



The Military Implications of SEATO



By Lieutenant Colonel Hugh F. Queenin, USA



THE shortest route to Paris of the initial Communist objective, is through Southeast and South Asia, and the Middle East." This statement has been attributed to Lenin.

Perhaps in his concept for Communist domination of the world Lenin considered these areas as presenting a fertile field for the torch of "red fire" which he hoped would then spread rapidly to the Mediterranean countries and eventually engulf the entire Eurasian Continent and Africa. This would isolate the Western Hemisphere and, after consolidation of Asia is the immediate goal of the Communists, certainly of the Chinese Communists. Mao Tse-tung, in a memorandum outlining a new program for world revolution, indicated that "...the time has come to look upon Asia as our immediate goal." He considered that under the present circumstances, any vigorous action in Europe such as internal

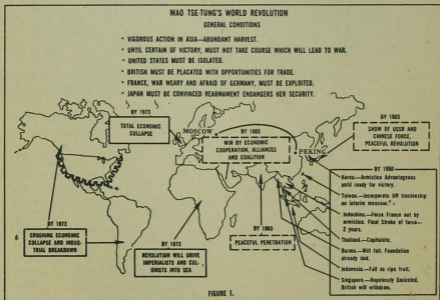
revolution, effective infiltration, or intimidation into inaction or submission would currently be impossible. However, he further considered that such tactics in Asia would, for the foreseeable future, yield an abundant harvest. (See Figure 1.)

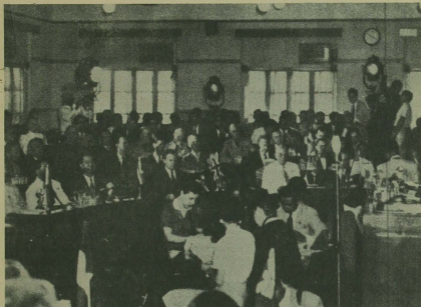
In the implementation of Mao Tse-tung's concept, the spearhead of communism has been provided with additional impetus in Southeast Asia (Indochina) by the continuation of colonial policies and the suppression of the Nationalist desires of the indigenous peoples of this area. With no colonial aspirations but with an active interest in obtaining world communism, the United States decided to take action to meet the threat of aggression in Southeast

Asia in accordance with President Eisenhower's peace address of 16 April 1953. The President, in this address, called for "united action" in this area and a basis for such action had already been established by the negotiation of security treaties with Australia, New Zealand, and the Philippines, each of which called for "the development of a more comprehensive system of regional security in the Pacific."

Unified Position Needed

The outcome of the Geneva Conference during the summer of 1954, with reference to Indochina, confirmed the need for a unified position on the part of the United States and her allies as pertained to South-





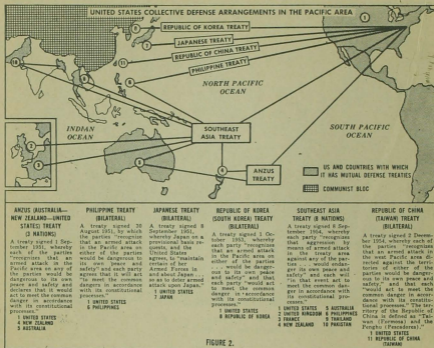
Delegates to the second meeting of the Council of Ministers of SEATO nations are shown in session at the Sind Building, in Karachi.

east Asia. Therefore, Australia, France, New Zealand, Pakistan, the Philippines, Thailand, the United Kingdom, and the United States met at Manila, in the Republic of the Philippines, in September 1954 in order to develop such a position. Negotiations were conducted as full and equal partners and a treaty known as the "Southeast Asia Collective Defense Treaty," Manila (SEATO) Pact, was signed on 8 September 1954. The treaty entered into force on 19 February 1955, following the deposit of the instruments of ratification with the Government of the Republic of the Philippines.

The Secretary of State, Mr. John Foster Dulles, has stated that:

The United States was in a special position at Manila, because it was the only one of the signatories which did not have territorial interests in the treaty area. For the others, the pact was not only an anti-Communist pact but also a regional pact. Therefore, it dealt with any and all acts of aggression which might disturb the peace of the area.

In elaborating further, Mr. Dulles considered that any significant expansion of the Communist world would be a danger to the United States because international communism thinks in terms of ultimately using its power position against the United States. In a broad interpretation of the words of President Mon-



roe in proclaiming his doctrine, Mr. Dulles further considered that Communist armed aggression in Southeast Asia would endanger our peace and security and call for counteraction on our part.

The treaty area is defined as the territory of the member states in Southeast Asia and the southwestern Pacific. (See Figure 2.) However, a protocol to the treaty provides for the extension of treaty benefits to Laos, Cambodia, and that portion of Vietnam which is not Communist controlled. These nations are not members of SEATO because the armistice provisions of the Geneva Ac-

cords of July 1954 raised a question in the minds of some of the parties to the accords as to whether these former members of the Associated States in Indochina could actually join such a pact. This was primarily due to the fact that the armistice terms for the cessation of hostilities in Indochina are extremely complicated and somewhat ambiguous with respect to these matters; however, Cambodia, Laos, and Vietnam welcome the mantle of protection that the treaty provided to them.

SEATO has three main purposes: first, defense against open armed



United States Secretary of State John Foster Dulles addresses delegates to the Karachi meeting of the SEATO member nations.

aggression; second, defense against subversion; and third, the improvement of economic and social conditions.

In considering the military implications of the pact, Article IV contains some of the most important provisions of the treaty. It sets forth any measures by which the parties agree to take action against armed aggression and against the danger of subversion and indirect aggression.

Under paragraph 1 of Article IV, each of the parties 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 the common danger in accordance with its constitutional processes.

This paragraph is based upon the Monroe Doctrine principle and follows the pattern of other United States security treaties in the Pacific. Further, the agreement of each of the parties to act to meet the common danger "in accordance with its constitutional processes" leaves to the judgment of each country the

type of action to be taken in the event an armed attack occurs.

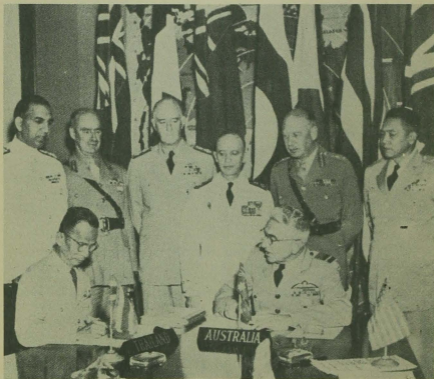
The danger from subversion and indirect aggression is dealt with in paragraph 2 of Article IV which meets this difficult problem more explicitly than any other security treaty to which the United States has ever been a signatory—it provides for immediate consultation by the parties whenever any party believes that the integrity of the treaty area is threatened by other than armed attack. This paragraph con-

tains no obligation beyond consultation, but it is considered that the primary purpose of consultation is to agree on measures to be taken for the common defense.

In order to implement properly the various provisions of the treaty, Article V establishes a council in which each party is to be represented. The council provides for consultation with regard to military and other planning as the changing situation in the treaty area may require.

The first meeting of the SEATO

The military advisors of the SEATO nations met in Melbourne, Australia last January, 1956, where they approved the various studies made by their staff planners.



Council opened in Bangkok, Thailand, on 23 February 1955. During this meeting each of the council members agreed, with the approval of their respective governments, *inter alia*, to designate a military advisor. The mission of these military advisors is to make recommendations to the council on military cooperation under the treaty. They meet periodically as required, formulate their own rules of procedure, and make any necessary organizational arrangements.

The initial meeting of the military advisors was held in Bangkok, Thailand, on 24-25 February 1955 with Admiral Felix B. Stump, Jr., the United States Commander in Chief, Pacific, representing the United States. The magnitude of the planning tasks became obvious immediately at this initial meeting and action was initiated to isolate the major problems pertaining to pact planning for the area. When this was accomplished, planning tasks were then referred for development to a staff planning group of the military advisors.

After detailed consideration of the problems involved, the staff planners met at Baguio, Republic of the Philippines, in April and May 1955 and developed recommendations on certain plans and courses of action for the consideration of the military advisors.

The military advisors considered and forwarded the recommendations of the staff planners, together with the advisors' comments, to their respective chiefs of staff for approval. The resulting comments of the

chiefs of staff on the staff planners' recommendations were then considered jointly at a meeting of the military advisors held in Bangkok, Thailand, during the period 6-8 July 1955. It is considered that this procedure will be used for future meetings of the staff planners and military advisors (the most recent being at Pearl Harbor during the period 1-15 November 1955) thus ensuring an orderly progression of coordinated military planning (joint plans will not be developed) in which the problems and requirements of each member nation, as well as the entire area, will receive full and careful consideration.

The controlling Communist force in Asia is the Chinese Communist Party with the Communist military strength in the area being provided primarily by the Chinese Communists. As a military power they provide the one probable force of aggression which must be considered a current threat to the countries of South and Southeast Asia who are now struggling to maintain their independence.

For military purposes the Chinese Communist front should be regarded as an entirety because if the Chinese Communists engage in open armed aggression, it would mean that they have decided on general war in Asia. In this event they would have to take into account, in addition to SEATO and its forces, the mutual defense treaties of the United States with the Republic of Korea and the Republic of China, and the forces maintained under these treaties. Thus general war would confront the Chinese Communists

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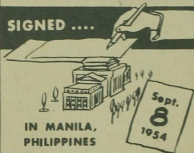


IT IS A
TREATY
BY

8 NATIONS:

- AUSTRALIA - 1
- GREAT BRITAIN - 2
- FRANCE - 3
- PAKISTAN - 4
- PHILIPPINES - 5
- THAILAND - 6
- UNITED STATES - 7
- NEW ZEALAND - 8

SIGNED



IN MANILA,
PHILIPPINES

THE MANILA PACT

SEATO

SOUTHEAST ASIA TREATY ORGANIZATION



ITS PURPOSES:



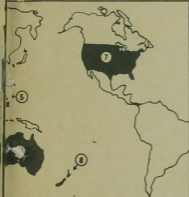
TO STRENGTHEN THE FABRIC
OF PEACE AND TO UPHOLD
THE PRINCIPLES OF DEMOCRACY.

TO PROVIDE MUTUAL DEFENSE
AGAINST ARMED ATTACK AND
AGAINST INTERNAL SUBVERSION.



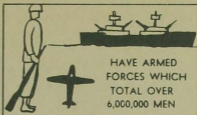
TO MAINTAIN
WELL-BEING
OF SOU...

LA PACT:
ATO
TREATY ORGANIZATION



TO PROMOTE
WELL-BEING OF THE PEOPLES
OF SOUTH ASIA.

ITS STRENGTH:
THESE NATIONS . . .

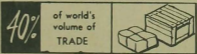
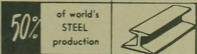


HAVE ARMED
FORCES WHICH
TOTAL OVER
6,000,000 MEN

THEY HAVE . . .

- $\frac{1}{7}$ OF THE WORLD'S PEOPLES
and
- $\frac{1}{8}$ OF THE WORLD'S SURFACE

THEY CONTROL . . .



A SIGNIFICANT AND GROWING
PART OF THESE RESOURCES IS
LOCATED IN SOUTHEAST ASIA.

with operations which would not be mutually supporting and would make difficult the rapid concentration of force on their part due to their inadequate means of transportation.

No material change in the military planning of the United States is contemplated by the United States participation in SEATO. It is considered that reliance shall be placed for military defense of the pact area upon mobile allied power which can strike an aggressor wherever the occasion may demand. That capacity should be sufficient to deter aggression and obviate the necessity for a buildup of large static forces at all points. Nevertheless, it was considered at the November staff planner's meeting at Pearl Harbor that each member nation must be continuously alert not only to its own national security and objectives, but to the requirements necessary to maintain the security of the treaty area. It was further considered that these requirements could be developed only by realistic, aggressive SEATO planning.

At present, United States plans call for maintaining at all times powerful naval and air forces in the western Pacific capable of striking at any aggressor by means and at places of our choosing. The responsibilities of the United States are so vast and farflung that it is considered it would serve all interests best not by earmarking forces for particular areas of the Far East, but by developing the deterrent of mobile striking power plus strategically placed reserves. However, other treaty members may deem it desir-

able to make their contribution toward strengthening the defense of the area by specific force commitments.

Conclusion

SEATO nations possess together adequate military power for employment in the pact area. The United States in particular has ground, sea, and air forces now equipped with new and powerful weapons of precision which, if employed in support of pact operations in the event of overt Communist aggression, would ensure the complete destruction of military targets without endangering unrelated civilian centers. Therefore, the SEATO Council, after analyzing the military factors pertaining to the pact area, concluded at their February meeting that the available military powers offered hope of deterring open armed aggression against the pact area.

It is desired to emphasize that SEATO: is not a panacea for all the ills of the area; complements other United States treaties in contiguous areas; is consistent with the provisions of the United Nations Charter; varies from NATO in that the United States is not committed to stationing forces in the area; and provides for coordinated rather than joint planning in conjunction with other pact countries.

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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