

AUSTRALIAN DIPLOMATIC POLICY TOWARDS THE SOUTHEAST ASIAN REGION 1945 – 1965

Wong Yee Tuan

Southeast Asia which is the region located north-west of Australia and one of Australia's closest neighbours encompasses the three Indochinese states of Cambodia, Laos and Vietnam as well as the other seven states of Brunei, Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Burma. For several centuries before World War II, Southeast Asia had been in a state of political flux. Nevertheless, the post-war Southeast Asia has been one of the more turbulent regions in the world. Instability has been caused by various intra-mural rivalries as well as by great power competition, which have tried to shape the regional order to serve their strategic purposes. The Australian diplomatic policy therefore towards the Southeast Asia from 1945 to 1965 had not only predominantly been influenced by the pressure of changing regional political order of Southeast Asia but also by the Australian ruling political party's ideological posture and perception of geo-political interests of the region.

As a member of the British Empire, Australian diplomatic objectives and interests in Southeast Asia prior to World War II were

co-ordinated through British-led diplomatic policy of the region. In this regard, successive Australian governments had sought to resolve issues and conflicts, such as Australia's attempted annexation of East New Guinea in 1833, the occupation of the New Hebrides and the possession of North Pacific Islands by the Germans in 1866, and the fighting in World War I (1914 – 1918), through almost exclusive reliance upon, and support for, British foreign policy. Consequently, Australia could not develop an independent spirit, as a Labor member said in 1917: "Australia grew up under the physical and psychological wing of Great Britain."¹ A number of factors bound Australia to this strong and continued British orientation. Australia was a white outpost in a geographic setting off the southern rim of Asia. Having such proximity with Asia, Australians had long been always anxious about either an imminent foreign conquest, especially by an Asian power, or a large influx of Asian immigration. This anxiety was felt as early as 1891 and clearly revealed in the argument of Sir Henry Parkes, the President of the National Convention. He argued :

We have evidence abundant on all hands that the Chinese nation and other Asiatic nations – especially the Chinese – are awakening to all the powers which their immense population gives them in the art of war, in the art of acquisition...and it seems to me – and, non-professional man as I am, I venture to throw it out – that if we suffer in this direction at any time, it will not be by an attack upon our sea-borne commerce...but it will be by stealthily effecting a lodgment in some thinly-peopled portion of the country, where it would take immense loss of life and immense loss of wealth to dislodge the invader.²

Hence, Australia's response to this double threat was the promotion of British or European immigration, the exclusion of Orientals by imposing the 'White Australia' policy, and the maintenance of close ties with the British Empire. So long as Britain controlled the sea and ruled in her vast Indian Empire, Australians felt reasonably safe, but Japan's rapid modernization and increasing world power concerned Australians and increased rather than diminished their reliance upon

Britain. The concern of Australia over the Japanese's expansion and the need of British power's presence in Pacific was noticeably revealed in the Conference of the Commonwealth's most senior military officers, summoned by Minister for Defence, George Pearce in January-February 1920. As Mr. T. Trumble, Secretary for Defence, said in the conference :

The Empire of Japan remains therefore, in the immediate future, as the only potential and probable enemy. The possibility of Japan's alliance with Powers antagonistic to Great Britain must not be overlooked...A change in the disposition of the British Naval strength would of course alter Japan's present power. A strong Far Eastern naval Unit properly based would remove almost entirely the probability of aggression.³

In the period from 1939 to the outbreak of World War II in Southeast Asia, Australian leaders' demeanour like Robert Gordon Menzies's, the Prime Minister of 1939 – 1941, and John Curtin's, the Prime Minister of 1941 – 1945, exhibited strong orientation towards Britain. Both leaders stressed the importance of Australia's indispensable dependence on British power for national security. As Mr. Menzies said in 1939 :

...we must, of course, act as an integral part of the British Empire. We must have full consultation and cooperation with Great Britain...⁴

Mr. Curtin, as the Prime Minister in 1941, read a statement of Labor policy drawn up by a party meeting :

We stand for the maintenance of Australia as an integral part of the British Commonwealth of Nations. The party will do all that is possible to safeguard Australia and at the same time, having regard to its platform, will do its utmost to maintain the integrity of the British Commonwealth.⁵

In view of the great emphasis of Australian policy's strong adherence to the British course, it does seem clear that Australia always considered itself as the protégé of Great Britain.

However, the Second World War brought profound change in Australia's relations with Great Britain and Southeast Asia, and Australia had to reappraise its position and develop a foreign policy to meet unprecedented challenges of the region.⁶ The Pacific War was a watershed of Australia's long-adhered to British-oriented foreign policy. The fall of Singapore and the bombing of Darwin, during the war, vividly demonstrated the inadequacy of continued reliance upon British power as a means of insuring Australia's survival and the strategic importance of Southeast Asia to Australia's security.⁷ The fall of Singapore shook the Australian confidence in British supremacy because Singapore, from an Australian vantage point, was centrally placed to provide powerful and effective naval protection throughout the Pacific.⁸ The bombing of Darwin clearly demonstrated that Britain was unable, when heavily committed elsewhere, to defend Australia and had very different priorities.⁹

Besides, the Pacific War also ushered in the process of decolonization. While recovering its former territories, the United Kingdom soon adopted a policy of liquidating its imperial interests and reducing its military commitments, especially in Southeast Asia.¹⁰ The nationalist movements in Southeast Asia were on the rise and forcing the colonial power to restore their national sovereignty. The rise of the nationalist movements, however, was in accordance with the Australian government's anti-imperialist struggle for an independent Australia as well as the principles of the United Nations Charter.¹¹ In other words, the nationalist movements were given support by the Labor government which perceived them as a reflection of the Southeast Asian people's dissatisfaction and suffering from foreign capitalist exploitation under an imperialist system.¹² Furthermore, the nationalist movements were completely in harmony with Dr. Evatt's United Nations Charter-oriented approach to world politics. To Dr. Evatt, the most pure expression of public opinion was nationalism.¹³ He believed that nationalist expression of world opinion would be more effective as a force for peace than either great power politics

or great power unanimity in the Security Council.¹⁴ Thus, in order to strengthen nationalism as a force for peace, Dr. Evatt championed Southeast Asian nationalist movements out of an apparent belief that they would not only strengthen and morally heighten the influence of world opinion, but also enlarge the roles of those lesser powers, such as Australia.¹⁵

Economically, Southeast Asia had also been important to Australia. Before the war, Australian investments yielded half a million pounds per year from the region.¹⁶ Almost since 1938, there was an increasing talk about the need of promoting markets for Australian exports in the Pacific to offset stationary and declining markets in Europe.¹⁷ The outbreak of war in Europe with the further possibility of war with Japan resulted in substantial increases in the value of exports to Southeast Asian countries during 1939-40 and 1940-41. In the post-war period the relative importance of Australia's trade with these countries had increased further. Since 1945-46, Australia's imports from Southeast Asia had averaged £30 million annually, or 11.6 per cent of total imports.¹⁸ Exports had been valued at £41.5 million per year or 13.4 per cent of total exports.¹⁹ In 1947, the Australian Minister for External Affairs, Dr. Evatt, spoke of a "spectacular" growth in the exchange of Australian processed products for the raw materials of the intensely rich areas of Southeast Asia.²⁰ Besides, Mr. Conelan also argued in the parliament :

To the north of us there is a population of 1,200,000,000 people inhabiting the Netherlands East Indies, the Celebes, British Borneo.....To those we sell our surplus primary and secondary products, and we can in turn buy from them rubber, petroleum, quinine and other forest raw materials for the manufacture of cordage.²¹

In order to ensure such a potential market, it was in Australia's interest to improve the living standards and promote political stability of the region, which could serve the common and long-term economic interest. As Mr. Conelan stated :

They (Southeast Asian people) have suffered, and are suffering, great privations, and it will be our duty after the war endeavour to raise their living standards until they are more nearly approximate to our own. In this way we shall benefit them and ourselves, also.²²

All this produced a new and challenging set of political and strategic developments and interests in Southeast Asia. In the light of this, the Chifley Labor Government (1945-49) attempted to establish a new, ambitious, and independent foreign policy which broke out of the imperial context in order to define Australia's interests in such a different Southeast Asian orientation and order.²³

During 1945-1949 the Australian Labor Government under J.B.Chifley and Evatt showed a genuine support and in some ways sympathy towards the Southeast-Asian nationalist movements, especially the Indonesian nationalist movement; as the Dutch sought by military means to suppress the Republic or erode its authority.²⁴ Sympathy of Labor government hardened into active and practical support for the Republic of Indonesia and into opposition to Dutch objectives.²⁵ However, the Labor Government was not in any general sense a militant anti-colonialist.²⁶ As suggested by Dr.Evatt's approach to the issue of United Nations trusteeships, Indonesia should be administered by a mandatory or trust power under U.N. Trusteeship Council's supervision until she was able to determine her own future status.²⁷ There were two aspects to Dr.Evatt's policy towards the Southeast Asian peoples; one stressed gradual reform and the other Australian security consideration.²⁸ The trusteeship policy expressed by Evatt involved tutelage of dependent peoples which would lead to self-government, co-existing with alliance with colonial powers in the security field. Certainly Dr.Evatt welcomed the full emancipation of states like Philippines and Indonesia; for the rest he seemed to assume indefinitely continuing protection and tutelage for what he called "peoples who are unable to stand by themselves in the modern world".²⁹

The trusteeship policy was employed by Dr.Evatt to deal with the Netherland East Indies (N.E.I) or Indonesia's struggle for independence. Evatt urged Britain to see that Netherlands undertook to improve the administration of the N.E.I and to place it, temporarily,

under trusteeship.³⁰ Concerned about the value in Europe of Dutch friendship, Britain objected to the policy of trusteeship and wanted to restore Dutch administration.³¹ But, Australia declined to do the same. Chifley told Britain that he could not agree to the return of the Netherlands administration and that the terms of any return were a matter essentially for the Indonesians.³² Besides, Australia whose security in the Pacific was directly affected because the return of Dutch administration would infuriate the Indonesians and spark off undesirable wars.³³ To achieve security in the Pacific, it was vital that those with colonies should adopt policies ensuring political, economic, and social progress for the indigenes. As Dr. Evatt said:

For more than three years the peoples of south-eastern Asia and Indonesia have been under Japanese military overlordship...They will need help and guidance for their material and moral rehabilitation...Their goodwill must be fostered not only because their co-operation is essential to good administration in their own interests, but also because they inhabit a vital strategic area.³⁴

From Labor Government's point of view, the restored Dutch administration would bring further colonial exploitation and impoverishment to the Southeast Asian and Indonesian peoples and this, in turn, resulted social and political unrest which could threaten Australia's security.³⁵ Hence, Chifley insisted that the Netherlands East Indies should be placed under trusteeship.³⁶

Besides, the Australian Labor Government also brought the Dutch-Indonesian dispute before the United Nations Charter under Article 39 dealing with a breach of peace, which in turn prompted the Security Council to create a three nation Committee to deal with the dispute.³⁷ In a demonstration of their appreciation for Australian support of their grievances, the Indonesians nationalist designated Australia as their choice to serve on this Committee, while Netherlands chose Belgium as its choice. Subsequently, the governments of Australia and Belgium then selected the United States to serve as the third member of the Good Office Committee.³⁸ But, the Good Office Committee found it exceedingly difficult to establish

any basis for agreement between the disputing parties, especially as the Dutch preferred to resort 'police action' which involved the use of military suppression on the nationalist movement.³⁹

The Australian position undoubtedly hardened in the face of the methods employed by the Dutch. Using the United Nations Charter, Australia tried to lobby among the Western members of the Security Council, such as United States, to take firmer action. In particular, Australia advocated that the Security Council should apply economic sanctions against Netherlands.⁴⁰ It also pressed the United States to suspend aid to Netherland for Indonesia under the European Recovery Programme (E.R.P).⁴¹ Furthermore, in the Security Council on 23rd December Colonel Hodgson, the Australian representative, charged that the Netherlands had deliberately violated the United Nations Charter and should be expelled from the United Nations.⁴² All this exhibited the Australian government's firm support for self-government of the Indonesian peoples and antagonism to the Dutch. Seen in this light, undoubtedly, the Labor Government made ample use of the United Nations Charter to champion the Indonesian nationalist movement in order to maximize the influence of the policies and actions of 'small' and 'middle' powers, such as Indonesia and Australia.

In 1948, when Britain constituted the states of the Malay peninsula into a federal political structure, a communist insurgency erupted. Armed violence became an everyday occurrence in Malaya. There were attacks on police stations, rubber plantations, tin-mines and communications.⁴³ This communist-led insurrection had caused serious disruption to the economy and stability of the country.⁴⁴ It is noteworthy that such communist-led armed outbreaks also took place in Burma, Indonesia, and the Philippines during the first half of 1948.⁴⁵ In view of the chain of communist-armed struggle, fear arose in Australian official circles that if an opportunity offered itself, Communism would sweep through Southeast Asia and so to the edge of Australia like the Japanese influence in 1942.⁴⁶ Australia under the Labor Government had already committed itself in principle to 'a common scheme of defence' for its region, in conjunction with Britain and New Zealand, but Chifley saw the Malaysian 'emergency' as the responsibility of the United Kingdom, and in good measure a result of British imperial

policies.⁴⁷ In that regard, the Chifley Government, on its part, decided to send arms, munitions, food and drugs to Malaya on the request from the British Government, but not forces. From this perspective, it suffices to say that the Labor Government attempted to exercise a greater measure of independence and moderation in its diplomatic policy towards Malaya.

Nonetheless, the approach of the Australian Labor Government toward Southeast Asia was coloured strongly by Labor ideology, but it also bore the influence of Evatt and, to a lesser degree, that of the Prime Minister, J.B.Chifley. Chifley generally supported independence movements not only because he believed these aspirations deserved support, but also because he believed that an attempt to reimpose European authority in Southeast Asia was "like drawing a stick through water" and would be futile.⁴⁸ Evatt strongly supported Labor's anti-colonial sentiments and also was determined that Australia would assert a leading role in the affairs of Southeast Asia. As colonialism receded in the region, he believed, Australia interests would increase and its influence would mount. "We must", he told Parliament in 1947, "work for a harmonious association of democratic states in the Southeast Asia area, and see in the development of their political maturity opportunity for greatly increased political, cultural and commercial co-operation."⁴⁹ In this regard, Evatt advocated the establishment of regional commissions which were incorporated with U.N in Southeast Asia to promote the well-being of the region's peoples. Such organizations, from Evatt's point of view, would "at least facilitate the free and rapid interchange of basic information concerning the problems of administration, education, health, agriculture, commerce and cultural relations."⁵⁰ In response to his statement, the Australian Labor Government introduced relief, scholarship schemes and extended its representation to Southeast Asia. The objective of these policies was to promote maximum economic development, higher living standards, and the orderly growth of political autonomy and democratic institutions throughout the area.⁵¹

In view of all this, Australian Labor Government did display its independent diplomatic policy towards a changing Southeast Asia. The resolution of the Dutch—Indonesian dispute, which was initi-

ated by Australia, exhibited the limit of the Western alliance's influence.⁵² In the conduct of the resolution, Dr. Evatt tried to use various tactics, such as the trusteeship and United Nations Charter, in order to marginalise the role of great powers, like Britain and United States.⁵³ By offering relief supplies and scholarships to the countries of Southeast Asia, Australia held a unique opportunity for forging close and friendly ties with the region.⁵⁴ Australian strategic and economic interests, from the Labor Government's standpoint, depended on the maintenance and extension of such friendly relations.⁵⁵ Advocating such an independent, ambitious and moderate diplomatic policy, the Labor Government had not only tried to build up good relations with Southeast Asia through support, aid and trade supplementing political guidance but also develop an independent, forceful role for Australia in world politics.⁵⁶

However, the independent, ambitious and moderate diplomatic policy towards Southeast Asia of the Labor Government came to an end when the Liberal-Country Party, under the leadership of Robert G. Menzies assumed office at the end of 1949.⁵⁷ With the coming to power of the Liberal-Country Party, Australia entered a different phase in the development of its diplomatic policy towards Southeast Asia. Throughout much of the 1950's, Australian diplomatic policy was characterized by the building of a network of security alliances based upon the military power of the United Kingdom and the United States which, in the process of formally committing those two "great and powerful" nations to the defence of the maintenance of an impregnable strategic barrier between Australia and its Southeast Asian neighbours.⁵⁸ In other words, the Menzies Government (1949 - 1966) pursued an active diplomatic offensive policy, which took the form of support for the maintenance of Western political and economic influence in Southeast Asia.

In 1948-49 a series of events convinced the Liberal-Country Government that there was a giant communist conspiracy organised and propelled by the Soviet Union to take over the world. Communist insurrections had broken out in Burma, Indonesia and Malaya, Mao Tze-Tung's forces had sent a shock-wave through Western democracies by winning undisputed control over the Chinese mainland

and the world had become deeply divided by the cold war.⁵⁹ Moreover, the old Commonwealth composed of European peoples or countries dominated by them, was changing into a new association of many races with widely differing interests and hence with little unity.⁶⁰ Unequivocally, all these changes stirred up the Australian fears and anxieties of the "Yellow Peril" once again. This time the "Yellow Peril" would sweep down to the South with a more powerful force, the unstoppable expansionist communism. The Menzies Government, however, was an avowedly anti-Communist government which perceived communism as the enemy of human freedom and the most unscrupulous opponent of religion, civilised government, law, order, peace and national security.⁶¹ Hence, according to Spender, the Australian policy had to meet :

...new problems created in this area by the emergence of a communist China, and by the ever increasing thrust of communism, which endeavours to ally itself, in the pursuit of its ends, with the national aspirations of the millions of people of South-East.⁶²

The response of the Liberal-Country Party to that requirement was to place a much stronger emphasis upon military preparedness and closer co-operation with Great Britain and United States in the area of defence planning.⁶³ This emphasis in Australian diplomatic policy found formal expression in what eventually came to be known as the Forward Defence Strategy.⁶⁴

At the conceptual level, the Forward Defence Strategy was to lay the foundation for an Australian policy of containment of Communist Chinese expansionism in South and Southeast Asia through a series of regional security arrangements.⁶⁵ What followed from that conception of Australia's role was a series of Australian regional initiatives designed to keep the United Kingdom and the United States heavily involved in the Southeast Asian region as a means of serving the dual purpose of both containing Chinese Communist expansionism and erecting a security shield between Australia and Southeast Asia.

The two major regional security arrangements initiated by the Liberal-Country Government were the ANZAM and SEATO (South-East Asia Treaty Organization). The word ANZAM stands for the Australia, New Zealand, and Malayan area.⁶⁶ The word was coined by British military staff personnel to designate the Commonwealth defence area in Southeast Asia and the Southwest Pacific.⁶⁷ In 1953 and 1954, British strategic planning for that area led the Imperial General staff to engage Australia and New Zealand authorities in discussions concerning the problems of defending Malaya, Commonwealth island territories in the region, and Australia and New Zealand.⁶⁸ Those discussions eventually led an Australian and New Zealand commitment to what was called the "Commonwealth Strategic Reserve"—a combined British-Australian New Zealand brigade group, plus naval and air units.⁶⁹ This arrangement, however, bound Australia and New Zealand to assist Britain in combating the communist-led Malayan Emergency. This had, in turn, precipitated the Australian Government announcement of April, 1955 that it planned to station Australian troops in Malaya. It first sent RAAF (Royal Australian Air Force) squadrons there and in 1955 it sent a battalion to Malaya, the first Australian troops would be committed overseas in peacetime.⁷⁰ Strategically, this involved a revolutionary switch in Australian policy. In the last two world wars, Australian troops fought as part of a defence force in the Middle East and Europe. Malaya had now clearly become the pivot of Australian defence; and the Middle East had been tacitly abandoned, with British consent, as an Australian responsibility. Stationing troops in Malaya was in fact a significant departure in Australian Forward Defence Strategy planning. The deployment of Australian troops was explicitly welcomed by Tunku Abdul Rahman, the first Prime Minister of Malaya, because the presence of Australian troops was seen as a counterattack to communist terrorism.⁷¹ Ostensibly, the use of Australian troops had led, not to hostility, but to crush the communist and warm relations with the freely-elected government of an independent, pro-western country, which had good prosperity and political stability.

With the birth of Malaysia in September, 1963, Indonesia began to prepare the policy of 'Crush Malaysia', or 'Confrontation' against

Malaysia. The Federation of Malaysia was interpreted by Sukarno as an attempt to reinforce the status quo, perpetuate the British military presence and thwart Indonesia's ambitions for regional leadership.⁷² The Indonesian policy of Confrontation towards Malaysia was motivated by a number of political considerations more directly related to Indonesia's domestic situation. Quite possibly, President Sukarno was eager to adopt a militant posture towards the formation of Malaysia in the hope that the policy would enable him to balance the two main contending political forces within the country, the army and the PKI (Communist Party of Indonesia), while reinforcing his own position as arbiter between them.⁷³ Perceiving Sukarno's such manoeuvre as a conspiracy to spread communism, the Menzies Government quickly announced its support for Malaysia. Menzies informed the House of Representatives on 17 September 1963 that the provision in the British-Malaya defence agreement of 1957 creating the Commonwealth Strategic Reserve, under which the Australian forces helped put down insurrectionary activities, would cover Malaysia.⁷⁴ On 25 September 1963, Mr. Menzies made a statement to Parliament pledging Australian military support :

if....there occurs, in relation to Malaysia or any of its constituent states, armed invasion or subversive activity—we shall to the best of our powers and by such means as shall be agreed upon with the Government of Malaysia, add our military assistance to the efforts of Malaysia and the U.K. in the defence of Malaysia's territorial integrity and political independence.⁷⁵

With all this in view, undoubtedly, the Menzies Government regarded Malaya (later Malaysia) as regional theatre in the global struggle against communism as well as the Australian commitment to the defence of Malaya as a *quid pro quo* for the continued maintenance of British power in Southeast Asia. Furthermore, it also revealed the attitudes of the Australian and Malaysian governments were similar in two aspects, with a common opposition to communism, and with long 'Commonwealth' associations.

The Southeast Asia Collective Defence Treaty (SEATO), was signed in 1954 in Manila by Australia, France, New Zealand, Pakistan, the Philippines, Thailand, the United States, following the withdrawal of the French from Indo-China and the partition of the former French colonial territory.⁷⁶ Fearing the aggressive policies of international communism would pose a direct military threat to Australia, the Menzies Government signed the treaty to contain the expansionist communism. This possible scenario created an intolerable defence burden beyond the country's capacity to repel the thrust of communism. As McBride, the Australian minister for Defence, argued :

The present high water mark of the southward flow of communism. Should this gap narrow the nature and scale of attack on Australia would become intensified as distance shortened. Finally, should the tide of aggressive communism lap on our shore, we would face an intolerable defence burden and a scale of attack, which would be beyond our capacity to repel alone.⁷⁷

In another word, the Menzies Government viewed Australia as unable to defend itself without external assistance. Hence, SEATO, the Menzies Government believed, was the best means to bring Great Britain and the United States into joint strategic planning for the Southeast Asian region as well as emphasizing the importance of communist warfare in the region where the potential for subversive incursions was extremely high. This Treaty arrangement was directed at the defence of Australia, but it unprecedentedly generated substantial military commitment. In 1962 Australia sent military advisers to support American efforts to meet the growing insurgency war in South Vietnam. Australia followed the U.S. by directly intervening in the Vietnam conflict in the mid-1960s. The Australian military commitment rose rapidly between April 1965 and October 1967 and reached a peak of some 8,000 men.⁷⁸

The launch of the regional military security arrangements was not the only way used by the Menzies Government to contain communism in Southeast Asia. The utility of economic security arrange-

ment, such as the Colombo Plan, the Menzies Government believed, was another means of combating the spread of communist influence in Southeast Asia through the destruction of the socio-economic appeal of communist doctrines to impoverished peoples of Southeast Asia.⁷⁹ The stated objectives of the Colombo Plan was never explicitly anti-Communist. Officially, the Colombo Plan was designed to channel development aids and promote the economic improvement, which were indispensable to social stability and the strengthening of free institutions.⁸⁰ It was used as a weapon in foreign policy to secure the effective political and economic collaboration of the United Kingdom and the United States in Southeast Asia in order to contain the communist imperialism.⁸¹

Taking all this into account, the Liberal – Country Government's diplomatic policy towards Southeast Asia nations was in a series of *quid pro quo* security arrangements with the great Western powers, namely United Kingdom and United States. It is clear that clinging to the Western influence and Western rule was of paramount importance to the Liberal-Country Government because the attitudes and ideas of Menzies, Spender, and Casey were imbued with strong faith and attachment to the conception of British Commonwealth, the British constitutional monarchy and United States which was the greatest Pacific Power. Furthermore, to the Liberal-Country Government, the situation in Southeast Asia tended to fit naturally into the older Australian stereotypes about 'Asiatic Hordes' who were presumed to be hostile towards Australian and covetous of its small white population, long coastline and high living standard.

In conclusion, the dramatic change of regional political order of Southeast Asia after the World War Two had profound strategic and economic considerations and implications for Australia's diplomatic policy adopted by the Labor Government (1945 – 49) and the Liberal-Country Government (1949 – 66). In the selection of the diplomatic policy mechanisms, which were considered most appropriate for the prosecution of Australia's national interests, the two parties differed with each other. Under the Labor Government's direction, the diplomatic policy towards Southeast Asia had been pursued in an independent, ambitious and moderate approach. The Labor Government's

attitude towards its Southeast Asian neighbours found expression through international organization, the United Nations. In order to protect Australia's post war- security, Dr. Evatt chose to resolve the Southeast Asian disputes or conflicts such as the Indonesian-Dutch dispute through negotiation within the framework of United Nations. The settlement of disputes through reliance on power, especially of a military nature had never been used by the Labor Government. By supporting the nationalist movements of Southeast Asia, the Labor Government believed, would bring the full force of world opinion to bear upon great powers' influence. Besides introducing the relief and scholarship schemes and extending Australian representation to the region, the Labor Government sought to increase political, cultural and commercial co-operation. Thus, the Southeast Asian region was viewed as a source of potential and opportunity. The Liberal-Country Government, by contrast, pursued a *quid pro quo*, rigid and militant approach of the diplomatic policy towards Southeast Asia. Menzies Government interpreted the Southeast Asian disputes and conflicts, such as the nationalist movements and communist insurgency as part of greater international contest for power, prestige and ideology. Hence, the Liberal-Country Government viewed Southeast Asia as a source of danger and threats. Seen in this light, the government sought the *quid pro quo* approach to insure Australian security. The approach was given formal expression in the Forward Defence Strategy in which Australia obsessively and deliberately developed the regional military and economic security arrangements in order to involve the great Western powers' influence, namely the United Kingdom and the United States, in the region. Moreover, the military measures were given more emphasis by the Liberal-Country Government to settle conflicts in Southeast Asia. All in all, the two Australian Governments' diplomatic policy towards a changing Southeast Asia region during 1945 – 1965 was pursued in conflicting and distinctive approaches. And all the approaches of the two governments were not only immensely and inextricably influenced by the change of political order of Southeast Asia but also by the different ruling party's ideological posture and perceptions of political interests of the region. All this revealed the fragility and incohesion of the bases of Australian diplomatic-policy-

making. It is clear that the key problem in Australian diplomatic policy was the lack of a careful and thoughtful assessment and examination of the character of Australian association with Southeast Asian communities.

Note

- ¹ J.F. Cairns, *Living With Asia*, Melbourne: Lansdowne Press, 1965, p. 1.
- ² Neville Meaney, *Australia And The World: A Documentary History from the 1870s to the 1970s*, Melbourne: Longman Cheshire, 1985, p. 105.
- ³ *Ibid.*, p. 292.
- ⁴ Brian Penton, "Those Ties of Empire", in John Arnold, Peter Spearritt and David Walker (eds), *Out of Empire: The British Dominion of Australia*, Mandarin Australia, 1993, p. 84.
- ⁵ K.H. Bailey, "Attitude to Britain", in John Arnold, Peter Spearritt and David Walker (eds), *Out of Empire: The British Dominion of Australia*, p. 84.
- ⁶ Gareth Evans & Bruce Grant, "Australia's Foreign Relations" *The World of The 1990s*, Victoria: Melbourne University Press, 1991, p. 22.
- ⁷ *Ibid*
- ⁸ Tim Gurry, *Focus On Australian History: An Emerging Identity*, Victoria: Heinemann Educational Australia, 1988, p. 170.
- ⁹ *Ibid*
- ¹⁰ Vandenbosch & Vandenbosch, *Australia Faces Southeast Asia*, Lexington: University of Kentucky Press, 1967, p.2.
- ¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 6.
- ¹² Alan Renouf, *Let Justice Be Done: The Foreign Policy of Dr. H.V. Evatt*, Brisbane University of Queensland Press, 1983, p. 162.
- ¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 163.
- ¹⁴ *Ibid*
- ¹⁵ *Ibid*
- ¹⁶ Ravinda Varma, *Australia and Southeast Asia: The Crystallisation of A Relationship*, New Delhi: Abhinav Publications, 1974, p. 28.
- ¹⁷ *Ibid*
- ¹⁸ "Trends In Australian Trade With Southeast Asia", *Current Notes On International Affairs*, Vol. 20, No. 3, March 1949, p. 389.
- ¹⁹ *Ibid*
- ²⁰ Ravinda Varma, *Australia and Southeast Asia*, p. 29.
- ²¹ *Commonwealth of Australia Parliamentary Debates*, Vol. H of R. 179, 17th July-26th September 1944, p. 1180.
- ²² *Ibid*
- ²³ Gareth Evans & Bruce Grant, "Australia's Foreign Relations," p. 22.
- ²⁴ Geoffrey Bolton, *The Oxford History of Australia: The Middle Way 1942-1988*, Vol. 5, Sydney: Oxford University Press, 1990, p. 50.

- 25 *Ibid.*, p. 51.
- 26 *Ibid.*
- 27 W.J. Hudson, "Australia's Trusteeship Policy," *Australian Outlook*, Vol. 21, No.1, April 1967, p. 12
- 28 *Ibid.*
- 29 *Ibid.*
- 30 Alan Renouf, "Let Justice be Done," p. 164.
- 31 E.F Hill, "The Labor Party? Dr. Evatt - The Petrov Affair - The Whitlam Government," October, 1975, p.16.
- 32 *Ibid.*
- 33 *Ibid.*
- 34 *Ibid.*
- 35 Margaret George, *Australia and the Indonesian Revolution*, Victoria: Melbourne University Press, 1980, 122.
- 36 *Ibid.*
- 37 Ravinda Varma, *Australia and Southeast Asia*, p. 95.
- 38 *Ibid.*, p.96.
- 39 *Ibid.*
- 40 Margaret George, *Australia and the Indonesian Revolution*, p. 123 .
- 41 *Ibid.*
- 42 *Ibid.*, p.124.
- 43 J. Kennedy, *History of Malaya*, (3rd.ed) Kuala Lumpur: S. Abdul Majeed & Co., 1993, pp. 282-283.
- 44 *Ibid.*
- 45 Brian Crozier, *South-East Asia in Turmoil*, New York: Penguin Books, 1965, p. 64.
- 46 Geoffrey Bolton, *Oxford History of Australia*, p. 149.
- 47 Ravinda Varma, *Australia and Southeast Asia*, p. 105.
- 48 Vandenbosch & Vandenbosch, *Australia Faces Southeast Asia*, p. 33.
- 49 *Ibid.*
- 50 *Ibid.*
- 51 "Pacific And Southeast Asia-Conference of Officials At Canberra", *Current Notes on International Affairs*, Vol. 20, No. 11, November 1949, p. 1176.
- 52 Geoffrey Bolton, *Oxford History Australia*, p. 51.
- 53 *Ibid.*
- 54 W.E. Gollan, *How To Make Australia Safe: A Policy For Peace And Security*, Sydney: Current Books, 1964, p. 27.
- 55 *Ibid.*

- ⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 19.
- ⁵⁷ A.W. Stargardt, *Australia's Asian Policies: The History of a Debate 1839-1972*, Hamburg: Institute Of Asian Affairs, 1977, p. 217.
- ⁵⁸ Robert Clyde Toenniessen, "An Analysis of the Changing Bases of Australia Foreign policy," Ph.D Thesis American University, 1971, p. 455.
- ⁵⁹ Vandenbosch & Vandenbosch, *Australia Faces Southeast Asia*, p. 5.
- ⁶⁰ *Ibid.*
- ⁶¹ J.A. Camilleri, *An Introduction to Australian Foreign Policy*, Brisbane: Jacaranda Press, 1973, p. 29
- ⁶² John Murphy, *Harvest of Fear : A History of Australia's Vietnam War*, Sydney: Allen & Unwin, 1993, p. 43.
- ⁶³ Gareth Evans & Bruce Grant, "Australia's Foreign Relations," p. 25.
- ⁶⁴ *Ibid.*
- ⁶⁵ Robert Clyde Toenniessen, "On Analysis of Changing Bases," p. 396.
- ⁶⁶ Alan Watt, *The Evolution of Australian Foreign Policy 1939-1965*, London: Cambridge University Press, 1967, p.164.
- ⁶⁷ *Ibid.*
- ⁶⁸ Robert Clyde Toenniessen, "An Analysis of the Changing Bases," p. 433.
- ⁶⁹ *Ibid.*
- ⁷⁰ *Ibid.*
- ⁷¹ *Ibid.*, p. 4.
- ⁷² J.A. Camilleri,., *An Introduction to Australia Foreign Policy*, p. 66.
- ⁷³ *Ibid.*
- ⁷⁴ T.B. Millar, *Australia in Peace and War : External Relations 1788 – 1977*, Canberra: Australian National University Press, 1978, p. 335.
- ⁷⁵ *Commonwealth Of Australia Parliamentary Debates*, Vol. H. of R. 40, 24th September to 30th October, 1963, p. 1339.
- ⁷⁶ T.B. Millar, *Australia's Foreign Policy*, Sydney: Argus & Robertson, 1968, p. 96.
- ⁷⁷ *Commonwealth of Australia Parliamentary Debates*, Vol. H.of R. 4, 4th August to 21st September, 1954, p. 66.
- ⁷⁸ F. A. Mediansk, & A. C. Palfreeman, (ed.), *In Pursuit of National Interests: Australian Foreign Policy in the 1990s*, Sydney: Pergamon, 1988, p. 232.
- ⁷⁹ E.E. Ward, 'The Colombo Plan', *The Australian Outlook*, Vol. 5, No. 4, December 1951, p. 199.
- ⁸⁰ *Ibid.*
- ⁸¹ *Ibid.*