containment had originally been adopted by the Truman Administration because it was their belief that the policy would stem Soviet expansion and at the same time prevent the outbreak of another World War. The Administration's decision of September, 1950, therefore, must have been based on their belief that Korea offered the United States an opportunity not only to stem Communist expansion but in fact to "roll back" the line of Soviet control, without the risk of global confrontation. Such an opportunity had not existed in Europe.

The decision to extend military operations into the North proved to be a disastrous one for the United Nations—but especially for the United States and the people of Korea. As a result of this action, the Chinese Communist intervened in the war, and the Korean War became intensified and drawn out as the threat of global war was renewed.

The United States decision to attempt to unify Korea by means of a military victory and the U.N. approval of this objective had been based on the assumption that neither the Soviet Union nor Communist China would intervene in the war in an attempt to prevent the achievement of that goal. And yet, Peking, since the latter part of August had voiced its increasing concern over the developments in Korea, and their relationship to China's own security. On September 30, the

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58 It may be argued that the division of Korea was not officially recognized, nonetheless, the division did exist.
day before the ROK forces under the United Nations Command first crossed the thirty-eighth parallel, Communist China's Premier Chou En-lai publically declared:

The Chinese people absolutely will not tolerate foreign aggression, nor will they supinely tolerate seeing their neighbors being savagely invaded. Whoever attempts to exclude nearly 500 million people from the United Nations and whoever ignore and violate the interest of this one-fourth of mankind and fancy vainly to solve arbitrarily any Far Eastern problem directly concerned with China, will certainly break their skulls. 59

After the first ROK units "crossed the thirty-eighth parallel, and MacArthur broadcast his ultimatum, ordering Pyongyang to surrender," Chau En-lai informed the Indian Ambassador in Peking, that should U.S. ground troops invade North Korea, China would enter the war. 60 The Indian Ambassador promptly informed American sources of the warning. Similar information was also given to the United States from other sources and American intelligence reported a heavy build-up of Chinese Communist forces in Manchuria. The threat of Chinese intervention was nevertheless minimized by American leaders, who believed that Chou En-lai's threats "were a bald attempt to blackmail the United Nations by threats of intervention in Korea." 61 The United Nations at the time was deliberating over a resolution that would recommend

60 Whiting, op. cit., p. 108.
61 Truman, op. cit., p. 362.
"that all appropriate steps be taken to insure stability throughout all of Korea."

While Washington for the most part minimized the Chinese Communist threats, it did take a precautionary measure and sent MacArthur a directive, authorizing him to engage Peking forces in Korea, only as long as in his judgement, such action offered a reasonable chance of success. While the Truman Administration was again re-emphasizing their desire to limit the Korean conflict, they left the ultimate decisions concerning military operation up to MacArthur to interpret. On October 7, the first American ground forces crossed the thirty-eighth parallel, and within a week of that event the first Chinese Communist troops crossed the Yalu River.

The entrance of Communist China into the Korean War, drastically changed the entire complexion of the war. Militarily, by late 1950, the Communist had once again regained the advantage. The United Nation forces at that time were forced back behind the thirty-eighth parallel and there was some speculation that they might be forced to retreat from the entire Korean peninsula.

The Communist military success presented the Truman Administration with a grave decision. It had to decide whether or not the war was to be extended to China. General

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62 Whiting, op. cit., p. 111.
63 Ibid., pp. 114-115.
MacArthur insisted, after the Communist Offensive in November, that such a course was imperative if his forces were to be victorious. While the Administration desired a military victory, they were aware of the political considerations that had to be taken into account, before a decision on whether or not to carry the war to China could be met. Political considerations were of paramount importance in Korea because the military operations were being conducted under the flag of the United Nations. Almost every U.N. member had expressed their opinion at various times, that they were opposed to any enlargement of the war.

Then Secretary of Defense Marshall in discussing the diplomatic aspects of the situation in Korea had stated that it was his opinion,

... (that) it (was) essential for the United States to go along with the United Nations approach to the Korean question, even if going along with the United Nations meant some difficult problems ... ... it (was) essential for (the U.S.) to keep a unanimity of approach in the U.N. 64

Marshall further stated that the three American Service Secretaries agreed that it was most important that the United States not become involved "either individually or with the United Nations in a general war with China."65

At the same decision-making meeting at which Marshall spoke, Secretary of State Acheson also expressed his opposition

64 *Truman, op. cit.*, p. 386.
to any extension of the war. Acheson explained his position from the standpoint of America's overall foreign policy:

We had banked our foreign policy on the idea of keeping Russia contained, and we had succeeded in repulsing her attempts to break out. If we allowed the Russians now to trap us inside their perimeter, however, we would run the risk of being sucked into a bottomless pit. There would be no end, and it would bleed us dry. 66

Acheson, therefore, was also opposed to a war with China, because he believed it would hinder rather than assist the main U.S. objective, the containment of Soviet expansion.

With President Truman, his advisers, except of course General MacArthur, and U.N. members all in agreement, the decision was made not to extend the war to China. From this point on the United States' avowed objective of unifying Korea through a military victory is played down and replaced by expressed desires to end hostilities. The re-establishment of the status quo ante bellum seems to become once again the main objective to be achieved by the United Nations and the Truman Administration in the Korean conflict. Leland M. Goodrich states in his book Korea: A Study of U.S. Policy in the United Nations, that during the period, December 1950 and early January 1951, when U.N. military operations in Korea were at low tide, that,

There was a reluctant willingness, (on the part of the U.S.) as evidenced by the acceptance of the

66 Ibid., p. 388.
"Five Principles"\textsuperscript{67} ... to maintain the "coalition" intact, to agree to discuss certain political issues raised by the Chinese Communists in return for a cease-fire agreement which would provide for the withdrawal of North Korean and Chinese Communist forces back of the 38th parallel. Thus it can be said that during this period of uncertainty and adversity, the restoration of peace was accepted as an objective which to some extent took precedence over the resolve to deny to the aggressor any possible fruits of aggression. \textsuperscript{68}

While the Truman Administration was adamant in its decision not to enlarge the conflict, General MacArthur was just as adamant in his belief that the war had to be carried to China. This sharp difference of opinion between the President and the General, caused U.N. members many anxious moments.

MacArthur not only disagreed with President Truman's policy of limitation, he openly ridiculed it. In a final attempt to force Truman to change his policy, MacArthur appealed directly to the U.S. Congress and the American people. MacArthur's actions and statements instilled doubt and fear in some U.N. members. They began to doubt Truman's authority in the making of policy decisions, fearing he might be a mere figure-head and that the real decisions were made by some military complex. If this were the case, as

\textsuperscript{67}The Five Principles were a group of five proposals established by the General Assembly in the U.N. in an effort to find an acceptable negotiating position for both the United States and the People's Republic of China. Communist China rejected them as an acceptable solution. The "Five Principles" are listed in Goodrich, \textit{op. cit.}, pp. 160-161.

\textsuperscript{68}\textit{Ibid.}, p. 180.
allies of the United States they feared that they might be drawn into a major war without previous consultation or choice. The Truman-MacArthur rift, therefore, often hindered U.S. - U.N. cooperation.

By March, 1951, the tide of the military battle in Korea shifted in favor of the U.N. forces. President Truman decided that because of the more favorable military situation, the time was ripe to begin a new approach to a negotiated cease-fire. Truman in his Memoirs recalls his reasoning behind his decision.

... since we had been able to inflict heavy casualties on the Chinese and were pushing them back to and beyond the 38th parallel, it would be in their interest (the Communists) as much as ours to halt the fighting. 69

On March 24, the day Truman was to release a statement declaring the United States desire for a cessation of hostilities, MacArthur issued a statement "that was entirely at cross-purpose" with the statement Truman intended but never did release that day. 70 America's allies, who had known of Truman's intentions, became confused by MacArthur's statement and immediately rushed inquiries to Washington to learn if there had been a sudden shift in the President's policy. 71 President Truman became increasingly disturbed with MacArthur, who continued to misrepresent "official" American policy.

69 Truman, op. cit., p. 438.

70 Ibid., p. 440.

71 Ibid., p. 442.
It had come to the point where the General was not only openly expressing his opposition to the President's policy but he was also confusing American allies and foes alike, and therefore hindering American peace efforts in Korea. A few weeks later, General MacArthur wrote a letter to House Minority Leader, Joseph Martin, which caused Truman to relieve MacArthur of his command. The letter, read by Mr. Martin in the House of Representatives, belittled President Truman's diplomatic efforts in Korea. In belittling the President's policy, MacArthur condemned the concept of limited war and the policy of containment. Truman felt he had no choice but to relieve MacArthur of his duties as Commander of the U.N. forces because of this open insubordination to his Commander-in-Chief, especially since such actions were forestalling a possible settlement in Korea.

General MacArthur's return to the United States set off a public protest against Truman's Korean policy. Americans who had grown disenchanted with the various aspects of Truman Administration's policies rallied together in support of the great General. The supporters of the General varied from those who were then opposed to the

\[72\text{Ibid.}, \ p. \ 446.\]
\[73\text{Ibid.}, \ p. \ 447.\]
Korean War, to those who rejected the concept of limited war, the containment policy and the leadership of President Truman. Many Americans dismayed by the American retreat since the November Communist Offensive felt that MacArthur had become a scapegoat for Truman's blunders. They did not understand that MacArthur's open opposition to Truman's policy had greatly hindered the American war effort and caused a serious rift in ally cooperation. For most, MacArthur remained the World War II hero who was being dismissed because he insisted on a military victory - the traditional American objective in war. To condemn a great man because of this was too much for many Americans to bear. They felt they could no longer remain silent as American failures mounted.

Americans of many political persuasions had become confused and contradictory in their wants. For example, those who criticized the concept of "limited war" were pleased that the Korean War was waged below the level of a general war, yet at the same time they despised it because "it whittled down

74 When the United States entered the Korean War, a Gallup Poll released showed that 81% of the people polled were for the war and only 13% opposed. In another release shortly after MacArthur's forced retreat by the Chinese, 66% of the people polled favored pulling out and 25% were opposed. Cited in Thomas A. Bailey, A Diplomatic History of the American People (New York, 1964), p. 821, p. 823.
the real superiority of the United States."

Other Americans had come to believe that Truman's policy of containment was nothing more than a policy of appeasement, or a policy of fear. The rhetoric of the Truman Doctrine had so overcome the American people, that they could not tolerate a policy of "appeasement" or a policy that brooked compromises with the all-evil Communists. This attitude was influential in the following Administration's decision to adopt a stronger "anti-Mao and pro-Chiang policy," which would come to jeopardize America's entire Asian policy.

On July 10, while public criticism continued to rage in the United States, delegations representing both sides in the Korean conflict began to meet at Kaesong, near the thirty-eighth parallel, for discussions "concerning the cessation of military activities and the establishment of peace." These meetings continued with no substantial results until finally an impasse was reached. Despite the impasse, however, negotiations continued to take place off and on until 1953. During this period the fighting dragged on.

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75 Alvin J. Cottrell and James E. Daugherty, "The Lessons of Korea: War and The Power of Man" in Korea And The Theory of Limited War, op. cit., p. 82.
76 Truman, op. cit., p. 457.
77 Spanier, American Foreign Policy Since World War II, op. cit., p. 98.
78 Truman, op. cit., p. 459.
The American people displayed their dissatisfaction with the Korean War in 1952, and elected a Republican President, Dwight David Eisenhower. The Republicans had based their presidential campaign on Eisenhower's pledge to the American people to end the Korean War if elected.

President Eisenhower, however, upon assuming office, found, as had his Democratic predecessor, that the Communist were reluctant to conclude the war. The Eisenhower Administration, finally frustrated by the lack of progress achieved at the negotiation table and irritated by the sporadic Chinese Communist Offensives, threatened the use of atomic weaponry if a truce was not soon arranged. Whether it was the threat of an atomic attack, as Dulles and Eisenhower believed, or whether it was the uncertainty that came over the Chinese and North Korean leaders because of a change in Soviet leadership in 1953, or most likely a combination of the two, nonetheless negotiations did take on a different nature with the Communists becoming more moderate in their demands. In late June 1953 an agreement was reached and a truce signed at Panmunjom at July 27, 1953, ending all military activity in Korea.

The armistice was almost disrupted by Syngman Rhee, the leader of the South Korean Republic who insisted that the conflict could not be settled as long as Korea remained

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79 For more detail see Rees, op. cit., pp. 417-420.
80 Ibid., pp. 418, 420.
divided, and thus refused to comply with any armistice based on such a division. Rhee's threats to resume the conflict on his own, caused the United States and the United Nations some anxious moments. American desires to end the confrontation forced it to "buy-off" Rhee. In return for Rhee's cooperation in complying with the truce, the United States pledged itself "to train and equip a South Korean army of twenty divisions, to extend some one billion dollars in economic aid, and to conclude a mutual security pact to protect South Korea against future Communist aggression." The mutual security pact with the South Korean Government was ratified by the U.S. Senate in January, 1954.

The armistice agreement of July 27, 1953 ended the military conflict in Korea, but the political settlement of the Korean question was left to be resolved at a later diplomatic conference.

The Korean War had a profound effect on the world leaders. Heads of Government faced the reality of a global power struggle between the United States and the Soviet Union, as well as a revival of Chinese power. Many came to realize that in lieu of these world realities they must re-evaluate their foreign policies. The possibility of an atomic war and consequently the possible annihilation of world became very real. If they were to insure their very

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81 Davids, op. cit., p. 457.
survival they realized they had to make every effort to prevent a future Korea, for there was no guarantee that the next time the two superpowers met, the conflict would be a limited one.

American leadership, during the Korean War, had built up very little credit for itself either in Europe or Asia. Initially most U.N. members were pleased and impressed by the prompt American initiative in meeting the Korean crisis, in defense of the principle of collective security established in the United Nations. Yet, as the war continued, many of the members, especially the Arab and Asian members, became disillusioned by American motives and objectives. More and more it became apparent that American interests were taking precedent over United Nations interest, when the two may have conflicted. Neutrals and alliance partners of the United States discovered that there were disadvantages of following American decisions. As for example, they found themselves in a war against Communist China, even though it was not in their interest, and they had expressed their desire to avoid it.

Unquestionably, the quick response by the United States to the North Korean aggression, thereby exhibiting its determination to face up to the Soviet challenge, was instrumental in preserving the then newly organized Atlantic

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Alliance. In fact during this period, the United States increased its military assistance to the NATO allies, and with the American leading the way the military strength of the alliance was greatly strengthened. Yet, while American allies were impressed with American efforts in Europe, these governments were not pleased with all of American's Asian policy. Some felt that the United States, by forestalling the "natural" integration of Formosa with the Chinese mainland and by the use of its powerful influence to keep Red China out of the United Nations, was, in part responsible for the continued state of tension in the Far East.83

American prestige had declined especially in Asia by the end of the Korean War. Some Asians interpreted American efforts to unify Korea by means of a military victory, an act of white "imperialism", which caused the devastation of the Korean peninsula. The increased American involvement in Indochina on the French colonist side, reinforced these thoughts. In noting the U.S. involvement in Korea, Taiwan and Indochina, other Asians feared that the United States had embarked upon a program in which small Asian territories were to be used as pawns in America's gigantic power contest with the Soviet Union.

On the other hand, the prestige of the Communist nations, the Soviet Union and Red China, was on the upswing.

83 Ibid., p. 91.
in Asia at the end of the Korean War. Many Asians, desiring a quick end to the Korean conflict, were impressed with the various Soviet efforts to conclude a truce in Korea. These efforts overshadowed the fact that the conflict was started by a government whose troops were armed with Soviet weapons. Peking's ability to fight the most powerful Western nation to a stalemate commanded the respect of all Asian nations.

The United States emerged from its three year struggle in Korea as a scared nation. "Where it had once felt itself as one of an alliance," after Korea, "it felt alone." As a nation it was "hurt and humorless." Despite the fact that it had achieved its original objective in Korea, having been denied a clear victory, America lost much of its self-assurance. The moral defeat incurred by the Communists in Korea, increased America's determination to stand up to the Communists to a point where it was to evolve into an obsession.

American leaders then viewed China as the most powerful ally of the Soviet Communist empire. Communism, therefore, came to be viewed as a monolithic threat with Peking being an enemy in Asia of the same type as was the Soviet Union in Europe. This perception manifested itself

85 Ibid., p. 33.
86 Donelan, op. cit., p. 173.
in the U.S. post-Korean War policy. Secretary of State Dulles was to bring into operation in Asia the full apparatus of European-style containment - "the iron-clad military resistance on the free world's borders with Red China, the butteressing of Red China's neighbors with economic and military assistance, the building of perimeter alliances and the rejection of diplomacy." 87

The military aspect of the containment policy, which had begun with NATO, was reinforced during and after the Korean War. Collective defense alliances became the keystone of American foreign policy in Asia. During the Korean War defense pacts were signed with the Philippines, Japan, Australia and New Zealand, and another was concluded with South Korea at the end of the war. The war in Korea taught the United States that "there must be no further power vacuums into which the forces of Communist aggression could move with impunity." 88 Even before the Korean War had ended, American policy-makers were attempting to apply this lesson to Indochina.

87 Ibid., p. 173.
CHAPTER III
CONTAINMENT IN ASIA
1954-1963

Up until the outbreak of the Korean War, as previously noted, the policy of containment as an operative policy pertained to Western Europe. While Korea marked the beginning of the United States' active pursuance of the containment policy in Asia, it was in the post-Korean period that the policy became clearly identifiable in its Asian context. Because containment has been and is the fundamental theme of American foreign policy in Asia, every Asian event dealing with either domestic affairs or external affairs, during the 1954-1963 period examined here, had some affect on American policy. The type of affect varied of course with Washington's perception of the event's importance with regard to American policy. Therefore, a precise study of the Asian version of the containment policy would, in effect, involve a day-to-day account of all events during this period, which had in any way, shape or form some relation to it. Such a task is beyond the scope of this dissertation. Rather, it will be the purpose of this chapter to identify and examine the main elements or instru-
ments of the containment policy as they pertained to Asia.\textsuperscript{1} during the ten year period 1954-1963 and to further attempt an evaluation regarding the appropriateness or inappropriateness of such a policy in Asia. Insofar as there are various elements or instruments of the containment policy, the discussion of containment in this chapter will accordingly be divided into several subsections, each of which will deal with a specific aspect of the policy.

The Legacy of the Korean War

"The Korean War left its mark not only on American attitudes and policies toward China but also on United States security strategy throughout all of Asia and the Pacific."\textsuperscript{2} Communist China's entry into the Korean War greatly affected American perceptions of the Peking regime. Prior to Red China's participation in Korea many American officials had viewed it as merely an unfriendly nation, but after Peking actively allied itself with North Korea, the United States tended to view Peking as a violently hostile and aggressive ally of the Soviet Union.\textsuperscript{3} This American

\textsuperscript{1}The discussion of containment in Asia in this dissertation does not include the area of the Middle East. American policy-makers have treated the Middle East as a distinct area rather than as part of their Asian policy.

\textsuperscript{2}Blum, op. cit., p. 158.

\textsuperscript{3}Ibid., p. 158. While this view is not clearly identifiable through the pronouncements of the Truman Administration, it is quite evident under the Eisenhower Administration, led by Secretary of State John Foster Dulles.
perception of a monolithic Communist threat gave impetus to a series of security arrangements between the United States and countries in the Pacific. In the latter half of 1951 American security treaties were signed with the Philippines, with Australia and New Zealand (ANZUS) and with Japan. While Australia and New Zealand had desired a defense treaty with the United States because they wanted American reassurance against a resurgent Japan, Washington considered the treaty's chief value a defense against Communism.4

Growing Involvement In Indochina

Immediately after the outbreak of the Korean War, the United States accelerated its military assistance to the French in Indochina.5 Prior to that time overt American support of the French in Indochina, appeared to be tempered by a reluctance to be associated with what had been considered a colonial war. However, with the North Korean aggression, the United States' view of the war in Indochina shifted to become one of a definite struggle between Communism and the "free world."6 America's interest and involvement in the


Indochina war increased during the period of its involvement in Korea, and was to continue after the Korean armistice. In fact, Indochina had become of such great concern to American leaders that President Eisenhower stated, prior to the Korean armistice, that not only was peace in Korea necessary but "no less importantly, an end to the direct and indirect attacks upon the security of Indochina... For any armistice in Korea that merely released aggressive armies to attack elsewhere would be fraud."

In July 1953, when the Korean Armistice was finally concluded, Indochina became the focal point of American interest in Asia. Eisenhower, himself, in the now famous "domino theory," expressed the rationale for U.S. involvement in Indochina. He stated that the "loss of all Vietnam would have a disastrous material and psychological effect on the security of nearby states, which might then topple like a row of dominoes." The Korean Armistice, therefore, did not remove the conflict between the United States and the Communist world in Asia; rather it "only shifted the

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9 Greene, op. cit., p. 60.
center of conflict from the north to the south."¹⁰

By April 1954, the French military position in Indochina had deteriorated to the point where defeat was imminent, if it did not receive outside assistance. Secretary of State John Foster Dulles, aware of the French plight in Indochina, wished to ask the Congress for a joint resolution to permit the use of American air and naval power in support of the French in Indochina. Mr. Dulles' desires, however, did not correspond with the Congressional mood at the time, nor did it enjoy the complete approval of President Eisenhower. Both the President and the majority of U.S. Congressmen, with the trauma of Korea still lingering, felt that the United States should not become directly involved in another Asian war. This belief was reinforced by the fact that such unilateral American action offered no guarantee of success but did carry the risk of involving American ground forces at a latter date. Dulles was instructed by President Eisenhower to consult with American allies and find out which allies might assist the United States if and when it decided to directly intervene in the Indochina War.¹¹ In diplomatic discussions,

Dulles was unable to convince the chief American ally, Great Britain, to assist the United States in such an intervention. The British Government made it perfectly clear that it would not be a party to any such action, because it felt that such action would seriously impede negotiations at the impending Geneva Conference. Britain's refusal to support American action coupled with his personal doubts concerning the success of such an intervention, apparently determined Eisenhower's decision not to involve the United States directly in the war in Indochina. President Eisenhower in explaining his decision stated:

If the United States sent its flag and its own military establishment - land, sea or air into the Indochina War, then the prestige of the U.S. would be engaged. ... We could not afford thus to engage the prestige of the United States and suffer a defeat which would have world-wide repercussions. 13

The French without the additional military assistance were unable to hold their position in Indochina. In addition to the steadily deteriorating military position, there was mounting pressure on the French Government from its people to end the war. The French populace had grown weary of the war after eight years of fighting with no prospect of success. The heavy strain that the mounting cost of the war placed on the French economy was a further incentive to

12Ibid., p. 109.

the French government to seek an armistice. While the French wished to conclude an armistice, Secretary of State Dulles encouraged the French to continue their battle against the Communists. Yet Dulles could not change the French position, without a U.S. commitment to intervene on France's behalf, which Eisenhower refused to make.

At the Geneva Conference, which had originally been scheduled to deal with the Korean and Indochina questions, the proceedings focused on achieving an armistice in Indochina.

A settlement was finally reached which brought about a cessation of hostilities. Vietnam was divided along the seventeenth parallel, with the Communist forces of Ho Chi Minh controlling the North and the French controlling the South. On either side of this line of demarcation there was to be a buffer zone. The division was to be only a temporary situation, and two years after the Geneva Conference general elections were to take place to determine what government would govern a united Vietnam. In addition, the nations of Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos were forbidden to participate in military alliances or to


15 Chapter 4 deals with what did take place in Vietnam after the Geneva Settlement of 1954.
allow foreign powers to establish military bases on their territory. An International Control Commission\textsuperscript{16} was established to see that the provisions of the Settlement were carried out.

The United States was not pleased with the final settlement and expressed its displeasure by refusing to sign the final declaration. In fact, when it became clear that "the solution that was being arrived at in Geneva would not accord with the American concept of an acceptable settlement," Secretary Dulles left the conference, before the final draft of the Settlement had been concluded, and turned over representation of the United States to Walter Bedell Smith.\textsuperscript{17} Dulles stated that his absence was his way of "disassociating the United States from the agreements because 'American public opinion would never tolerate the guaranteeing of the subjection of millions of Vietnamese to the Communist rule.'"\textsuperscript{18} Although the United States refused to confirm the settlement in the end, its representative did state that the United States "would refrain from

\textsuperscript{16}Members of the I.C.C. were Canada, India and Poland.

\textsuperscript{17}Kahin and Lewis, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 60.

\textsuperscript{18}Ibid., p. 60. Mr. Dulles' statement was mere rhetoric for the United States continued to be represented at the Conference. What in fact Mr. Dulles did do was to disassociate himself personally from the Settlement and not the United States. Later, in 1955 and 1956 Dulles was to rely heavily on his contention that the United States "disassociated" itself from the Settlement.
the threat or use of force to disturb the agreements." 19 Furthermore, in a warning addressed to the Communists, Smith added that his government "would view any renewal of the aggression in violation of the aforesaid Agreements with grave concern and as seriously threatening international peace and security." 20

As soon as the Settlement produced in Geneva, confirming the stalemate situation in Vietnam, became an accomplished fact, American policy in Asia "turned into a clear cut containment posture." 21

The Republican Version of Containment

The Republicans' professed foreign policy was one of liberation, one described by the London Economist as a policy which "means either the risk of war or it means nothing." 22 Eisenhower, in deciding not to intervene in the Indochina War with American military forces had displayed his administration's desire to shy away from war,

19 Buttringer, op. cit., p. 840. While the United States was to refrain from the use of force, it nonetheless actively pursued policies which if they were not against the letter of the settlement, ran counter to the spirit of the settlement. See Chapter 4.

20 Ibid., p. 840.

21 Bator, op. cit., p. 224.

at least as much as the previous administration had. Consequently, the policy of liberation was indistinguishable from the policy of containment in operation. Thus, Secretary Dulles was to spend much of his tenure in office (1952-1958) "trying to transfer the concept of containment, which he had so vigorously denounced in Europe - but which had been effective there - to Asia, where its deficiencies became steadily more apparent." 

Secretary Dulles' version of containment in Asia stressed the military aspects of the policy. Under his guidance anti-communism became a blinding dogma, that was reflected in the rigidity of his containment policy. The policy became devoid of flexibility even when wisdom demanded it.

The Eisenhower Administration attempted to implement a policy of containment in Asia, particularly in Southeast Asia, although they were almost totally unprepared to tackle such a task. In contrast to their knowledge of Europe, its people, condition and needs, prior to American involvement there, American policy-makers committed the United States in Asia, "knowing little about its people and their hopes,

\[23\text{Ibid, p. 293.}\]
\[24\text{Coral Bell, op. cit., p. 135.}\]
\[25\text{Bator, op. cit., p. 227.}\]
\[26\text{Ibid., p. 228.}\]
their weaknesses and their strengths."\(^{27}\) As a result of American policy-makers lack of knowledge concerning Asia, they tended to visualize problems in Asia on the basis of analogies with the area they were better schooled in - Europe. However, "in the absence of firm ties and mutual interests of the kind that had bound the United States and Western Europe," containment in Asia did not rest on a stable foundation.\(^{28}\) While, both the United States and the nations of Western Europe visualized a common external threat to Western European security, a key factor in cementing their bonds of cooperation, in Asia there was no agreement between the majority of Asia leaders and the United States on what constituted the common threat.\(^{29}\)

"For most of the Asians the enemy was not Soviet military might or ... the rising power of Communist China," as the United States contended, "so much as the past colonial or semicolonial domination of the West."\(^{30}\) American policy-makers failed to realize that agreement on a common external threat is an "indispensable condition for the success of


\(^{29}\)Notable exceptions were Nationalist China, South Korea, Thailand and the Philippines.

\(^{30}\)Reischauer, op. cit., p. 79
policies, modelled on European-type containment." In fact, some Asians felt that U.S. policy was too closely aligned with former colonial policies and therefore considered it a threat to Asian freedom and progress.32

By 1954, America's policy of containment had clearly become a policy predominantly military in nature. Beginning in 1949, with the collective defense alliance in Europe (NATO), followed by the Pacific alliances in 1951,33 and the alliance with South Korea in early 1954, containment, as it evolved, had become almost synonymous with collective defense alliances. After the United States' jolting diplomatic defeat in Indochina in 1954, Secretary Dulles renewed earlier efforts34 to secure a security plan for Southeast Asia to prevent any further Communist expansion in that area. In a press statement on July 23, 1954, Mr. Dulles stated there were two lessons which the free nations should learn from the Indochina experience, namely: "that resistance to Communism needs popular support, and this in turn means that the people

31 Monzingo, op. cit., p. 365.
32 Stebbins, op. cit., p. 6.
33 Referring to the alliances with Japan, 1951, the Philippines 1951, and Australia and New Zealand (ANZUS), 1951.
34 Prior to the Geneva Settlement 1954 Dulles had discussed with American allies the necessity of a security alliance for Southeast Asia. At that time, however, Britain refused, fearing that such an alliance might disrupt the impending Geneva Conference.
should feel that they are defending their own national institutions (and) that arrangements for collective defense need to be made in advance of aggression, not after it is under way." The Republicans in formulating an Asian policy were to concentrate their efforts on the second lesson learned in Indochina at the expense of the first. They failed to realize that any collective defense arrangement needs the popular support of the nations of the area to be successful. This failure is evident in the negotiations that preceded the Southeast Asian Treaty Organization.

Asian Attitudes Towards U.S. Policy

The United States proposal, after the Geneva Settlement, for a collective defense alliance in Southeast Asia did not meet with much enthusiastic support in Asia. As already noted, many Asian leaders did not agree with the United States' perception that Communism was the primary threat to the independence of the Asian nations. Therefore, many Asian leaders did not believe that a military alliance designed to protect Asian nations from Communism would be of any substantial value in insuring the defense of their own national institutions. On the contrary, it appeared that some Asian leaders felt that a formal alliance with a superpower (the United States) would be a greater danger to their nations' independence than the nebulous threat of

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\(^{35}\)Vandenbasch and Butwell, *op. cit.*, pp. 371-372.
"Because America was an atomic superpower whether it denied it or not, Asians looked for ulterior motives and devious intent behind each American move. The increased activity of the United States in Asian affairs after World War II, in China, Japan, Korea and also its support of the French in Indochina, did nothing to alleviate such suspicions and in fact they became intensified. While the United States explained its involvement in Asia on humanitarian grounds that it was attempting to protect the independence of Asian nations, some Asians interpreted American action as that of a powerful outside force interfering in their problems. The disparity between the region-wide preoccupation of the United States and the domestic or national preoccupation of Asian nationalist leaders, particularly in South and Southeast Asia, often made "mutual trust difficult to establish and maintain."

Another reason why many Asian nations preferred not to align themselves formally with the United States was that

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many of them felt "that involvement in the cold war would divert their attention and energy from the internal development of their countries." Prince Sihanouk of Cambodia declared:

For our part we believe we have the right, considering the vital problems which beset us, to stay away from the bless and so-called "defensive" military organizations which in practice often show themselves to be of a nature which tends to draw peoples into adventures which do not concern them, and where they stand to gain little.

While Prince Sihanouk's statement concerned Cambodian feelings, it is a fair description of the feelings of many other Asian leaders.

Several Asian nations, because of the aforementioned reasons, and because of the fear of some Asian leaders that a thoroughgoing Western or Communist alliance would encounter opposition from important and vocal segments of their populations, chose a policy of non-alignment. However, during the Eisenhower Administration Secretary of State John Foster Dulles seemed to reflect the belief that non-alignment was immoral. From an American point of view at that time, non-alignment "was against the best interest of the free world," because the U.S. regarded neutral countries as

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39 Ibid., p. 124.
40 Ibid., p. 125.
41 This American attitude seemed to change by late 1957. Beginning in 1958 American policy seemed to show a greater toleration of non-alignment.
constituting a dangerous power vacuum susceptible to communism. The non-aligned nations of Asia resented Dulles' condemnation of their foreign policy position. Prime Minister U Nu of Burma, in June 1955, declared that

The implication (of American policy) seems to be that a nation which does not choose sides and join irrevocably with one or the other camps in the armed truce that exists in the world today lacks courage and conviction. And very often the inference which seems to be drawn is 'if you are not with us, then you are against us.' And if you are not with us, you must be either openly or secretly in tow with communism. American policy-makers' condemnation of non-alignment stemmed from the fact that they did not understand that many Asian leaders, particularly in Southeast Asia, were concerned with the conflict "between nationalism and imperialism and not (that) between Communism and freedom." Although in reality both the Asians and the United States sought a similar objective - the maintenance of Asian national independence - because they differed concerning the major, immediate source of the threat, they very often differed on the type of policy to pursue in attaining their objective. Therefore, while the United States wanted the Asian nations to join with itself and other Western allies in a military alliance for the area, many Asian leaders

43 Roger Smith, op. cit., p. 117.
resisted such efforts contending that "the developments of major power groupings" would give rise to tensions, which would impede Asian efforts in the pursuit of particular objectives.\textsuperscript{46} Due to the differing views between the United States and many Asian leaders, it is not surprising that the latter rejected alignment with the United States and individually sought to curtail American presence and keep the cold-war struggle from the area.

**Pre-SEATO Negotiations**

In the preliminary negotiations leading up to the Manila Treaty (SEATO), many differing views, concerning the desirability of a collective defense alliance in Southeast Asia, were expressed by the participants. During the negotiations seven nations,\textsuperscript{47} that were asked by the United States to participate in the alliance, and had agreed to do so, displayed such varying interests, that the final alliance arrangement was to be greatly hindered as an operative force.

In fact, of the eight participating nations only the United States, Thailand and the Philippines were primarily concerned with the Communist threat, which for the most part had by now come to mean in practical terms the threat of

\textsuperscript{46}Reitzel, Kaplan, Coblenz, op. cit., p. 453.

\textsuperscript{47}Great Britain, France, Australia, New Zealand, the Philippines, Thailand and Pakistan.
Communist China. Yet, even among these three nations the perception of the nature of the threat differed somewhat. Thailand's neighbor, Red China, had emerged from the Korean War as a formidable power and the Thais feared they might become "swallowed up" by this growing giant. The Philippines, because it had experienced Communist subversion, was therefore very interested in curtailing future Chinese-sponsored Communist activity. However, the Philippines was already an alliance partner of the United States and seemed to be interested in the proposed new alliance more from the point of view of a guarantee and reinforcement of the previous U.S. commitment. The United States, on the other hand, was interested in furthering its containment policy by strengthening the regimes along the periphery of Mainland China.

The remaining five nations expressed interest in the proposed alliance more from the point of individual interest than a collective interest. Pakistan envisioned the arrangement as being an instrument which would strengthen itself militarily against its enemy, India. France seemed interested primarily because it desired to retain some influence in Asia, if only in a limited capacity. Great Britain still had interests in Asia, especially in Malaya, and therefore felt it should belong to any alliance which might affect

48 Communist China's activities were perceived to constitute the greatest immediate threat to Asia and world peace, whereas the U.S.S.R., after Stalin's death was exploiting with some success the theme of relaxation of tension and peaceful coexistence. Sabbins, The United States In World Affairs 1954, op. cit., p. 28.
these interests. Australia's and New Zealand's interests could probably be attributed primarily to those countries increasing dependence on American defense commitments. Neither country wished to jeopardize their relationship with the United States and thus were willing to agree with American desires. Also, like the Philippines, Australia and New Zealand viewed the proposed alliance as a guarantee and reinforcement of the United States' existing commitment to them established in ANZUS.

While during the preliminary negotiations various reasons for the desirability of an alliance had been expressed by the participating nations, many Asian leaders expressed adamant opposition to the proposal. What was of particular significance was that the strongest opposition came from the larger and more influential nations in Asia - India and Indonesia. Peking naturally, also objected vigorously, but that was to be expected, since the main objective of the alliance as far as the United States was concerned, was the creation of an instrument which would contain mainland China.

India's severe criticism of the proposed alliance irritated Dulles. He was fully aware that India's refusal to join the alliance would greatly weaken the "grand design" against Communism, he had envisioned. India, in condemning the plan so vociferously, was influential in discouraging other Asian states from participating in the alliance.
Indian Prime Minister Nehru stated that "the peace of Asia should be maintained by Asians" and the proposed American alliance would in no way help peacemaking in the area but rather hinder peace. Indonesia expressed similar criticism. The United States, however, was determined to secure a collective defense alliance in the area and therefore continued to press its proposal, despite the fact that Asian opposition would hinder the effectiveness of the alliance.

Ultimately, in September, 1954, a conference was held in Manila to draw up a collective defense alliance for Southeast Asia. Among the participants were only three Asian nations, Pakistan, Thailand and the Philippines. The results of the recent war in Indochina had been a major influence on the decision by American policy-makers to conclude a collective defense alliance in Southeast Asia and yet Laos, South Vietnam and Cambodia were prohibited from directly participating in the alliance. According to the provisions of the Geneva Settlement (1954), these nations could not join military alliances. Formosa had not been invited to participate, because the British and Pakistanis already recognized the Peking regime. Japan, likewise, had not been asked to participate due to the feeling of mistrust that existed among many Asians toward Japan. While

many Asian leaders had voiced opposition to the very concept of the alliance, it was feared Japanese membership in the alliance would reinforce their opposition. In any event Japan probably would not have accepted an invitation to participate because Japanese public opinion would have been against it. India, Burma, Ceylon and Indonesia refused to be members, preferring to maintain their non-aligned positions "in the conflict that centered between the United States and mainland China."  

SEATO

The final product of the Manila Conference was the collective defense alliance known as the Southeast Asia Treaty Organization. The alliance was extremely vague in its overall presentation. The varying interests expressed by the members during the preliminary negotiations were evident in the alliance's lack of "definiteness, cohesiveness and organization."  

The heart of SEATO, signed on September 8, 1954, is found in Article IV, paragraph 1. It states:

Each Party recognizes 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


51 Bator, op. cit., p. 166.
the common danger in accordance with its constitutional processes. 52

The United States qualified its interpretation of Article IV, by asserting that its obligations applied only in the event of Communist aggression. Secretary of State Dulles had originally intended that this position would be specifically stated in the text of the agreement, but he was opposed by some of the other member nations especially Great Britain and Pakistan. Dulles was in no position to push his demands for the inclusion of the anti-Communist clause.

In addition to Article IV, paragraph 1, which states the main purpose of the Manila Treaty, there are three other provisions which are of significant importance. These three provisions concern, the problem of subversion, the description of the treaty area, and a proclamation of general principles.

The problem of subversion directed from outside and indirect aggression are dealt with in Article IV, paragraph 2. This provision calls for

... immediate consultation on the steps for common defense if a party believed the political independence or territorial integrity of any member in the treaty area or designated state or territory was threatened by other than armed attack or for any fact or situation that might menace the peace of the area. 53

52 Treaties And Other International Act Series 3170, p. 3.
Action, however, could only be initiated at the invitation or approval of the government concerned.

One of the basic problems or weaknesses of SEATO is that the treaty's emphasis is placed on meeting overt aggression rather than the threat of subversion. It is ironical that as the provisions were being formulated, the Communist shifted their strategy and began concentrating on subversive activity rather than overt aggression such as they employed in Korea. The SEATO Association is legally restricted to consultation in combating subversion and thus is not able to meet effectively what most observers, including now American officials, consider to be the main obstacle to peace in the area.

What has become, a most important provision of the Manila Treaty, especially as far as the United States has been concerned, is the description of the treaty area. The area is defined as:

... the general area of Southeast Asia, including also the entire territories of the Asian parties, (Pakistan, Thailand and the Philippines), and the general area of the South-West Pacific, not including the Pacific area north of 21 degrees 30 minutes (21°30') north latitude.

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54 American analysis of Communist activity and intent was not aware of this at that time.


The treaty territory as defined excludes Hong Kong and Formosa but does include the protocol states of Laos, South Vietnam and Cambodia. The only changes that have occurred concerning the treaty area, have been the removal of the Federation of Malaya, through its decision not to join SEATO after achieving its independence in August, 1957, and the dropping of the protocol States of Laos and Cambodia. Laos was excluded as a result of the Geneva Settlement of 1962, and Cambodia was excluded because of its expressed desires not to be covered by the alliance.

A proclamation of general principals called the Pacific Charter was included in the text of the treaty, at the request of the Philippines. The Filipinos, sensitive to the criticism of some Asian leaders that SEATO encouraged colonialism, felt that the treaty should make it clear that participating nations in no way supported colonialism. The Pacific Charter in effect states that members "were seeking the welfare of the Asian peoples and were not supporting colonialism." While the proclamation was an attempt to squelch the critical Asian attitude toward SEATO, it also left the door open to a possible future extension of the Asian membership. As an effort to stem Asian criticism, the Pacific Charter failed. The Asian opposition and criticism that followed the signing of the agreement intensified. U.K. Krishna Minon, Indian delegate to the United

57 Fifield, op. cit., p. 115.
Nations, denounced SEATO as "an incipient and embryonic infringement on our peace area approach."\textsuperscript{58} Indian Prime Minister Nehru described the alliance as "diplomacy by threats and an unwarranted intrusion into Asian affairs."\textsuperscript{59} Nehru was especially embittered not so much by the fact that the West discussed Asian problems of peace and security, as that it had taken upon itself, without significant Asian participation and despite Asian protest, the right to implement what it perceived to be the proper solution. The Indian Prime Minister seriously believed that the alliance would have the effect of halting "the process of calming down" that had begun at the time of the Indochina Settlement (1954) and that the alliance would in fact increase the tension and unrest in the world.\textsuperscript{60} Despite the Pacific Charter, as far as Nehru was concerned, SEATO "stunk of colonialism". Some observers have argued that SEATO was to some degree responsible for Nehru's efforts to establish a closer relationship with Communist China at that time.\textsuperscript{61} However, since the Panch Shila agreement between India and Red China preceded the Manila Treaty it would appear that SEATO at most reinforced

\textsuperscript{58} Vandenbasch and Butwell, \textit{Southeast Asia Among The World Powers}, op. cit., p. 302.

\textsuperscript{59} Mills, op. cit., p. 166.

\textsuperscript{60} Vandenbasch and Butwell, \textit{Southeast Asia Among The World Powers}, op. cit., p. 302.

\textsuperscript{61} Brian Crozier, \textit{South-East Asia In Turmoil}, (Middlesex, 1968), p. 103.
an already amiable relationship that was encouraged by the U.S.-Pakistan military aid agreement of February, 1954.

India was not alone in its dislike of SEATO. The Indonesian Prime Minister was so strongly opposed to the Manila Treaty, that he immediately "suggested an all-Asian alternative to SEATO's commitments to ensure peace in the area." His immediate proposal was a mutual non-aggression treaty with Communist China. Fortunately for the United States the proposal did not receive sufficient support from the other Asian nations.

SEATO's military capabilities to effectively meet an act of overt Communist aggression are questionable. The consensus appears to be that the alliance could not adequately do so, without expanding the incident into a nuclear holocaust. However, a detailed discussion of SEATO's military structure and capabilities are not germane to this discussion. What is relative here is that the correlation between the distribution of power and responsibility, is close among SEATO members, (both being centered in the United States). The military backbone of SEATO ultimately rests on American nuclear weapons and thus is not properly equipped to meet the challenge of guerrilla warfare.

62 Vandenbasch and Butwell, Southeast Asia Among The World Powers, op. cit., p. 302.
64 Ibid., p. 121.
The then Secretary of State John Foster Dulles believed that SEATO would be a vital instrument in halting the spread of international communism in Asia. Yet, "whatever compatibility of interest that flowed from the American desire for allies, and the Asian desire for American aid, it did not cover the specific and crucial question of the future of China." The United States in return for the inconsequential military support it received from Asian members in SEATO, was to pay a high political price. For example, the United States in increasing the amount of military assistance to Pakistan through SEATO, placed an enormous military and financial burden on India, a nation which, because of its greater size and strategic geographic location, was of even greater concern to the United States. While this is but one example, it is typical of the inherent contradictions between America's Asian policy and the objectives it sought to achieve.

Instruments of the Containment Policy

In December, 1954, the United States signed a defense pact with Nationalist China. This completed the American alliance system in Asia, the revised Japanese-American security pace of 1960 being the only alteration. Under the provisions of the U.S.-Nationalist China defense alliance, "the

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66 Ibid., p. 96.
United States assumed the standard obligation to meet the common danger of an armed attack in accordance with its constitutional processes." This agreement additionally provided for mutual help in resisting Communist subversive activities directed from without against either signatory's territorial or political stability." 

American alliance-building efforts in Asia, during the 1951-1954 period, seemed to be based on the premise that pressures from Peking and Moscow were and would be in the near future the "primary and at times the only causes of Asian instability." One would further conclude that American policy-makers at that time believed the thrust of such outside pressures would be in the form of aggression rather than subversive activities. The fact that military alliances comprised the largest share of American efforts to counter Sino-Soviet pressures and the fact that the provisions of the alliances emphasized the responsibilities of the members in the case of "armed attack", while in dealing with the problem of subversion members' responsibilities are stated in such broad and vague terms as "consultation" and "mutual help", lends credence to such a deduction.

Although military alliances were the primary instru-

67 Greene, op. cit., p. 80.
68 Ibid., p. 80.
ments of the United States' containment policy in Asia during the 1954-1963 period, other instruments, especially the diplomatic and external aid instruments, played their part in the implementation of that policy, as the following two sections will show. Dulles believed that the cement for effecting cohesion (anti-Communism and pro-United States) was "a shared ideology and economic and military interdependence."70

U.S. China Policy

The policy of containment in Asia, during this period, became intertwined with and at times seemingly subordinated to the United States' policy toward Communist China.

The United States "recognition and support of the government of the Republic of China on Taiwan, renewed and reinforced as a result of the Korean War," became the major element of its China policy during the 1950's and continues to exist today.71

Prior to the outbreak of the Korean War and for a short time thereafter, John Foster Dulles advocated the admission of Red China into the United Nations. In the book War or Peace written by Dulles, he stated that the organization (U.N.) "will best serve the cause of peace

70 Brown, op. cit., p. 76.
71 Blum, op. cit., p. 145.
if its Assembly is representative of what the world actually is, and not merely representative of the parts we like." Continuing, Dulles stated that if a government did establish control, it "should be represented in any organization that purports to mirror world reality," therefore if the Peking regime exhibited its control of mainland China, "then it ... should be admitted to the United Nations." Yet, Dulles, while serving in the State Department during the Truman Administration, was hesitant about the United States immediately recognizing the Communist regime in China. In explaining his seemingly contradictory position, Dulles declared "that every government should be tested over a period of time in order to establish the fact of control." After assuming the office of Secretary of State in the Eisenhower Administration Dulles' position regarding Peking's membership in the United Nations shifted. While he continued to maintain that "the U.N. should be constructed on a universal base," Dulles qualified this position by stating that "universality should not turn the United Nations into an impotent organization." Some political writers and

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74 Ibid., p. 56. Mr. Dulles obviously was referring to the fear that the Peking regime would use its veto power, which it would receive as a member of the Security Council, to prevent the U.N. from performing any type of pertinent
analysts claim that Dulles, as Secretary of State, adopted a rigid position against recognition of Peking and its membership of the U.N. because that was the overwhelming opinion of Congressional members and their constituents.\textsuperscript{75} However, while there is no doubt that Secretary Dulles necessarily took Congressional and public opinion into consideration in formulating America's China policy,\textsuperscript{76} it is important to note that Dulles' personal beliefs coincided with public opinion at the time. It would seem to be a distortion of the facts, therefore, to insinuate that Dulles' China Policy was due to the pressures of public opinion. Instead it would be more accurate to say that the China policy was a reflection of Dulles' convictions and were supported by congressional and public opinion.

Early in 1954, the United States' policy toward Communist China was officially described as "a middle one, calculated to limit the capacity of the enemy for further aggression and to build up the strength of our friends" - a policy of "pressure and diplomatic isolation" that would function in maintaining world peace. Yet, considering the fact that the Soviet Union already possessed such power, the addition of a Chinese veto at that time would prove to be no greater hindrance to the U.N. Today, when a Sino-Soviet split is evident and U.S.-Soviet cooperation has steadily increased, the fear of a Chinese veto in the Security Council is understandable.


\textsuperscript{76} Dulles was always conscious of Congressional opinion. During his tenure as Secretary of State he strove to please the Congress, always remaining aware of the fate suffered by his predecessor, Dean Acheson, at the hand of the Congress. Hans J. Morgenthaw, "John Foster Dulles," Norman R. Graebner ed., \textit{An Uncertain Tradition - American Secretaries of State In The Twentieth Century, op. cit.}, p. 292.
"at least slow the growth of the war-making potential of Communist China and retard the consolidation of its diplomatic position." Therefore, by 1954, the American policy of not recognizing the Peking regime and American efforts to block Communist China from attaining U.N. membership, were additional instruments being used to contain Communist China. Just as the military alliances were an effort to contain Peking's territorial expansion, the former instruments were an attempt to contain Peking's expanding influence. It would be much more reasonable to presume, therefore, that Dulles pursued a policy of non-recognition of Peking and worked to prevent Peking from attaining U.N. membership by design, rather than as a result of the pressure of the domestic public opinion.

Following Dulles' retirement in 1958, his successor Christian Herter maintained the same policy. In 1961, there seemed to be a shift in attitude on the part of President Kennedy toward the possible admission of Peking into the

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78 Michael Edwards states that the American belief that non-recognition is an effective instrument in blocking Peking's attempt to extend Communist rule in Asia is a myth. It is similar to saying fire can be prevented from spreading by denying that it is fire. Michael Edwards, Asia In The Balance, (Baltimore, 1962), p. 183.
Before this apparent change in attitude was able to manifest itself in U.S. policy, Peking, in 1962, became involved in a border conflict with India. Peking's militancy removed all hope of the United States adopting a more realistic policy. The Kennedy Administration knew that the American people would be in no mood at that time to accept a change in America's China policy, especially one that would have appeared to be favorable to Peking by the American people. Having already received heavy criticism from the Congress and the American public for the Bay of Pigs fiasco, the Kennedy Administration did not feel it could then pursue a policy which would draw heavy criticism and opposition by Congress and the American people.

It is quite apparent, however, President Kennedy did not use the policy of non-recognition and a policy of blocking Peking admission to the U.N. as instruments to contain China as Mr. Dulles had. But in so far as the policy did not change, the rhetoric of containment was often used as a rationale.

Sino-American relations focused during the 1950's and continue to focus today on the island of Taiwan. In Peking's view "Taiwan is Chinese territory and the 'liberation' of Taiwan and the defeat of the Nationalist regime are required to complete the unification of China." As previously stated, the United States recognizes and supports the Nationalist Government on Taiwan as the legal government of China. Yet, the United States maintains that the legal status of Taiwan remains unsettled.

The Japanese Peace Treaty effective April 28, 1952, stripped Japan of "all right, title and claims to Formosa and the Pescadores." It did not, however, establish present or future legal rights in connection

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with these islands. 80

While both Mao Tse-Tung and Chiang Kai-shek are well aware of the American position both point back to the Cairo Conference of 1943, where the U.S. agreed that the islands should be returned to China. Therefore both insist that the area is indisputably a part of China, 81 and are determined that China should be united. The United States since the beginning of the Korean War has stationed its Seventh Fleet in the Taiwan Straits to avoid open confrontation between Peking and the Nationalist regime, which might set off general war in Asia.

On September 3, 1954, Communist artillery began a heavy shelling of the off-shore island, Quemoy. The Nationalists retaliated with attacks on the mainland "but discontinued them about a month later, evidently at American request." 82 As a result of the Communist attacks and probably as part of an agreement with the Nationalists to stop their attacks on the mainland, the United States signed a defense alliance with the Nationalist regime.

In the three years following 1954, Communist China's attempts to bring about the "liberation" of Taiwan were


81Ibid., p. 161.

carried out for the most part through diplomatic means. The Nationalist regime during this period built up its military forces on the off-shore islands. Chiang Kai-shek was skeptical of American intentions, because the United States was carrying on ambassadorial discussions with Peking in Warsaw. The Nationalist leader feared that the discussions might lead to a "two China" arrangement, a situation which he considered out of the question despite the fact that such a de facto situation existed. Continual American statements emphasizing the fact that the U.S. was arming the Nationalist Government only as a defensive measure and thus by implication not as a supporting gesture of Chiang's desire to regain control of the mainland, intensified Chiang's suspicion of the United States. Chiang Kai-shek's fear that American policy-makers did not support his personal ambition of regaining control of the mainland were entirely justified. While the United States could not officially advocate a "two China" policy because of domestic pressures against such arrangement, it is clear that American policy was based on this strategy. The United States, although it wished to eliminate the Communist control of the mainland, was not prepared to risk an Asian war to achieve this desire. At the same time the United States had become steadfast in maintaining Taiwan as part of the "free world."

83 Communist China shelled the off-shore islands briefly in 1956.
Taiwan had become strategically important to the American defenses in Asia.

In 1955, President Eisenhower in a letter to Winston Churchill concerning the Taiwan crisis, wrote:

We believe that if international Communism should penetrate the island barrier in the Western Pacific and thus be in a position to threaten the Philippines and Indonesia immediately and directly, all of us, including the free countries of Europe, would soon be in far worse trouble than we are now. Certainly the whole region would soon go. 84

America's support of the Nationalist regime thus was based on Taiwan's strategic importance as a link in the United States' island chain defenses and Taiwan's symbolic importance in displaying to the "free world" America's determination to halt Communist advances, rather than on the belief that the Nationalist Government was the legal and rightful government of China. 85 U.S. efforts to prevent the Nationalist Government from attacking mainland China seems to be further evidence.

That the United States Taiwan policy has incurred the wrath of the Peking regime is understandable. Through unilateral action the United States has prevented the Communist regime not only from consolidating Taiwan, at one


85 "President Kennedy especially alarmed Nationalist Leaders by repeatedly referring to the 'defense of Taiwan' and our commitments to 'the government and people of Taiwan.' The term 'Republic of China' was confined in usage mainly to official documents and communiques." Allen S. Whiting and Robert A. Scalopino, op. cit., p. 161.
time part of China, under its control, but has actively supported an alternative to the Peking regime. From Peking's point of view the survival of the Nationalist Government is a threat to its own position.

The United States in its determination to contain Communist expansion in Asia has complicated the settlement of the Taiwan issue by placing it in the realm of the cold war struggle. Yet the United States seemingly has pushed aside the feelings of the Taiwanese people in the formulation of their policy. The native-born inhabitants constitute the vast majority of the population of Taiwan. Despite the fact that "mainlander refugees" and native-born Taiwanese are both of the Chinese race, substantial cultural differences exist between the two groups.86 "These cultural differences, reinforced by occupational and political disparities, have presented a problem on Taiwan, albeit one not openly discussed."87 While the indigenous Taiwanese populace has displayed signs of unrest, as long as economic conditions remain reasonably good and some social mobility is possible, mass revolt seems unlikely. However, if the United States officially pushes for a two China policy, there is the possibility that "such a policy will exacerbate political tensions within Taiwan, and may risk an upheaval that could only be of advantage to the Communist."88

86 Ibid., p. 162.
87 Ibid., p. 162.
88 Ibid., p. 179.
present there does not appear to be any solution to the Taiwan question which would be satisfactory to parties concerned, but the United States must become more aware of the Taiwanese position, if the question is ever to be resolved.

The U.S. China Policy, a central element in its overall containment policy in Asia, is rejected by most Asians. Despite the fact that many Asian nations acknowledged a growing fear of Communist China during the 1954-1963 period, especially the latter part, most of these countries maintained that the United States must face world reality, and its China policy does not. Some of the main Asian complaints concerning the U.S. China Policy is that it is too negative and defensive, not to mention unrealistic. For these reasons Asian nations refuse to support it. And yet, the success of the containment policy is dependent upon the cooperation and collective action of Asian nations. Because non-Communist states in Asia favored a more flexible realistic American policy toward China, a successful implementation of containment was thus hindered. In perpetuating its myth-based China policy, the United States isolates Taiwan from the mainstream of thought and action in non-Communist Asia, and fosters a situation of continual potential crisis.

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Foreign Aid In Asia

When the containment policy first became operative in Western Europe, U.S. economic assistance, in the form of the Marshall Plan, was the primary instrument. In Asia, American economic assistance has been, for the most part, a secondary instrument in achieving containment objectives.

During the Eisenhower Administration, U.S. foreign aid to the countries of Asia was restricted. While President Eisenhower personally desired to cut down on the amount of American foreign aid, he found it difficult to do. He came to realize that foreign aid was necessary "to support Secretary of State John Foster Dulles' polico-strategic drive to complete a ring of strong points around the Communist bloc." But, Secretary of State Dulles' preoccupation with the military aspect of containment and his personal prejudice against non-alignment greatly influenced the allocation of American assistance to Asian countries.

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90 This was to change, beginning in 1950 when NATO became the prime instrument of containment in Europe.


92 By 1958 Dulles' position on non-alignment shows signs of toleration.
while he was in office. It was Dulles' opinion that...

...economic aid to nations not militarily allied with the United States was an extravagance (the U.S.) could not afford; that such nations were essentially hostile to (the U.S.) purpose anyway, seeking to embarrass (it) and to play off East against West for their own material gain; that many of these new nationalistic regimes were more interested in following "socialistic" models of development, and thus had ideological leanings toward the "other

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<th>Country</th>
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<td>Nepal</td>
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<td>*Pakistan</td>
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<td>Burma</td>
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<td>*Republic of Korea</td>
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<td>**Laos, v:</td>
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<td>*Vietnam</td>
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<td>177</td>
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*U.S. allies
**Laos neutralized 1962.
(1) less than $500,000

B) Ibid., 1963, pp. 860-861

U.S. Foreign Assistance Commitments Under Economic and Military Assistance Programs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Economic</th>
<th>Military</th>
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<tr>
<td>1955</td>
<td>1,821</td>
<td>2,396</td>
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<tr>
<td>1959</td>
<td>1,916</td>
<td>2,110</td>
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<tr>
<td>1963</td>
<td>2,296</td>
<td>1,810</td>
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side" in the Cold War despite their pretentions of non-alignment; and finally if (the U.S.) discounted these ideological incompatibilities and extended aid, most of the would-be beneficiaries lacked the administrative and technical talent, economic structure, and will to make significant gains with the additional capital. 94

It is often difficult to clearly distinguish between military assistance and economic assistance in the American foreign aid program. A division, therefore, into the two categories of military assistance and economic assistance is not particularly enlightening and more often than not, confusing. It is important, however, to distinguish between what Arnold Wolfers refers to as "short-run aid, military or economic, both being in the field of defense broadly conceived, and economic development aid that will bear material fruit at best after two or three decades."95

During the Republican Administration not only was the largest part of U.S. assistance to Asia sent "to increase defense capabilities in countries on the southern and eastern borders of the Soviet Union and Communist China," but the amount of "military assistance and that part of economic aid, which finances defense support or other security objectives, were


roughly double the level of developmental aid. Yet, while the major portion of American assistance to Asian nations was designated to build military defenses against Communism, the major problem faced by most Asian leaders was that of economic development. The Indonesian Ambassador to the United States, Murkarto Natowijdo, in 1954, discussing Asian problems stated:

The significance of the danger is inherent in the failure of economic developments ... to keep pace with those in other parts of the world is not fully appreciated by the West. The emphasis of the Western Powers has been on achieving a military balance of power.

Most Asian leaders, even some of those allied to the United States, agreed with Natowijdo's assessment. American aid programs, because they were not directed toward what most Asians agreed was the major problem of the area, disappointed many Asian leaders, alienated others and produced some results no one wanted.

The United States in viewing Communism as not only


97 Vandenbasch and Butwell, Southeast Asia Among The World Powers, op. cit., p. 313.

98 In 1956 the Thai press strongly criticized the predominately military emphasis of U.S. aid programs. Thailand was at the time and continues to be today one of America's staunchest supporters in Asia. Stebbins, The United States In World Affairs 1956, op. cit., p. 131.

the primary but virtually the absolute enemy in Asia, gave its assistance to any government, even a reactionary one, when it was or appeared to be the only alternative to power in the hands of men orientated toward Communism. Indeed, Chester Bowles has stated that "the unearthing of a local Communist underground might be expected...to produce more American dollars than the discovery of oil or uranium." As a consequence, a government in power, as a means of obtaining aid, would frequently exaggerate the danger of communism within its border.

In making a declaration of anti-Communism a major criterion for the granting of assistance, the United States found itself at times supporting a despot or a military oligarchy, while at times "a despot or military oligarchy was the only possible alternative for the exercise of power, excluding Communist or radical reformers," American policy-makers restricted their own choices by "equating radical reformers with Communists." American support for

102 Ibid., p. 940.
103 Aron, op. cit., p. 724.
autocrats, because they declared themselves to be anti-Communist; often meant, in reality, that the United States was supporting a irresponsible and corrupt regime that had little support from its people, as in the case of Syngman Rhee in Korea, General Rhourni Nsavan in Laos and Ngo Dinh Diem in South Vietnam. When indigenous forces rose up to oppose these type governments, American "support of these governments became a powerful issue around which to organize opposition." The United States, thus, found itself, at times, being considered by some nationalist groups, the ally of reaction and the enemy of progress. Because some Asian nationalists viewed the United States as an imposing force perpetuating an unsatisfactory status quo, they often allied themselves with the Communists in an effort to sweep away both the United States and the unhappy past. The United States, confusing all discontent and disorder with outside aggression or political subversion, aided efforts to suppress these nationalist groups at times and, therefore, was responsible in part for increasing the Communist appeal in that area. In 1958, eight U.S. Senators in a letter to the President expressed their fear that American military assistance to Asia was increasing rather than decreasing the problems in that area. It was their opinion that the

104 Senator Edward M. Kennedy, Decision For A Decade, (Garden City, 1968), p. 152.

105 South Vietnam is an excellent example.
United States, by contributing to the maintenance in power "of regimes which have lacked broad support within their countries," by creating "a militaristic image of the United States," and by "perpetuating military hierarchies" in Asia, the United States has at times endangered "the very value of individual freedom which (it) seeks to safeguard." 106

American defense assistance was intended to promote stability and security in Asia. In this sense it can be said to have defeated its own ends." 107 Not only was such assistance manipulated by some regimes, to secure their own power at the expense of people, but excessive militarization placed a great burden on the economics of these weak nations, in need of economic development. Still another adverse affect of American stress on military assistance was that it aroused fears in neighboring non-Communist neighbors, exacerbating relations between neighbors by altering the local balance of power. 108 At the same time, relations between some of these non-Communist nations and the United States were strained, thus, promoting relations between these nations and China, because it was an alternative.


President Kennedy, noting the importance of economic development in these underdeveloped nations, pursued aid programs in most Asian countries which emphasized developmental aid rather than military aid. Yet, his Administration could not, through aid programs, remedy the deficiencies caused by some recipient nations' own unsound fiscal or economic policies. On the other hand, the United States continued to run the serious risk of being viewed as an imperialist nation, whenever it took any initiative in sponsoring internal changes in Asian lands.109

Contradictions in the Asian Containment Policy, 1954 - 1963

Walter Lippman, in an article in the New York Herald Tribune, described the American position in Asia in 1961 in this manner:

The revolutions in South Korea and Iran, following the disorders in Laos and South Vietnam are a warning that in Asia the policy of containment by American satellite states is breaking down. In all four of these countries the governments have been (U.S.) clients, indeed they have been (U.S.) creations. All of them are crumbling for the same reason. In relation to the popular feeling of independence and the rising popular expectation of material welfare, these American client states are not only corrupt but they are intolerably reactionary. The fact that they are also under the protection of a foreign and non-Asian power is an additional liability. 110.


Mr. Lippman perhaps exaggerated the situation, but he did amply point out some of the adverse effects America's Asian policy had wrought, as well as some possible explanations for their occurrence. The main thrust of Mr. Lippmann's criticism was directed at what was the main handicap of America's Asian policy - it often went against the grain of Asia's most potent force, nationalism. In so doing a successful containment policy not only became impossible, but opposition to the United States often became the logical consequence.

In pursuing the policy of containment in Asia, the United States, a superpower, was pursuing its global interest. Secretary of State John Foster Dulles and his successors followed a policy of military containment in China because they believed it was in the interest of the free world. For most Asian nations, however, their prime concern was with local objectives, and they, therefore, "formulated policies of purely national character, often designed to improve their internal conditions and create modern social structures."\textsuperscript{111} Because U.S. interests and Asian interests at times were perceived to be different by the respective parties and because the individual interests among Asian nations also at times differed and were sometimes opposing, any attempt to unite these divergent attitudes and interest into an anti-Communist coalition was almost an impossible

\textsuperscript{111}Reitzel, Kaplan, Coblenz, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 453.
feat. The United States failed to unite the majority of Asian nations in an anti-Communist coalition, and its policies served the Communist purpose. SEATO, America's China Policy and its Foreign Aid Programs had divisive effects. Asian nations who allied themselves with the United States tended to become isolated from the rest of Asia while various non-aligned countries were pushed toward the Communist bloc as the only alternative to American dominance. Even after the Communist Chinese adopted a more militant Asian policy, which aroused fears in all the Asian nations, most Asian nations still were unwilling to ally themselves with the United States, because its policy of military containment had already displayed so many shortcomings that it offered no reasonable alternative.

While American policy-makers generally did not understand why Asian leaders refused to adhere to the American policy, Soviet Premier Khrushchev in a speech in 1955, expressed the reasons quite accurately. He stated that the United States was attempting

... to push ... (the peoples of Asia) off the path of peaceful development and on the path of militarization and preparations for new war. It is this purpose, incidentally that lies behind all kinds of military pasts and blocs knocked together in South-East Asia and the Near East and in other areas of the world. They arouse the justified suspicion of the peoples of Asia, because sponsoring them are the forces which at one time implanted and defended the colonial order.

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113 Reitzel, Kaplan, Coblenz, op. cit., p. 415.
While Khrushchev’s statement naturally distorted American intentions, it does describe the impression many Asian leaders held about American policy.

Defenders of the United States containment policy in Asia, constantly point out the fact that Communist China did not expand territorially, with the exception of Tibet. However, they fail to mention the fact that during the same period, 1954-1963, Chinese influence in North Korea, North Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia, Nepal, Burma and Pakistan increased. They also fail to mention that a policy directed against Red China is not effective in prohibiting adventures by second or third level powers seeking to alter existing situations and it is equally ineffective in prohibiting internal conflicts. In fact, the United States because of its many commitments continually faces the prospect of being drawn into local or internal conflicts, which many feel is the case today in Vietnam.

The United States, for all its intensive involvement in Asia during the 1954-1963 period, was not able to insure Asian stability. Its policy which was intended to maintain an international status quo, evolved into a policy that often protected an unsatisfactory internal status quo, while Asian nationalism demanded a new and acceptable order.

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114Vidya Prakash Dutt, China And The World: An Analysis of Communist China’s Foreign Policy, (New York, 1966), p. 36.
Containment, therefore, did not alleviate Asian problems and may have compounded them, and yet, Asian progress and stability is a prerequisite for any policy which attempts to prevent the expansion of Communism in that area.
 CHAPTER IV

VIETNAM

Hans J. Morgenthau has stated that the United States is "militarily engaged in Vietnam by virtue of the basic principle of its foreign policy that was implicit in the Truman Doctrine of 1947" and followed by each successive administration.¹ This basic principle is the containment of communism. Former President Johnson confirmed this fact in a major policy speech on Vietnam in 1965.² America's present tragic involvement in Vietnam is thus a consequence of its containment policy in Asia. It is due to this fact that the present war in Vietnam has stirred many leading men, both in government and in academic circles, to question not only the Americanization of the Vietnam War but also almost all aspects of America's containment policy in Asia. It, therefore, seems most appropriate to devote the last chapter of this thesis to a case study of American


involvement in Vietnam.

Vietnam was temporarily divided into two zones, at the conclusion of the French-Indochina War in 1954. This division, according to the settlement reached at the Geneva Conference (1954), was to be resolved by the Vietnamese people in general elections to be held in July, 1956. During this two year interim, however, the United States went about creating an independent anti-communist state in the southern half of Vietnam. The United States designed a two-pronged plan to achieve this situation. One prong consisted of the Manila Treaty (SEATO), initiated by the United States following the Geneva Agreements that granted, in effect, "protection in advance to the southern regrouping area against any attack by indigenous forces based in the other half of the same country." The other prong was the United States' efforts to build a political entity in South Vietnam. To further its objectives the United States launched a massive program of economic assistance to South Vietnam and "started to retrain and reorganize the South Vietnamese army," under the leadership of its "hand-picked" candidate, Ngo Dinh Diem.

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3George McTurnam Kahin and John W. Lewis, op. cit., p. 68.
4Ibid., p. 63.
5Edwin O. Reischauer, op. cit., p. 25.
American policy-makers apparently were determined to prohibit the Communist from gaining control of all of Vietnam, for despite the Agreements decided upon at the Geneva Conference, the United States, through unilateral action, went about making the seventeenth parallel a permanent division. The reunification elections were not held in 1956. Diem, with full American support, refused to allow South Vietnam to participate in such elections, stating both that his government had not signed the Geneva agreements and that the absence of all liberty in North Vietnam made the question of electoral and pre-election campaigns practically unattainable for the moment. In fact, however, the main reason Diem and the United States did not want the elections to take place was simply that Ho Chi Minh would have easily won the election and therefore his regime would have become the ruling government of all Vietnam. (The Communist belief that reunification elections

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6 U.S. Senator Ernest Gruening and Herbert Wilton Beaser, Vietnam Polly, (Washington, D.C., 1968), p. 165. Assistant Secretary of State Walter S. Robertson defending Diem's failure to agree to hold reunification elections told a group of Americans that such elections should not occur because of "crimes against suffering humanity committed by the North Vietnamese. He went on to charge the Northern regime of having "sold their country to Peking." Marvin E. Gettleman ed., History, Documents, and Opinions on a Major World Crisis, (England, 1965), p. 170.

would be held in Vietnam, and that Ho Chi Minh would emerge victorious, seems to have been a major factor in their agreeing to the armistice in 1954). When it became apparent that Diem would not abide by the Geneva Settlement, refusing to hold reunification elections, the North protested the violation to the Co-Chairmen of the Geneva Conference, but found little satisfaction. The Co-Chairmen seemed to be of the opinion that as long as no hostilities had taken place, it would be unwise to press the issue. Ho Chi Minh, then appealed to Communist China, but like Britain and the Soviet Union, the Co-Chairmen of the Geneva Conference, Peking indicated that "they were more interested in the maintenance of peace than in reunification elections in Vietnam." Without the backing of the two leading Communist nations, North Vietnam could do little; it was in no position to take on what in effect was the United States and its vast power alone.

The Eisenhower Administration's decision in 1954 to create a separate independent state in South Vietnam, despite the fact that such action was contrary to the spirit of the Geneva Agreement, was due in part to domestic pressures. The United States at that time was still gravely concerned and disillusioned by Senator McCarthy's charges of a "global communist conspiracy." Add to that some

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8Gruening and Beaser, op. cit., p. 167.
9Ibid., p. 167.
dissatisfaction with the stalemated conclusion of the Korean War and it becomes apparent that "it would have been political suicide for Eisenhower to appear to be appeasing the Communists," in Indochina. Eisenhower and Dulles were fully aware of some of their Republican cohorts charges against the previous Democrat Administration for "losing China," and did not want to risk a similar fate, accusing their Administration of "giving Indochina to the Reds." Dulles, because of his personal convictions and the attitude of the Congress, left the Geneva Conference early in the proceedings, in an effort to disassociate himself and the Eisenhower Administration from "negotiations which were likely to result in an armistice involving concessions to Asian Communists." Furthermore, the Administration refused to give even its oral assent to the final declaration of the conference. Despite the Administration's efforts to disassociate itself from the Geneva Settlement, it did not escape unscathed. Some Congressional disapproval of what they considered an unfavorable settlement, was heard nonetheless. Senator Jenner appraised what had occurred in Geneva thusly:

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10 Schoenbrum, op. cit., p. 43.
11 Ibid., p. 43.
12 Donald Lacater "Power Politics At The Geneva Conference 1954". The selection is from The Emancipation of French Indochina. (New York, 1961), pp. 313-26, 332-37 in Gettleman op. cit., p. 129. However, Walter Bedell-Smith, the Under Secretary of State, was left behind to lead the United States delegation.
The United States has been out-thought, out-traded, and out-generalled. ...

It does no good to say we did not physically sign the Geneva agreements. That is an old excuse of Pontius Pilate, who washed his hands to keep his conscience clear. 13

Senator Jenner, if he had criticized Secretary Dulles' personal behavior and lack of diplomacy at the conference, would have been justified. But it is very doubtful whether the United States would have been able to achieve a more satisfactory settlement in Geneva. 14 On the other hand, because the Geneva agreements were not to the Eisenhower Administration's liking, the Eisenhower-Dulles team went about altering the settlement.

After the deadline for reunification elections had passed without either ballot or undue incident, American policy in Vietnam up until 196115 was one of continuous


14 Bedell Smith, upon his return to Washington stated: "I am ... convinced that the results are the best that we could possibly have obtained in the circumstances. ... diplomacy has rarely been able to gain at the conference table what cannot be gained or held on the battlefield." Stebbins, The United States in World Affairs 1954, op. cit. p. 253.

15 Bernard K. Gordon chooses the year 1962 as the one in which Vietnam became of paramount importance. He goes on to state that up until that time "the United States had not yet made any suggestion that its role in Asian security was inextricably linked with its ability specifically to prevent South Vietnam from being absorbed by the Hanoi Government." Whatever U.S. commitment to South Vietnam that did exist up until that time was an incremental combination of specific commitments. Bernard K. Gorden, Toward Disengagement In Asia, A Strategy for American Foreign Policy, (Englewood Cliffs, 1969), p. 24.
aid in support of the anti-Communist ruler, Diem. During this period American policy-makers apparently did not see the need to reexamine their policy, despite growing evidence of Diem's tyrannical rule and the growing numbers among the South Vietnamese population opposed to his regime.

By 1961, when President Kennedy took office, the condition of the Diem regime had seriously deteriorated and was getting worse. Relations between the Diem Government and the United States had become strained during the previous year. The American Ambassador to South Vietnam had carried so many messages of disapproval from the United States, that Diem no longer welcomed him.16 Following an attempted coup d'état in November 1960, "things had gotten even worse," Diem believing that the American Ambassador had previous knowledge of the attempt and did not warn the regime.17 President Kennedy, upon assuming office, appointed a new Ambassador to South Vietnam with the hopes "of restoring good relations with Diem" and at the same time "attempting to influence him toward concessions that would bring his regime wider support from within Vietnam and make it politically easier for the United States to give him aid he requested."18

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16 Roger Hilsman, To Move A Nation, (Garden City, 1967), pp. 419-420.
17 Ibid., p. 420.
18 Ibid., p. 420.
During the first year of the Kennedy Administration, while the President gave the impression that he believed much of the opposition the Diem regime faced was due to Diem's own mistakes, the Secretary of State, Dean Rusk, was speaking of "the determined and ruthless campaign of propaganda, infiltration and subversion by the Communist regime in North Viet-Nam to destroy the Republic of Vietnam."\(^{19}\) It is particularly interesting in this connection to note that Rusk had been Assistant Secretary of State for Far Eastern Affairs during 1950-1952, under the Truman Administration. It was at this time that the United States began to view the Viet Minh resistance to the French "as part of the international aggressive Communist movement of conquest," rather than primarily a colonial war.\(^{20}\) It is curious that even as early as 1950 Mr. Rusk failed to take into account "the strong nationalistic motivations of the Vietnamese people," in assessing the Vietnam situation. During the First Indochina War and later as Secretary of State, Dean Rusk continually seemed to have formed his opinions on Vietnam on the basis that Ho Chi Minh was a Communist and therefore was "being told what to do by Peking and Moscow."\(^{21}\)


\(^{20}\) Gruening and Beaser, *op. cit.*, p. 201.

\(^{21}\) Ibid., p. 201.
During 1961 President Kennedy moved cautiously in developing his Vietnam policy, "appreciating the internal aspects of the conflict," and becoming increasingly fearful that the United States "might be following the same disastrous path" the French had previously taken. In October 1961, the President sent Maxwell Taylor and Walt Rostow to Vietnam to find out "whether Vietnamese nationalism had turned irrevocably against (the United States)" or whether it might still "serve as a basis for the fight against Communism." Kennedy, in attempting to evaluate the true state of affairs in Vietnam was constantly reminded of his own fact-finding mission to Vietnam as a Senator in 1951. At that time Kennedy had concluded that the French were not being successful because they had been unable to gain the support of the Vietnamese people.

Noticeably missing from the Taylor-Rostow mission was any ranking member of the State Department. Roger Hillsman, who in the latter part of the Kennedy Administration became Assistant Secretary of State for Far Eastern Affairs, stated the reason was that:

... he (Rusk) did not want the State Department to play a prominent role in the upcoming decisions

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on Vietnam. For he regarded Vietnam as essentially a military problem even though a number of his colleagues in the State Department disagreed. 24

Considering Secretary of State Rusk's views on Vietnam and the lack of proper State Department representation on the Taylor-Rostow fact-finding mission, it is not surprising that the major theme of the missions report to the President was military. The report suggested that "the problem was primarily a military one, which could be solved by a larger commitment of American power including, if necessary, American fighting men." 25 The recommendation to use American combat forces, although qualified in the Taylor-Rostow report, was similar to an earlier recommendation proposed by the Chiefs of Staff in April of 1961.

24 Hilsman, op. cit., p. 421. Arthur Schlessinger concurs with Hilsman. He states: "It expressed a conscious decision by the Secretary of State to turn the Vietnam problem over to the Secretary of Defense. Rusk doubtless decided to do this because the military aspects seemed to him the most urgent ... ." Schlessinger goes on to say that "Kennedy doubtless acquiesced because he had more confidence in McNamara and Taylor than in the State Department." Schlessinger, op. cit., p. 545.

Averell Harriman, who was about to take over as Assistant Secretary for the Far East at the time disagreed with Rusk. Harriman was sure that the crisis in Vietnam "was political in its origins and had resulted from Diem's repressive and reactionary policies in face of a Communist-managed peasant insurrection." "The trouble with the State Department," Harriman said, "is that it always underestimates the dynamics of revolution." Ibid., p. 547.

25 George McTurnan Kahin and John W. Lewis, op. cit., p. 128.
Theodore C. Sorensen states, in his biography of Kennedy, that the President did not approve of the Joint Chiefs of Staff recommendation concerning combat troops.\(^{26}\) The same was apparently true of the Taylor-Rostow recommendation, for he again refused to send American combat forces to Vietnam, while accepting the majority of the other recommendations in the report. President Kennedy, however, in response to the various reports recommending the use of American combat forces in Vietnam,

... tripled the number of advisers to be sent to Vietnam, "with officers assigned at the battalion level as well as to regiments, to advise in combat as well as training, and to aid in unconventional as well as conventional warfare. United States logistical support was increased (helicopters) to fly South Vietnamese soldiers from place to place and ultimately as it turned out, into battle). In addition, more money and more instructors were made available to the South Vietnamese Civil Guard and Self-Defense Forces.\(^{27}\)

Kennedy's actions, despite his own apparent misgivings, conformed to Secretary of State Rusk's credo that the problem in Vietnam was primarily a military one. His decision to increase military aid to Vietnam followed the pattern of American foreign policy decisions in Asia since the outbreak of the Korean War, which emphasized meeting the Communist threat by means of military force.

It is curious that while Kennedy accepted a neutralist government in Laos, he never serious contemplated a


\(^{27}\) Gruening and Beaser, *op. cit.*, pp. 205-206.
similar settlement in Vietnam. Schlessinger, then a Special Consultant to the President, argues that such a policy would not have worked in Vietnam. He claims that,

... the collapse of the Dulles policy in Laos had created the possibility of a neutralist solution there; but the survival of that policy in South Vietnam, where the government was stronger and the army more willing to fight, left us in 1961 no alternative but to continue the effort of 1954. 28

However, while Schlessinger may be correct in saying that the South Vietnamese Government was stronger than the U.S. supported Laotian Government, it is also true the Diem Government was not a strong one at that time. The growing unrest in Vietnam which had reached serious proportions by 1961 and the attempted coup d'etat in late 1960 seem to be evidence of this fact. Schlessinger's contention regarding the willingness of the Vietnamese army to fight is either wishful thinking or a distortion of the facts. Prime Minister Nguyen Cao Ky in February, 1966 described the army's attitude toward Diem thusly: "We were dying for a cause, but we saw little evidence that the cause was worth laying down our lives for." 29 Therefore, it is more reasonable to assume that the South Vietnamese Army did not possess the "willingness to fight" which further enhanced Diem's opponents' chances of success.

The Kennedy Administration in their remaining years

28Schlessinger, op. cit., p. 538.
29Buttinger, op. cit., p. 985.
in office concentrated on projecting their contention to
the people of the United States and the world that Communism
was the enemy in South Vietnam, and the insurrection there
was directed from the North. In 1961 the State Department
issued a "White Paper" entitled "A Threat to Peace: North
Vietnam's Effort to Conquer South Vietnam." This document
"sought at every turn to give the impression that but for
Ho Chi Minh and his cohorts in the North there would be
nothing but peace and prosperity in South Vietnam." 30
Secretary of State Rusk and Under Secretary of State George
Ball attempted to reinforce this impression in all their
Vietnam policy speeches. As an example, in a major address
before the Economic Club of Detroit in 1962, Ball stated:

The struggle in South Vietnam today is not a local
civil war. It is a carefully planned and motivated
campaign of subversion and insurgency - equipped
and directed from Hanoi. 31

And yet later in the same speech the Under Secretary did
admit that,

Strong ties must be developed between local communi-
ties and the Central Government. The village people
must be helped to acquire a sense of identity with
the National State. 32

30 Gruening and Beaser, op. cit., p. 211.

31 George W. Ball, "Vietnam: Free-World Challenge
in Southeast Asia," from an address to the Economic Club
of Detroit, April 30, 1962, reprinted in Arthur C. Turner
and Leonard Freedman, ed., Tensions in World Affairs,
(Belmont, California, 1964), p. 297.

32 Ibid., p. 300.
From Mr. Ball's latter statement one would conclude that the people in many areas of South Vietnam neither supported nor identified themselves with the Government at that time. It would, therefore, seem reasonable to assume that much of the South Vietnamese population were either opposed to the Diem government or were indifferent, not caring what side won the war, as long as there was some hope that living conditions would improve. In the latter case the people were quite vulnerable to Communist propaganda promises; in the former case, if these people were the ones responsible for attempting to dispose the government, it was civil war. In either case the major problem in South Vietnam was internal. The State Department, however, refused to accept that fact.

The State Department, if they had to focus on the theme of aggression, would have done themselves a favor as well as perhaps sparing thousands of American boys and millions of Vietnamese people the brutalities brought about by the escalation of the War. While there is little doubt that the Communists were involved in the insurrection, they found ready allies in the Vietnamese nationalists. While in reality there was some aggression from the North, there was also civil war. While some of the revolutionaries were Communist, some were nationalists. But perhaps because

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the situation in South Vietnam was so complex and therefore had no easy or single solution, the United States Government deluded itself into believing that Hanoi-controlled aggression was the major if not the sole problem, in which case the solution became simple - additional military commitment.

During 1962 and 1963 the situation in Vietnam steadily deteriorated. The United States during that time increased the amount of aid and the number of its advisers to the Diem regime, despite the growing rift inside the Kennedy Administration over its Vietnam policy. Arthur Schlessinger, Jr., a Consultant to the President at that time, writes that the group of dissenters to the Vietnam policy, was led by Averell Harriman, then Assistant Secretary of State for Far Eastern Affairs, who insisted the United States was on the wrong course in South Vietnam. However, the Rusk-McNamara coalition remained content with the military predominance of the United States' Vietnam policy, and their views were to win out at that time.

34 While from hindsight there is no doubt that this was the case, Secretary of State Rusk, Secretary of Defense McNamara, and General Harkins, head of the American advisers in Vietnam at that time, all claimed the opposite was true. In the spring of 1963 Secretary McNamara authorized the Defense Department to announce "we have turned the corner in Vietnam" and General Harkins predicted that the war would be won "within the year." Schlessinger, op. cit., p. 982.

35 Roger Hilsman, then head of the State Department Office of Intelligence and Research, and Michael Forrestal, a White House Aid, were others to share Harriman's views. Ibid., p. 984.
Up until August, 1963 American leaders had put little pressure on the Saigon regime to initiate reforms in South Vietnam, even though numerous reports had noted the necessity of such reforms. The Kennedy Administration had consistently requested Diem to adopt various reform measures with each additional outlay of assistance. Diem neglected the requests.

Early in May, 1963 open conflict between the Diem regime and the Buddhist organizations erupted. The Buddhist crisis began on May 8, 1963, when the Buddhists of Hue protested a Diem order forbidding them to display their religious flags. Troops were ordered to disburse the protesters which resulted in open confrontation between the Government Forces and the Buddhist in which nine persons were killed.\(^36\) The nine deaths added to the Buddhist's furor and as a result the number of demonstrations increased, including human sacrifices, protesting against the Diem regime. Buddhist leaders demanded that Diem punish those responsible for the murders on May 8 and compensate the families of the victims, but he refused to meet these demands.

Washington became deeply concerned about the Buddhist crisis in South Vietnam. The Kennedy Administration not only felt guilty in supporting a regime that seemed to practice religious persecutions, but there was also grave concern that the growing public resistance to Diem would hinder

\(^{36}\)Buttinger, op. cit., p. 993.
the war effort against the "communists."\textsuperscript{37} The latter fear is quite understandable considering that probably about 70 per cent of the Vietnamese people considered themselves Buddhist.\textsuperscript{38} President Kennedy, disgruntled by Diem's unwillingness to reconcile the Buddhists, instructed the American Ambassador in Vietnam to warn Diem that if he failed to compose the Buddhist struggle, the United States might publically disavow his Buddhist policy. In a television interview on September 2, 1963, the President told an American public, which had become enraged by what they considered a religious persecution,

> The repressions against the Buddhist ... were very unwise ... all we could do is make it clear that we don't think this is the way to win.  \textsuperscript{39}

During the same interview discussing the general situation of the war effort, Kennedy said:

> I don't think that unless a greater effort is made by the government to win popular support that the war can be won there. In the final analysis, it is their war. They are the ones who have to win it or lose it. We can help them, we can give them equipment, we can send our men out there as advisers, but they have to win it - the people of Vietnam - against the Communists. ... In the last two months the Government (Saigon) has gotten out of touch with the people. \textsuperscript{40}

One week later in another national broadcast President Kennedy reiterated that the United States was using

\textsuperscript{37}Ibid., p. 995. Schlessinger, op. cit., p. 987.
\textsuperscript{38}Ibid., p. 993.
\textsuperscript{39}Gruening and Beaser, op. cit., pp. 226-227.
\textsuperscript{40}Ibid., p. 226.
its influence on the Saigon regime to take steps to "win
back the support of the people." Particularly interesting
was Kennedy's mention that he feared Vietnam might become
a situation similar to the one the United States faced in
the Chinese civil war after World War II. He stated:

Strongly in our mind is what happened in the case
of China at the end of World War II, where China
was lost, a weak government became increasingly
unable to control events. We don't want that. 41

In effect, Kennedy was admitting, contrary to official
State Department releases, that not all the opposition to
Diem stemmed from Hanoi's aggression. At the same time,
however, it is apparent that he did not believe the situa-
tion in Vietnam had deteriorated to the point where a policy
of containment had no chance of success, as Truman had
believed was the case in China. Kennedy, although never
seriously contemplating American disengagement in Vietnam,
at that time, made it clearly known that while he intended
to continue the American commitment, he was not in total
agreement with Saigon's policies and would be forced to
cut-back American assistance to Vietnam, if that government
continued to pursue policies which alienated the Vietnamese
populace. 42 Above all he believed that the United States
must restrain itself from taking over control of the war
effort. For in doing so the United States would convert

41 Hilsman, op. cit., p. 505.
42 Schlessinger, op. cit., p. 547.
the Vietnam struggle into a white man's war, in which case
the United States would lose as the French had lost a
decade earlier. President Kennedy's fearful prophecy
became reality during the Johnson Administration.

On September 12, 1963 the President stated the
objectives of his Administration's Vietnam policy:

... we have a very simple policy in that area
(Vietnam) ... we want the war to be won, the
Communists to be contained, and the Americans
to go home.  43

At that time he again referred to his growing
disenchantment with Diem's policies, stating:

What helps to win the war, we support; what
interferes with the war effort, we oppose.  44

The Kennedy Administration was planning to place
heavy pressures on Diem forcing him to alter his aggres­sive policies, but before they were applied Diem was
assasinated (November 1, 1963). A military junta led by
General Duong Van Minh took control of the Saigon Govern­ment. The New York Times summed up the Kennedy Administra­tion's attitude toward the coup d'etat thusly:

The Administration welcomes the coup d'etat in
South Vietnam, assumes that its policies helped
to bring it about and is confident of greater
progress now in the war against the Communist
guerillas.  45

43Hilsman, op. cit., p. 506.
44Ibid., p. 506.
45Max Frankel, New York Times, November 2, 1963
in Kahin and Lewis, op. cit., p. 145.
The Times description obviously did not correspond to the Government's official statement, but it did describe fairly accurately the actual attitude of the men in the Kennedy Administration.

However, before President Kennedy had time to evaluate the new regime in Saigon, and perhaps alter his Vietnam policy because of the leadership change, he, too, was struck down by an assassin.

By the end of the Kennedy Presidency the war in Vietnam had become a major problem for American foreign policy-makers. During those years the Communist had steadily increased their strength. The National Liberation Front, the political organization of the Viet-Cong, which had emerged in 1960 and had received open verbal support from Hanoi, was well established at the time of Kennedy's death. In many parts of rural Vietnam it had established an alternative de facto government, "the degree of its administrative authority varying from province to province." Much of the Vietnamese populace had become alienated from the Saigon Government because of Diem's oppressive policies. As the situation in South Vietnam deteriorated, the Kennedy policy

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46 There are some indications of the prior establishment of the Liberation Front. Yale anthropologist Gerald Hickey wrote in 1958 that in a South Vietnamese village he studied, had "for the first time experienced the activities of a relatively new political movement - the Mai Tran Dan Tac Gioi Phong Mien Nam Viet Nam (National Front for the Liberation of Vietnam)" Gerald Hickey, Village in Vietnam in Kahin and Lewis, op. cit., p. 110-111 ff.

47 Ibid., p. 145.

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became one of increased American support and aid, both military and economic, to the Saigon regime. President Kennedy, personally seemed to have believed the problem in Vietnam was more than just a military one, requiring a military commitment. However, Kennedy did little more than recommend that the Saigon Government initiate a program for land reforms; for the most part such recommendations went unheeded in Saigon. The number of American advisers in Vietnam, increased from approximately 750 in 1961 to about 17,000 by the end of 1963. The United States, during the Kennedy Administration, became more directly involved in the Vietnam war, yet it had been able to retain a position where the military struggle in Vietnam remained essentially Vietnamese. While Kennedy's policy enlarged the American commitment in Vietnam, thus reducing to some degree the following Administration's choice in its Vietnam policy, "he did succeed in keeping both the 'militarization' and the 'Americanization' of the struggle in Vietnam within tolerable limits."

48 Schlesinger states that "Kennedy, beset by the missile crisis, Congressional elections, Skybolt, deGaulle, Latin America, the test ban negotiations and the civil rights fight, had little time to focus on Southeast Asia. " Instead, his confidence in McNamara, led the President to go along with the Secretary of Defense's policy. Schlesinger, op.cit., p. 982.


50 Hilsman, op. cit., p. 579. Also see Harke, op. cit., p. 37.
President Johnson inherited the problems of America's Vietnam policy at a time, as stated above, when the struggle was still essentially between the Vietnamese. While the American involvement in Vietnam had increased, the Johnson Administration was still afforded some options as to which direction the Vietnam policy would take.

Shortly after Lyndon Johnson assumed the Presidency, the Secretary General of the United Nations, U Thant, is reported to have met with him and conveyed a message from Ho Chi Minh proposing discussions on a possible settlement. It is believed that at that time Ho Chi Minh's recommendations consisted of a coalition government for South Vietnam and the neutralization of South Vietnam. President Johnson did not immediately react to the message of U Thant but his New Year's message to South Vietnam's leader, General Duong Van Minh, clearly stated his refusal to accept any settlement that included the neutralization of South Vietnam. In the

Neutralization of South Vietnam would only be another name for a Communist take over. ... The United States will continue to furnish you and your people with the fullest measure of support in this bitter fight.... We shall maintain in Vietnam American personnel and materials needed to assist you in achieving victory. 52

The neutralization of South Vietnam at that time would have likely led to a Communist-controlled Government. General

51 Kahin and Lewis, op. cit., p. 145.
Duong Van Minh had been in control of the South Vietnam Government less than two months and there was no evidence that he had been able to consolidate firm control in that short period. The questionable stability of the new Saigon government and the strength of the Communists, in a neutralized Vietnam, would have likely resulted in a situation similar to Laos, where the Communists had increased their area of control after the nation was neutralized in 1962. President Johnson's position on the possible neutralization of Vietnam was the same as that of his predecessor, President Kennedy, whose policies he had pledged to continue. However, unlike the Kennedy Administration's rationale for believing neutralization unacceptable, President Johnson's reasons seem much more realistic. At the same time, Johnson's unwillingness to accept neutralization as a basis for a settlement and his promise to continue American assistance to Saigon to achieve "victory", made a settlement at that time impossible from Hanoi's viewpoint.

The year 1964 witnessed a growing discontent with American involvement in the Vietnam War among U.S. Congressmen and the American press. Some Congressmen were calling for a reevaluation of the entire United States containment policy in Asia, as had similarly been done during the Korean War. Senator Mike Mansfield, a leading member of the Senate's Foreign Relations Committee stated that the time

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53 Vide Supra, pp. 15-16.
had come for the United States to "face up to the realities of today, and not depend on the wishes of yesterday." The problem, however, among Congressional critics and between Congressional critics and the Administration was that there was little agreement on what those realities were.

President Johnson proceeded very cautiously with his Vietnam policy in 1964 because it was an election year. The American people were aligning themselves into two main categories: the "hawks", those advocating the escalation of the war, and the "doves", those advocating the United States to withdraw troops from Vietnam. President Johnson, not wishing to alienate any sector of the electorate chose a middle of the road stand on Vietnam.

While Vietnam evolved into a campaign issue in the United States, the situation in Vietnam continued to deteriorate, and the failures of American policy became more apparent. By the end of July, 1964,

France was calling for the neutrality of Indochina. Cambodia had begun to accept Russian military aid. Civil strife had broken out in Laos over which the United States had begun reconnaissance flights and had lost two planes early in June, 1964. 55

On August 2nd and 4th the now much questioned Gulf of Tonkin incidents occurred. According to the Secretary of Defense, on these dates, three North Vietnamese PT boats

54Gruening and Beaser, op. cit., p. 230.
55Ibid., p. 235.
attacked an American destroyer. These attacks, according to Secretary McNamara, were unprovoked and occurred in International waters. President Johnson, on August 4 in a nationwide broadcast, told the American people of these hostile acts committed by the North Vietnamese. The American people were told that aggression "by terror against the peaceful villagers of South Vietnam" had been joined by open aggression on the high seas against the United States. The United States would respond to the belligerent acts in a "limited and fitting" manner. Johnson's "limited and fitting" response turned out to be retaliatory bombing raids on Vietnamese PT boats and petroleum dumps. While the Congress at that time did not criticize the President's actions, in retrospect the bombing raids do seem to have gone beyond the scope of a "limited and fitting" response. The President in justifying the need to retaliate and in determining the form the retaliation should take, pushed aside the fact that the American destroyer was not damaged in the alleged attack and that two Vietnamese PT boats were sunk. In so far as the U.S. Navy had already

56 Ibid., p. 236.
57 In April, 1964 "Ambassador Adlai Stevenson told the Security Council the United States had 'repeatedly' expressed its emphatic disapproval of 'retaliatory raids, whenever they occur and by whomever they are committed.' The United States then voted for the resolution which condemned 'reprisals as incompatible with the purposes and principles of the United Nations.' On November 25, 1966, the United States voted to censure Israel for her reprisal raid on Samu, Jordan. Harke, op. cit., p. 50.
punished the aggressor, the addition of the bombing raids seemed to be out of proportion to the actual "crime" committed. However, today it is quite apparent that the Johnson Administration used the Gulf of Tonkin incident as an excuse to escalate the war, a policy that some members of the Administration had been advising for some time.

In addition the President went to the Congress and asked them for a resolution "affirming the national determination that all such attacks will be met, and that the United States will continue in its basic policy of assisting the free nations of the area defend their freedom." The vast majority of Congressmen enraged by the "alleged" attack on the American vessel willingly and hurriedly consented to Johnson's petition. The final resolution stated,

That the Congress approves and supports the determination of the President, as Commander in Chief, to take all necessary measures to repel an armed attack against the forces of the United States and to prevent further aggression.  

The resolution because of the ambiguous meaning of the phrase "and to prevent further aggression," came back and haunted many Congressmen. Because the resolution did not qualify what was meant by further aggression or against whom the aggression had to be directed, the President in 1965 used

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59 Southeast Asia Resolution, Background Information Relating to Southeast Asia and Vietnam, op. cit., p. 128.
the resolution as a justification for increased American involvement and escalation of the war in Vietnam, against the protest of some Congressmen, men who voted for the resolution, not realizing the possible repercussions of their action.

Although the United States unilaterally responded to the Gulf of Tonkin incident, it did also protest the North Vietnamese attacks in the Security Council of the United Nations. However, the protest consisted merely of verbal denunciation of the attacks, and at no time did the United States ask the Council to assume jurisdiction of the Vietnam conflict.

The retaliatory bombing raids had set the stage for American escalation of the Vietnam war; yet President Johnson on the "campaign trail" during the months of September and October gave no indication that the United States intended to do so. On the contrary, he constantly criticized his Republican opponent, Barry Goldwater, for even suggesting that the U.S. bomb North Vietnam and use nuclear weapons if necessary to win the war. Johnson said:

I want to be very cautious and careful and use it only as a last resort, when I start dropping bombs around that are likely to involve American boys in a war in Asia with 700,000,000 Chinese. So just for the moment I have not thought that we were ready for American boys to do the fighting for Asian boys. ... 60

Nearing the end of the 1964 presidential campaign, Lyndon

60Brown, op. cit., p. 327.
Johnson reiterated unequivocally "We are not going to send American boys nine or ten thousand miles away to do what Asian boys ought to be doing for themselves." President Johnson's statements throughout the campaign gave no indication that he would escalate the American involvement in Vietnam, as his "war monger" opponent had suggested the United States should do. The bombing raids on North Vietnam were presented as "just retaliation" and not as it turned out, the initial step in a pattern of escalation. Johnson's promise to keep American boys out of combat in Vietnam, turned out to be nothing but campaign oratory, as the American people found out within the year.

During the presidential campaign, President De Gaulle of France and Secretary-General U Thant appealed to President Johnson to begin negotiations for a Vietnam settlement, by calling for a reconvening of the Geneva Conference. Johnson, on the advice of his political advisers neglected the appeals, stating that such a consideration should be postponed until after the Presidential elections. Yet, after the election had come and gone and President Johnson had been elected in one of the greatest landslides ever recorded in a Presidential election, he again rejected U Thant's proposal. Eric Sevareid in an article in Look magazine, November 30, 1965 states:

61 Ibid., p. 327.
In the early autumn of 1964 ... U Thant ... privately obtained agreement from authorities in North Vietnam that they would send an emissary to talk with an American emissary in Rangoon, Burma. Someone in Washington insisted that this attempt be postponed until after the Presidential election. When the election was over, U Thant again pursued the matter. Hanoi was still willing to send its man. But Defense Secretary McNamara ... opposed the attempt. He said the South Vietnamese Government would have to be informed and it would have a demoralizing effect on them; that government was shaky enough, as it was .... U Thant was furious over this failure of his patient efforts. 62

Secretary McNamara's statement that Saigon "government was shaky," was an understatement. At the end of October 1964 a civilian government was installed in Saigon, the fourth government since Diem in 1963. The civilian government, however, did not find favor among the Buddhists who soon organized demonstrations against it. 63 Premier Huong's civilian government lasted until January 27, 1965 when the military leaders led by General Khanh staged a successful coup. While American officials became increasingly concerned about General Khanh's growing opposition to "the U.S. political presence in Saigon," and anti-American feelings grew in South Vietnam, 64 the Viet Cong were able to increase their already strong position. Some men in the Johnson Administration believed South Vietnam had

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63 Kahin and Lewis, op. cit., p. 164.
64 Ibid., pp. 164-168.
reached the point where it could not be "saved" without a heavy U.S. commitment, that included combat forces if need be.

On February 7, 1965 the Vietcong attacked a United States military compound at Pleiku. Seven Americans were killed and 109 were wounded as a result. The United States "enraged" by the terrorists action again bombed the North as a "retaliatory" measure. However, some evidence has since come to light, that the bombings were planned previous to the Pleiku attack, and were therefore not merely retaliatory actions. Pleiku was a convenient opportunity that the Johnson Administration was able to use as justification for action they had every intention of taking in any event. The United States had already decided to bomb the North in an effort to reduce the infiltration of forces from there, that the American leaders claimed was responsible for the deteriorating situation in the South. Furthermore, it is "coincidental" and "convenient" that in February 1965, the United States State Department came out with a "White Paper" on Vietnam entitled, "Aggression From The North: The Record of North Viet-Nam's Campaign to Conquer

65 Charles Roberts, a White House reporter for 11 years, has said that Johnson told him in May, 1965 that he, Johnson, had made the decision to bomb four months before Pleiku, in October, 1964 at the height of the Presidential Campaign. Harke, op. cit., p. 51.

South Vietnam."

Upon reading the State Department's "White Paper" one would find that it is nothing more than a justification for American escalation. The "facts" presented in the document do give reasonable evidence that some aggression from the North existed. However, at the same time the evidence is not so concrete as to disprove that the cause of the war in Vietnam was essentially the South Vietnamese people's dissatisfaction with the Saigon Government. Yet, even in "proving" that there was aggression from the North, the State Department found it necessary to distort some of the facts. For instance the "White Paper" refers to the International Control Commission's reports that stated "there was 'sufficient evidence to show beyond a reasonable doubt' that North Vietnam had sent arms and men into South Vietnam to carry out subversion with the aim of overthrowing the legal Government there." What the document does not state, however, is that the same Commission's report also found the governments of South Vietnam and the United States in violation of the Geneva Accords of 1954. In examining the figures cited in the "White Paper" concerning the number of Communist weapons captured and the number of "infiltrees" from the North it is difficult for many to come to the same conclusion as the State Department - if the "other side"

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67 "Aggression From the North, The Record of North Viet-Nam's Campaign To Conquer South Viet-Nam" Department of State Publication 7839, (Washington, D.C., 1965).
would halt its aggression everything would be all right in South Vietnam. The "White Paper" does nothing more than give some "evidence" that North Vietnam supports the guerrillas in South Vietnam, but that is no more a secret than that the United States supports the South Vietnamese government against them. 68

The American "retaliatory" bombing raids following the Communist attack at Pleiku in February, 1965, were continued during the following month. However, the bombing soon proved ineffective. The insurgency and terror in South Vietnam and the number of men infiltrating from the North increased, rather than diminished. 69 As the "Americanization" of the war became more apparent, with no solution in sight and as the number of casualties increased, especially the number of civilian casualties, people from all parts of the world and from all walks of life began to heavily criticize the United States Vietnam policy. In March, 1965 seventeen non-aligned nations issued a statement expressing their concern about the "aggravation of the situation in Vietnam" and stated that it was their belief that foreign military intervention was responsible for the situation. The group of nations called for negotiations, without any preconditions "so that a political solution

69 Brown, op. cit., p. 334.
to the problem of Vietnam may be found in accordance with
the legitimate aspirations of the Vietnamese people."70
The United States reply to the non-aligned nations' request
was made on April 8. Its content was a reiteration of the
American position - negotiations were possible the moment
the aggression from North Vietnam ceased.

President Johnson, on the previous day, had deliv­
ered his celebrated speech on Vietnam at John Hopkins.
This address is very important because it is the most thor­
cough statement of the Johnson's Administration's Vietnam
policy. In the first part of the speech President Johnson
states the reason why the United States is involved in
Vietnam.

... we have a promise to keep. Since 1954 every
American President has offered support to the
people of South Vietnam. ... we made a pledge to
help South Vietnam defend its independence. 71
This reason, while heavily used by defenders of President
Johnson's policy, is too shallow a reason to justify the
heavy commitment of the United States to Vietnam. More­
over, in reviewing his predecessors' correspondence with
the South Vietnamese government, the "pledge" President
Johnson spoke of is in reality an interpretation on his
part, rather than an actual fact. President Eisenhower
and Kennedy both offered assistance to Saigon, but with

70 Gruening and Beaser, op. cit., p. 279.
71 Department of State Bulletin LVI, April 26, 1965,
pp. 606-610.
the understanding that certain conditions be met. In so far as Saigon more often than not neglected to initiate many of the reforms suggested by the American Presidents, it would seem that the United States technically could rescind its offer. President Johnson, himself, must have had some doubts concerning the nature of America's "pledge" for he felt it necessary to give further reasons for his Administration's policy.

We are there to strengthen world order. Around the globe, from Berlin to Thailand, are people whose well-being rests in part on the belief they can count on us if they are attacked. To leave Viet-Nam to its fate would shake the confidence of all these peoples.... . 72

We are also there because there are great stakes in the balance ... . We have (responsibility) there for the same reason we have a responsibility for the defense of Europe. World War II was fought in both Europe and Asia, and when it ended we found ourselves with continued responsibility for the defense of freedom. 73

The latter two reasons offered by Lyndon Johnson were the core reasons for the United States' involvement in Vietnam. The Johnson Administration perceived a Communist victory in Vietnam as a threat to its post-war policy of containment. What President Johnson was unable to realize or acknowledge was that American policy and perceptions, especially his Administrations', had elevated the predominantly civil war in South Vietnam to the plateau of a

72 Ibid.
73 Ibid.
Cold War struggle.

In defining the real enemy in Vietnam Johnson said:

The confused nature of this conflict cannot mask
the fact that it is the new fact of an old enemy.
Over this war - and all Asia - is ... the deepening
shadow of Communist China. ... It is a nation
which is helping the forces of violence in almost
every continent. The contest in Viet-Nam is part
of a wider pattern of aggressive purposes. 74

According to President Johnson therefore, Communist China
was the stage manager of the insurgency in Vietnam.75
Despite the fact that no Chinese soldiers had taken part
in the struggle in South Vietnam, the United States presumably was defending Saigon from Chinese domination.
What is especially curious is that the same China was un-
willing to give more than verbal support to Hanoi back in
1955-56, when Hanoi desperately needed assistance if its
demand that the elections subscribed to in the Geneva
Accords was to be realized.

President Johnson in stating his reasons why the
United States was in Vietnam and in defining Communist
China as the ultimate enemy there had implicitly placed
Vietnam in the wider framework of America's containment
policy in Asia. In stating his response to the Communist
challenge in Vietnam it becomes explicit.

... we must say in Southeast Asia as we did in
Europe, in the words of the Bible: 'Hitherto
shalt thou come, but no further.' 76

74 Ibid.
75 Broun, op. cit., p. 335.
76 Department of State Bulletin, April, 26, 1955.
The President made perfectly clear his Administration's determination to win the war in Vietnam.

We will not be defeated. We will not grow tired. We will not withdraw; either openly or under the cloak of a meaningless agreement. 77

At the same time, the President went on to speak of his willingness to explore the possibilities of an early peaceful settlement to the war:

We will never be second in the search for a peaceful settlement in Vietnam.

We have stated this position over and over again fifty times and more, to friend and foe alike. We remain ready, with this purpose, for unconditional discussions. 78

Yet, the phrase "unconditional discussions" must denote a different meaning to President Johnson than it does to other men; for on the very next day, as has already been noted, Johnson's reply to a similar request by a group of non-aligned nations, demanded a pre-condition.

In the latter part of this address Johnson spoke of the need to improve the "life of man in that conflict-torn corner of our world."79 He divulged his plans for a billion-dollar American investment on a Mekong River project, which potentially could provide food, water and power to dwarf America's own TVA. While the project itself was a constructive ideal, practically it could only bring

77 Ibid.
78 Ibid.
79 Ibid.
about its intended objectives if there was peace. General Maxwell Taylor once used a revealing phrase which appropriately describes the necessity of peace first - it is "difficult to plant corn outside the stockade when the Indians are still around."\textsuperscript{80}

Despite President Johnson's expressed readiness for a peace settlement in Vietnam, the mighty arms which he claimed were "symbols of human failures" were soon increased. The number of bombing raids were increased and more American boys were sent to Vietnam. There was, therefore, a credibility gap between the President's verbal desires to find a peaceful settlement and his decision to further escalate the war. It is difficult to understand how or why the Administration concluded that Hanoi would be willing to talk peace while under heavy bombardment. Even if the bombing seriously crippled Hanoi's war efforts, which later evidence indicated it did not, for Hanoi to go to the peace table under such conditions, would have, in effect, been an act of surrender.

When the increased bombing raids produced no visible productive results, world and domestic pressures were exerted on Johnson to halt them. Under these conditions Johnson decided to suspend the bombing to give Hanoi a

chance to honorably seek negotiations. The bombing was halted from May 12 to May 18, 1965. At the end of the six days the United States claimed Hanoi had made no response; it therefore not only continued the bombing but increased again the number of bombing raids and the number of American forces in Vietnam. Also in May, 1965, President Johnson went to the Congress and received additional appropriations to carry out the United States' war effort in Vietnam. In July, 1965 the number of American troops in Vietnam was increased by 75 per cent. The American escalation continued until late 1965, but there was no sign of the struggle ending. On the contrary, since the Johnson Administration had embarked on its program of escalation, the potentially explosive nature of the Vietnam war had increased. It became noticeably evident that both the Soviet Union and Communist China had increased their assistance to Hanoi.

In 1965 as large-scale American combat troops were introduced into South Vietnam a war alarm occurred in the major cities throughout southern and coastal China.\(^{81}\) "Pitched to the slogan of preparing for war 'sooner rather than later, nuclear as well as conventional,' a Chinese civil defense campaign built up, complete with air-raid drills, pamphlets and films on protection against atomic

\(^{81}\)Allens S. Whiting, "How We Almost Went To War With China," \textit{Look}, April 29, 1969, p. 77.
fallout.\textsuperscript{82} In early May, 1965 the Chinese Chief of Staff Lo Jui-Ching claimed, "We will go on supporting and aiding the Vietnamese people, whether or not U.S. imperialism bombs our country and whether or not it enlarges the war."\textsuperscript{83} Johnson's policy of escalation threatened to touch off a major war with China, but was ineffective in bringing about a swift end to the Vietnamese war.

The year 1965 was a time of low morale in South Vietnam for another Saigon government had fallen. American casualties were rapidly rising as were American critics of the Johnson Vietnam policy. As the United States took over the major combat functions in Vietnam, President Johnson explained, "We did not choose to be the guardians at the gate, but there is no one else."\textsuperscript{84} Yet, in reality nothing could be farther from the truth. Since 1954, immediately following the Geneva Conference, the United States had followed a policy of self-appointed guardians of Saigon regimes. Granted, the previous Administrations may not have laid the basis of a sound Vietnam policy, but no one had forced the Johnson Administration to escalate the war; it was their decision and their mistake.

At the end of 1965 and during the first month of

\textsuperscript{82}Ibid., p. 77.\textsuperscript{83}Ibid., p. 77.\textsuperscript{84}Broun, op. cit., p. 341.
1966, President Johnson again suspended the bombing. The bombing operations had proved to be a dismal failure in bringing Hanoi to its knees, while the threat of a wider war with Communist China intensified in late 1965. In the early fall of 1965 Mao had sent regular forces of the Chinese People's Liberation Army to North Vietnam. While these forces were primarily engaged in railroad, road and bridge construction, there existed the possibility of Chinese troops joining Hanoi in the case of a U.S. invasion. Furthermore, Chinese anti-aircraft units moved in to protect vital targets in North Vietnam, and to shield Chinese engineering and construction personnel.

On January 7, 1966, during the 37-day bombing halt Secretary of State Rusk issued his Fourteen Points for negotiations in response to Hanoi's Four Points, issued in April, 1965. At that time Rusk said "the two positions were really not far apart" and "certainly, there was reason for negotiations on the basis of both positions." However, Secretary Rusk's optimism was based on the American condition that Hanoi was willing to back down on their

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85 Whiting, op. cit., p. 77.
86 Ibid., p. 77.
87 Hanoi issued its Four Points as a basis for negotiations less than one week after President Johnson's speech at John Hopkins University, where he stated the U.S. was always ready for "unconditional discussions."
88 Broun, op. cit., p. 341.
position that any negotiations include the National Liberation Front. Hanoi could not accept Rusk's condition; to do so would have been an admission of guilt by Hanoi, that they were aggressors. Not only that, but Hanoi realistically knew that any settlement without the NLF, would not be lasting. Mr. Rusk made it clear that until Hanoi was willing to agree to this condition, there existed no basis for negotiations as far as the Johnson Administration was concerned. In explaining the Administration's position, the Secretary said:

>If the Vietcong come to the conference table as full partners, they will ... in a sense have been victorious in the very aims that South Vietnam and the United States are pledged to prevent. 89

The question arises, what aims are the governments of Saigon and the United States pledged to prevent? By examining the policy statements of the United States and Saigon one must conclude that both governments are attempting to prevent the forceful conquest of South Vietnam by the Communists, or in more positive terms to secure the right of self-determination for the Vietnamese people. To admit the Vietcong to the conference table, does not necessarily abandon these goals. What it does, is admit the fact that the Vietcong are a southern grouping and that the war in Vietnam is essentially a civil war. While the United States consistently claimed the Vietcong was merely a "southern arm" of

Hanoi, it must be remembered Hanoi has also consistently claimed that the Saigon regime is nothing more than a puppet of the United States. Therefore, Hanoi, while repeatedly denying recognition of the Saigon regime as the legitimate government of South Vietnam, was willing to concede to their presence at the conference table. If the United States seriously desired negotiations, and one accepts compromise as an essential part of negotiation, then Hanoi's insistence on NLF representation was not unreasonable. The request was unreasonable as far as the Johnson Administration was concerned because it did not desire compromise, but all-out victory. Their refusal to grant the NLF representation was "intrinsically bound to the theory that (the United States is) resisting a war of aggression and the opening blow for world conquest."\textsuperscript{90}

While American soldiers continued to die at the hands of the Vietcong, the Johnson Administration found it impossible to recognize its political arm, the NLF, and begin meaningful negotiations.

On January 31, 1966 the Administration resumed its aerial attacks with "even greater punch." Secretary of State Dean Rusk explained that the bombing was resumed because "the response has been negative, harsh, unyielding ... ."\textsuperscript{91}

\textsuperscript{90}Harke, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 63.
\textsuperscript{91}Ibid., p. 58.
Meanwhile, the Johnson policy of escalation was receiving increasing criticism in the United States. The Senate Foreign Relations Committee in January, 1966 began hearings on Vietnam. During the hearings the Senate Committee heard the testimony of many distinguished Americans who were opposed to the Administration's policy. The reasons for their opposition were varied. For example, General Gavin testified that he feared the American escalation would begin to hurt the United States' world strategic position. He went on to say "When (the United States) begins to turn (its) back on what (it) is doing in world affairs ... to support a tactical confrontation that appears to be escalating at the will of an enemy (it) is in a very dangerous position." On the other hand the former diplomat, George Kennan, who first introduced the concept of containment, questioned American military intervention in the first place. Furthermore, Kennan concluded that the prestige of the United States was being damaged abroad because of its excessive involvement in Vietnam, particularly in Japan. General Gavin, a year later, agreed with Kennan on this latter point, when he again appeared before the Foreign Relations Committee. It is especially interesting that these two distinguished men opposed Johnson's policy on grounds similar to those used by the President to defend the policy. Obviously a

92Broun, op. cit., p. 342.
credibility gap existed.

President Johnson, while the Senate Hearings were in process, conveniently found that the time was right to meet personally with the leaders of the Saigon Government. In Honolulu, the two Governments in a public declaration proclaimed their common objectives and efforts to maintain an independent South Vietnam. During the conference the leaders discussed joint military operations, but the main news to emerge from the meeting dealt with new programs for the socioeconomic benefit of the Vietnamese people. Yet, while the Vietnamese people's need of such programs were unquestionable, peace was their foremost need, and a pre-condition if the programs were to be successful. But the Honolulu conference ended without peace in sight.

Throughout 1966 and 1967 the war continued and the number of bombing raids and American combat troops increased, until the number of American boys fighting the war that should be fought by Asians, reached approximately 540,000. During this period the Administration often spoke of how the United States was winning the war. Each act of escalation was explained as a necessary act to bring the war to an end. While the Administration just as often spoke of their willingness to negotiate, it was quite clear that they were banking on a military victory.

The Communist Tet offensive in February, 1968 crushed the Johnson Administration's illusions of a military victory. Henry Kissinger points out that from a strictly
military point of view, the Tet offensive was an American victory. However, he also points out that more importantly it was a political defeat in the countryside for Saigon and the United States. "The Vietcong had made a point whose importance far transcends military considerations: there are no secure areas for Vietnamese civilians." Washington faced the sad realization that from both a military and political point of view, its policy was a failure. Militarily, the American and South Vietnamese forces were not defeated, but they had not made any significant progress in bringing the war to an end, and the Tet offensive had vividly showed that it was unlikely that they could in the near future. This realization caused President Johnson, for the first time to put a limit on the number of American troops for Vietnam. He refused General Westmoreland's request for an additional two hundred thousand American troops, to secure a "major improvement" in the military situation in South Vietnam. President Johnson, finally faced the reality, that the American military machine after almost four years had been unable to improve


94 Ibid., p. 106.

95 Ibid., p. 107.

appreciably the military and political situation of the Government of South Vietnam. In facing these facts, President Johnson found that an eventual commitment to a political solution was inevitable and began the quest for a negotiated settlement.

On March 31, 1968 President Johnson before a nationwide television audience announced a partial halt in the bombing of North Vietnam. In November of the same year the Administration announced that peace negotiations would take place in Paris, with the United States, Saigon, Hanoi and the NLF represented. After almost three years of continuous battle, and countless deaths, the United States no longer maintained that NLF representation at the peace table meant in a sense victory for the "other side." Yet, because the United States "yielded" in 1968, after three years of insisting it could not allow NLF representation at the peace conference, the "other side" had indeed gained a victory in a sense. The NLF presence brought out the weaknesses and failures of the United States' past policy and the internal contradictions within it.

The peace negotiations in Paris begun under the Johnson Administration and continued by the succeeding Nixon Administration have yet, at the time of this writing, to bear any fruit. So today the war in Vietnam continues

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97 Ibid., p. 4.
98 Kissinger, op. cit., p. 108.
and the blood of American boys and innocent South Vietnamese civilians redden the soil of that country, demonstrating the failures of American leaders and the inadequacy of their Asian foreign policy. 99

In examining the United States' Vietnam policy since 1954, one might conclude that the U.S. commitment there has actually been an American commitment to itself - to contain Communism. This writer concurs with this conclusion for two reasons. First, during the 1954-1956 period the United States deliberately went about undermining the Geneva Accords of 1954; Accords perceived to be clearly unsatisfactory to American interests. Secondly, during the 1960's American statesmen have seemingly been unable to define who is to be contained in Vietnam. The "White Papers" of 1961 and 1965 state that the enemy is Hanoi and therefore it is Hanoi that must be contained. President Johnson, however, especially in his John Hopkins Address in 1965, strongly suggested that China was the real enemy in the Vietnam war and therefore it was China that must be contained. On the other hand, Dean Rusk, Secretary of State in both the Kennedy and Johnson Administrations, when asked in an interview for MacCleans in February, 1968, if he regarded China as the real enemy in Vietnam, replied

99The Nixon Administration have displayed favorable signs of earnestly attempting to end the war. However, at the time of this writing, it is not possible to evaluate its policy, or foresee any immediate end to the war.
"No. The aggressor nominates himself by his own action." 100

Yet in continuing Secretary Rusk said:

But in simple terms we believe and have believed throughout my term in office and before, that if Hanoi were to take over South Vietnam by force, the effect would be to stimulate the expansionist ambitions of China and greatly weaken the will and capacity of independent nations of South East Asia to resist.

Thus Vietnam has a direct bearing on freedom throughout South East Asia and particularly freedom of the area from Chinese pressure and subversion. 101

Assistant Secretary for East Asia and Pacific Affairs, William P. Bundy in February of 1968, gave yet another slightly different assessment of the enemy in Vietnam. He stated:

the nations of Southeast Asia are individually threatened by the parallel and mutually reinforcing ambitions of North Viet-Nam and Communist China. 102

While the debate between American statesmen over who is the enemy in Vietnam and therefore who is to be contained has concentrated on Peking and Hanoi, American refusal to accept the National Liberation Front as a party to peace negotiations up until March of 1968, and U.S. refusal until recently to consider a coalition government as a basis for a settlement, indicates that

101 Ibid., p. 208-209.
102 Ibid., p. 177.
the NLF was then to be the enemy to contain. Thus, while American statesmen have had difficulty agreeing on the face of the enemy, they have agreed on its name - Communism, that evil which threatens world peace and the American way of life.

Vietnam is a key element in the United States' Asian containment policy. The bankruptcy of the Vietnam policy is due to a considerable degree, to the failures in the entire Asian containment policy, in which context it was formulated.

Asian containment, as constructed during the Dulles era, is based on the image of a monolithic threat. Yet, currently it is quite apparent that there is disunity and diversity in "international" communism. This fact, almost by itself, makes a general policy of containment irrelevant. In any event, the original notion of containment became vulgarized in Asia, "so that while acquiescing in Soviet power in Europe, the United States, without counting costs and feasibility has set itself against parochial Asian Communism of minor scale." Vietnam is the classic example. Indeed, American goals in Asia sometimes seemed

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even more generalized - the containment of disorder, be it national or social discord, because the United States has allowed itself to perceive all discontent as Communist inspired. The United States, because of this mistaken perception, has found itself supporting regimes whose oppressive policies have caused much of their population to become discontented. American policy because it has become identified with the status quo, which at times may be regarded as less than satisfactory to the Asian peoples concerned, has at times alienated and seldom cultivated the important Asian nationalist forces. When alienated, these nationalist forces sometimes become associated with and later, as in Vietnam, "largely subordinated to the Communist movement." The United States, therefore, must learn from its Vietnam experience that it is not enough to support the governments in Asia who proclaim to be anti-Communist, but that the support of the Asian peoples themselves is needed, if it is to successfully achieve its desired objectives in Asia. Vietnam has proved beyond a doubt that while the United States may be able to advise and assist Asian peoples, it cannot force them to fight Communism, especially where Communism is allowed to appear as the better alternative.

105 Ibid., p. 76.
In Vietnam, as in most of the developing countries in Asia, American policy-makers must come to realize that the "overwhelming problem is not to buttress but to develop a political framework."\textsuperscript{107} The United States policy of containment in Asia, with its dominant stress on military might, cannot meet this demand. At the same time this is not meant to suggest that the entire military aspect of the policy must be or should be eliminated; it is merely to suggest that a greater emphasis must be placed on political aspects, for the basic problems facing the Asian nations are political.

Furthermore, "while the United States has committed itself to the containment of Communism everywhere in the world," American policy-makers must come to realize that "this commitment must obviously be subject to qualifications."\textsuperscript{108} As stated in a Report to the U.S. Senate Committee on Foreign Relations:

\begin{quote}
It does not follow, however, that it is in the interest of the United States or that it enhances (its) national security to respond to (Communist) pressures in all circumstances and in every specific situation in Southeast Asia. Nor does it automatically follow that that an ever-deepening total involvement of the United States on the Southeast Asian mainland is the only way or, in all circumstances, the best way to deal with the implications of the Chinese hostility. \textsuperscript{109}
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{107}Kessinger, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 106.

\textsuperscript{108}Hans J. Morgenthau, "Vietnam-Another Korea?" in \textbf{Tension Areas in World Affairs}, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 303.

\textsuperscript{109}"The Vietnam Conflict: The Substance And the Shadow," Report to Committee on Foreign Relations, United States Senate, (Washington, D.C., 1966).
American policy-makers, obviously, have not realized the necessity to qualify this commitment. If they had, the United States would not have found itself involved in a land war in Asia, which threatened to bring on a major confrontation with China, \footnote{Vide Supra, pp. 151-152.} a situation contrary to the United States' national interest.
CONCLUSION

For almost twenty years the policy of containment has been the foundation of America's Asian policy. Yet today leading Americans are still asking, what is America's Asian policy? and what are its objectives? A study of the containment policy in Asia brings out the reason why such inquiries are still made. Containment as an operative policy in Asia has become so distorted that the fundamental concept, so successful in Europe, has become obscured.

In its original European environment, containment reflected a cold assessment of American national interest. Despite the Administrative rhetoric that was used in introducing containment at the time of the Truman Doctrine, stripped bare, the policy was as Coral Bell has stated, a traditional balance of power strategy.¹ In an effort to maintain a European balance of power, which was perceived to be endangered by the threat of Soviet expansion,²

¹Vide Supra, Chapter 1, fn. 33.
²It has been a matter of debate, especially in the 1960's whether or not the Soviet Union in the immediate post-war period did in fact have any design to control Western Europe and world domination. However, the statement here, represents what all evidence indicates was the American and Western Europe perception of Soviet intent at that time.
programs within the economic, military and political spheres were initiated with the object of building "situations of strength" in Western Europe as a counterweight to the Soviet controlled Eastern Europe.

The initial success of the policy in Europe can be attributed to three main factors; (1) it was a policy whose objectives were vital to U.S. interest; (2) the objectives were within American means to achieve and; (3) the policy had the support of those the United States was trying to protect. Western European support for the policy, the indispensable factor in the policy's success stemmed from the area's agreement with the United States on the serious nature of the threat to their security and the common identification of the Soviet Union as the source of the threat.

The weight American policy-makers gave to factors 1 and 2 as a necessary prerequisite to attempting containment is evidenced by the American refusal to apply the policy to the Chinese Civil War, where American interests were not clear, and the desired objective seemed unattainable.

Containment was first actively applied in Asia at the outset of the Korean War. At that time there was still no indication that the policy was to be the basis for the United States Asian policy as a whole, for in extending the

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European limits of the policy President Truman let it be known that it was to be a "symbol" of American determination to live up to its commitments to the lands along the Soviet-controlled periphery. Originally, therefore, containment was applied to Asia because it was believed to be an integral element in the maintenance of European balance.

With the entrance of Communist China into the Korean War, American leaders seemed to think of containment as a specifically Asian policy. The Communist alliance in Korea was looked upon as a monolithic threat in Asia similar to the Soviet threat in Europe. Because the struggle in Asia was viewed as being the same as it was in Europe, the United States attempted to apply the same remedy.

The successful defense of South Korea without precipitating World War III, reinforcing containment's success in Europe, led American leaders to implement the policy on a wider scale in Asia - despite the fact that the general Asian situation differed from the particular situation in Korea just as it differed from the situation in Europe.

John Foster Dulles, the chief architect of the Asian containment policy, immediately found Asian opposition to his policy. Many of the Asian nations seemed to be oblivious to the monolithic threat of Communism that Dulles claimed threatened their security. Actually Asian leaders were well

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4 See Chapter 2, p. 49.
5 Steel, op. cit., p. 31.
aware of the possible threat a resurgent China posed but made a distinction between Communism as a social doctrine and Communism as a form of Chinese and Soviet imperialism — the United States did not. In any event, Asian leaders were primarily concerned with maintaining their newly won independence and believed the tight alliance bonds favored by the United States to be oppressive limitations on their freedom, rather than the source of protection Americans claimed it to be.

Despite the rejection by many Asian leaders of his proposed policy, Dulles tenaciously went about implementing it, seeking the cooperation of those Asian leaders willing to join the United States in its "crusade" against Communism.

The main instrument of Dulles' version of containment was the military alliance. The United States, using the aggression in Korea as an example of potential future Communist activity in Asia, entered into alliances in Asia designed to combat overt aggression. In its search for military allies in Asia, the promise of American economic assistance was waved as an incentive. As a result, the United States found itself allied with some nations which offered little or no hope of ever becoming military bulwarks against Communism and "which had special uses of their own for military aid it furnished.  

6 Ibid., p. 31.
was used by despotic rulers to secure their personal power position. When national sentiments turned upon the ruler, the United States, because of its association with the regime, often became the target of Asian anti-colonialist sentiments. Events in Vietnam and Laos provide good examples of this type of situation.

Because of the nature of its alliance system in Asia the United States has also found itself caught in the middle of regional confrontations. For example, in South Asia the U.S. was placed in a situation where an allied power, Pakistan, was hostile to a non-allied power, India, in whose security the U.S. has a major stake. Under these conditions the United States has found relations with both nations complicated, often resulting in one or both nations reacting against U.S. policy.

In both instances the alliance system has had a divisive effect hardly conducive to the successful implementation of the containment policy.

Even the military strategy of the alliance system has proved inadequate. As previously stated, it is based on an assumed need to combat a Communist frontal attack similar to the one used in Korea. The Communist, however, have adopted a new tactic that is commonly referred to as "wars of liberation," the type presently employed in Vietnam. This type of Communist approach is based on guerilla warfare. There had been a fundamental shift in American military strategy to meet this type of challenge, but the
implementation of it has been difficult and has not met with much success.

An obsession with Communism has led the United States into the trap of indiscriminately condemning it as the enemy all over Asia. This has complicated America's Asian policy, for it has perpetuated the myth of a cohesive Communist conspiracy. Today, however, the United States no longer faces a monolithic Communist bloc controlled and used for the furtherance of its own interests by the Soviet Union, or even an Asian conspiracy directed by Peking, as some American leaders persist in believing. Instead, the United States faces in Asia a "variety of communisms, whose relations with the Soviet Union and China change from country to country, and from time to time and whose bearing upon the interests of the United States requires empirical examination in each concrete instance."7

While containment in Asia has evolved into an open-ended commitment to resist Communism at all cost, President Johnson has made it clear that the maintenance of a balance of power in Asia has been the continuing fundamental objective of the American Asian policy. In October, 1966, Johnson stated: "No single nation can or should be permitted to dominate the Pacific Region."8 Johnson's statement

explicity brings out what was implicit in the domino theory of President Eisenhower and in President Kennedy's policies.

If the United States is ever to achieve this balance in Asia, it must first decide and clearly state who is to be balanced in Asia. No longer is it sufficient to say the enemy is Asian Communism, for since Communism has become polycentric, such an ambiguous enemy can never be balanced. If, indeed, the United States wishes to balance the growing power of China in Asia, then it should state so. As Inis Claude Jr. has pointed out, "the balance principle states that a state should join ... only if its own security is affected." Therefore, to achieve an Asian balance the U.S. must pursue a policy that is determined in terms not of Communist ideology but of the compatibility of a nation's security interest with the interest of the United States. For example, both a Communist and a non-Communist Asian nation could share the common interest of balancing the power of Communist China in Asia.

In Asia it is quite apparent that the United States

9It must be noted that while in declaratory policy, balance of power, connotes the idea of equilibrium, in operation a preponderance of power is sought, or in other words, a favorable balance. See Inis L. Claude, Jr., Power And International Relations, (New York, 1965), Chap. 2.

10Ibid., p. 147.

11Morgenthau, op. cit., p. 124.
has concentrated on the secondary objectives of the contain-
ment policy - the preservation of the network of military
alliance and the suppression of "Communist" insurrections -
at the expense of the primary objective of that policy -
the maintenance of the balance of power. Believing that
every Communist threat was equal and thus deserving of an
automatic American reply, the United States has found
itself in a catastrophic situation in Vietnam which has
been both morally compromising and militarily frustrating.
The United States thus has become the true victim of its
own obsession.
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Newspapers

VITA AUCTORIS

**Family:**
Richard John Pilliter, eldest child of Richard L. Pilliter and his wife Sue Travaglini; born May 6, 1945, at Rochester, New York.

**Education:**

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<td>1963-1967</td>
<td>Registered as an undergraduate in the Faculty of Arts and Sciences at University of Windsor. Received Bachelor of Arts degree, May, 1967.</td>
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**Other Activities**

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<td>1967 - 1968</td>
<td>Granted a Graduate Assistanship in the Department of Political Science, University of Windsor.</td>
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<td>1968 - 1969</td>
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