

*Sir Kenneth Bailey*

## AUSTRALIA, ASIA, AND WORLD SECURITY

THE FOREIGN POLICY of any country is a product basically of its history (including of course its ethnology) and of its geography (including of course its economic geography and its ecology): a product, that is to say, of both land and people. It is a fortunate country in which these factors all move in the same direction. In Australia they do not.

Racially, culturally, and historically Australia—like Canada—belongs to the West. The country was first settled by Europeans as a British colony. The national statistics do not make it possible to give the exact percentage of the present population that traces its descent from the British Isles. Though migrants from continental Europe have settled in increasing numbers and proportion since the end of World War II, Australia offers nothing comparable with the millions of French-speaking Canadians in Quebec. It is true that more than one in ten Australians trace their descent today from continental Europe. But more than half of the migration to Australia still comes from Britain. People of non-European race (mostly aborigines and Asians) comprise not much more than one per cent of the total.

Ethnically, therefore, the picture in Australia is one of greater homogeneity than it is in Canada. Economically, too, the Australian picture is less complex than the Canadian, if only because Australia is the only continent occupied by a single nation. Australia, unlike Canada, does not share its continent with a colossus. It is an island, and dependent as such upon ocean shipping for all its exports and all its imports alike. This circumstance accounts for Australia's rank as the twelfth trading nation in the world, though at least forty other countries have a greater population. (Australia has 11½ millions in an area only slightly less than that of continental United States, or little more than half that of Canada today.) Although minerals and manufactured

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products today figure more largely than they once did in Australian exports, it is basically on the export of agricultural and pastoral products—wool, wheat, meat, dairy products, and fruit—that we rely for foreign exchange to buy imports. These exports are primarily temperate-zone products. For this reason, Australian trade has been mainly with Britain and, to an increasing extent recently, with continental Europe, North America, and Japan (another temperate-zone country).

Historically, ethnically, climatically, and commercially, therefore, Australia must appear as basically a far-flung extension of the West—the highly developed industrial nations of Europe and North America, the North Atlantic community. Through its ties with Britain, this was in fact Australia's only role in international affairs until World War II spread into the Pacific. Australian troops, like (and sometimes alongside) Canadians, fought in European theatres in both world wars. In the United Nations, Australia—again like Canada—has always been an active member of the "Western group".

It is my conviction that Australia will and must remain a member of the "Western group". But it also seems to me that for Australia the era of active involvement in specifically European issues is over. The proximity of Australia to Asia, and the changes that have taken place and are taking place in Asia, have cast Australia for an altogether new role.

Simply as a geographical fact Australia is a physical outpost of Asia, and not a distant outpost at that. Across to the nearest Indonesian islands, our north coast is not as far as Fredericton, New Brunswick, is from Halifax, Nova Scotia; not much, if anything, farther than from Halifax to Saint John, New Brunswick, or even to Sydney, Nova Scotia; not very much farther than St. John's, Newfoundland, from Gander, and not much farther than Montreal from Albany, New York. Perth, in the south-west corner of Australia, is nearer to Djakarta than it is to Sydney, New South Wales. Darwin in the north is no closer to Sydney than it is to Singapore. The great arc of off-shore Asian islands was left between us and the mainland thousands of years ago when the sea broke through and cut Australia off from the Asian land mass.

The political and military significance for Australia of this proximity to Asia was for a long time concealed by the fact that almost the whole of southern Asia, including the islands off the mainland, was under friendly European political control—British, French, Dutch, American. For many years now, however, Australia has realized that her destiny is intricately bound up with that of her close northern neighbours. As far back as 1936, Australia put for-

ward a proposal for a mutual security pact in the Pacific area, by way of supplement to the Covenant of the League of Nations—the cause for anxiety at that time being, of course, the expansionist policies of Japan. I mention this 1936 proposal only because in some quarters there seems to be an idea that Australia did not awaken to its Asian environment until the bombings began in North Vietnam last year. The awakening had in fact come a generation earlier. But it was, of course, both hastened and sharpened by the process of de-colonization after World War II. The withdrawal of European and American control left a series of succession states, mostly small but including the populous states of India, Indonesia, and Pakistan, around the whole southern perimeter of Asia.

Australia's geographical propinquity to Asia has always existed. Technological changes are bringing the two continents closer every year. This is something that Australia can do nothing whatever to alter; but its very propinquity to Asia necessarily involves Australia in what is happening among the hundreds of millions of people that live so close to us.

Asia, like Europe but unlike Australia, is of course not a continent under the authority of a single government. The continent is torn by conflicts both nationalist and ideological. Nationalist rivalries, erupting on many occasions into violence, or even into war, have existed between neighbouring states around the Asian perimeter: between Pakistan and India; between Indonesia and Malaysia; between Cambodia on the one hand and both Thailand and South Vietnam on the other; between South Korea and Japan; even between Peking and Moscow.

But it is the ideological conflict in Asia that is the most significant—most significant because indeed it is not limited even to Asia. It is part of the global struggle, both of ideology and of power, on both sides of which nuclear armaments are to be found, and in which the protagonists are those communities that profess and assert the Marxist-Leninist Communist doctrine and those who reject it. It is indeed an over-simplification to speak only of “communities” that profess the Communist doctrine. Even in countries whose system is not based on Communism there is likely to be an active revolutionary Communist party, in close contact with the Soviet Union, or perhaps with Peking, or even with both, and working for the revolutionary overthrow of the existing order. It is also an over-simplification to leave out of account the extent to which interests of traditionally “national” character are operative within the Communist group of states.

Apart from nationalism and Communism, the most significant aspect that Asia presents to the affluent West is what President Johnson once called "the face of human need". Much of its vast population—more than half of the human race—lives in lands that are under-developed, in which the masses lack even the basic essentials of community life—food, education, health services. Economic aid has been forthcoming, both from the West and, to a lesser extent, from the Soviet Union. But need makes the masses a ripe field for propaganda both nationalist and Communist. Asia is in fact undergoing at present something like a social upheaval, both in human relations and in the ideas that influence the conduct of mankind.

Australia recognizes, then, that—as the Australian Minister for External Affairs, Mr. Hasluck, said recently—"the river of its destiny has two banks". In any foreseeable future Australia must continue to live with Europe and North America. But it recognizes, more clearly every year, that the other bank of its river of destiny is Asia, with which also it has to live. As a "middle power" Australia would like to see in Asia, and its policy is consciously directed towards promoting, the kind of world envisaged in the Charter of the United Nations—a world of free and independent nations, practising tolerance, living together in peace and security as good neighbours, and enjoying rising living standards. These goals, whether political or economic, cannot be attained without collective arrangements both for mutual defence and for economic development. Australia is deeply committed in both fields. I have emphasized first the economic and social field, if only to correct any wrong impression that Australia's current military activity and concern exhausts her interest in Asia. It certainly does not.

"Military measures", Mr. Hasluck told the Australian House of Representatives in April last, "are necessary to provide a shield behind which economic development can take place and national independence can be consolidated. But the military measures could prove in vain if progress is not made politically and economically."

While the potential of Australian *trade* with Asia is currently limited by the character of Australia's major export products, its potential for economic *aid* to Asia is also limited, by its national responsibilities for the development and welfare of the two million inhabitants of Australian New Guinea. One part of this territory is held under United Nations trusteeship; the other is held in sovereignty by way of transfer sixty years ago from Britain, and is now held as a territory to which international accountability applies under

Chapter XI of the United Nations Charter. The needs of these two million primitive indigenous peoples have had, and continue to have, an effective priority in the allocation of Australian resources. For this I am not disposed to offer any apology. But the discharge of these responsibilities has inevitably limited the amounts available for other countries. Aid to developing countries has nevertheless been substantial. It has mostly been in pursuance of bilateral arrangements, has always been by way of grant rather than loan, and has been concentrated chiefly on the countries of South and Southeast Asia—Pakistan, India, Ceylon, Indonesia, Malaysia, Burma, and South Vietnam.

Three years ago Australia was accepted as a full regional member of the Economic Council for Asia and the Far East, a local consultative agency of the United Nations. This step has emphasized Australia's interest in and concern for the economic welfare and development of the Asian region.

In the private sector, Australia's awareness of belonging to the region of South Asia has been expressed strongly in an initiative on the part of the Law Council of Australia which led in August 1966 to the provisional establishment, at a conference held with the financial support of the Asia Foundation, of a Law Association of Asia and the Western Pacific. Subject to ratification, founding members of the Association will be the national organizations of the legal profession in all countries in the ECAFE area—from Japan on the east to Iran on the west. The headquarters will rotate among member countries, but have been established in Australia for the initial five-year period. The Association is not to engage in political activities, but is to promote the development of the law, the administration of justice, the protection of human rights, and the maintenance of the rule of law in the region.

Australia's concern for the economic welfare and development of the Asian region is further emphasized by its having become one of the charter members of the new Asian Development Bank, with an initial contribution of about ninety million dollars. Australia is also contributing to the multilateral Mekong Delta Project in South Vietnam. Like Canada, Australia has always played an active part in the "Colombo Plan".

Training in Australia takes an important place in the external aid programme. All told, there are approximately 12,000 Asian students enrolled this year in Australian universities or schools, many of them under one or other of the aid programmes.

Politically and strategically, the basic fact in contemporary Asia is the emergence in Peking of a strong Communist central government. It pre-

fesses and acts in accordance with the Marxist-Leninist ideology in its most unqualified revolutionary form. It denounces the Soviet Union for espousing the heresy that there can be peaceful co-existence between Communism and capitalism. It declares that Communism cannot establish world revolution except by war. It develops nuclear power by methods that almost every other state in the world has abjured. It declares—as Mao Tse-tung told a group of French officials recently—that “whenever there are guerilla wars in the world, we will support them”. In furtherance of this objective, it has committed some \$300 million (U.S.) to aid programmes in Africa, much of it for military assistance. After the recent revolution in Ghana, the existence was disclosed of a secret camp north of Accra in which major training in violence and in the preparation of “people’s war” had been conducted, primarily by the Chinese.

Peking has also developed a doctrine—part, as I understand it, of “the glorious military thought of Comrade Mao”—of the way in which, in five steps, “wars of liberation” should be begun, carried on, and brought to a successful conclusion. Tested originally in China itself, this doctrine has been used also in Korea. It is the doctrine on which North Vietnam is currently working. Its own exponents declare that if the revolution succeeds in South Vietnam, it cannot be stopped anywhere in Asia, or in the world.

On this, General Giap, the outstanding military leader and theoretician of North Vietnam, has said “South Vietnam is the model for the national liberation movements in our time . . . . If the special warfare that the U.S. imperialists are testing in South Vietnam is overcome, this means that it can be defeated everywhere in the world.” To this may be added, as making the same point, Marshal Lin Piao’s observation in the now celebrated article (September, 1965) on “People’s War”: “The people in other parts of the world will see . . . that what the Vietnamese people can do, they can do too.”

How, then, is Chinese revolutionary expansionism to be met? In the long term, the answer is obvious enough. There will be no peace in Asia until China has come to terms with its neighbours, including of course the Soviet Union. Means must be found to bring Peking fully into the mainstream of international life. I do not suppose for a moment that anyone seriously denies this. Certainly the Australian Government does not, nor does the Canadian or, for that matter, the Government of the United States. Secretary McNamara was specifically asserting it, quite recently, in Montreal. The Australian Prime Minister, Mr. Holt, has emphasized again and again, on a recent visit to the United States and Britain, the vital importance of giving “attention

to ways and means by which both the Iron and the Bamboo Curtains may be made more penetrable and the interiors more accommodating”.

It is only as to the short-term solution of the problem of Chinese Communist expansionism that major differences of opinion and policy arise. The Australian Government's view on the short-term needs has been stated repeatedly by Mr. Hasluck. In April last, for instance, he said in New York:

The great question is to find a way of fitting China into the international community and bringing about the peaceful co-existence of China with the other countries of Asia and the Pacific. I believe that this can only be achieved if Peking understands that aggression against its neighbours will be resisted and will not be allowed to succeed. Thus our resistance in Vietnam should contribute in the long run to the objective of finding a way of living peacefully with China. Nothing would do more to destroy the hopes of peaceful co-existence with China, and to bring on new and greater hostilities under worse conditions, than for the present aggression from North Vietnam or China's aggression elsewhere in Asia, for example against India, to be allowed to succeed.

Some of the implications of this view were developed by Mr. Hasluck in an article published in *Foreign Affairs* in October, 1964:

The small nations of Asia cannot do it alone [i.e. preserve the independence and freedom that they have won with the end of the colonial era]. Behind all that is happening or will happen in Asia looms the fact of China. The doctrines and the intentions declared by its Communist government, its invasion of Tibet and India and its political activities throughout Asia today are all plain to read. The fear of China is the dominant element in much that happens in the region, and the fear is well grounded. Consequently, for the foreseeable future, the presence of non-Asian strength in the area, and particularly the strength of the United States, will be essential if fear is to be removed and freedom of choice restored . . . . Nations are entitled to decide whether and to what extent they will prepare the bases from which a concerted resistance to aggression will be maintained. The reality that has to be faced is that at present no balance to the power of China can be found in southern Asia. The balance has to be provided from outside Asia.

This Australian reaction to Communist expansionism in Asia sprang from realization of our country's deep involvement in what happens in South and Southeast Asia. It has seemed clear to the Government that what happens there is likely to decide Australia's own future. It was even more clear that Australia could not, any more than the small new states in Asia, exercise alone any substantial influence on the course of events in Asia. There would be

no hope except in collective security arrangements, in which Great Power participation was forthcoming.

In the region, three such arrangements have been made. One is the "ANZUS Pact", developed in 1951 against the background of the Japanese Peace Treaty, the Korean conflict, and the early experience of NATO. The ANZUS Pact is an alliance involving mutual assistance against an attack in the Pacific area on the territory or forces of any of the participants—in alphabetical order Australia, New Zealand, and the United States. The second is the South East Asia Collective Defence Treaty ("SEATO"), under which the six parties (the United States, Britain, France, Pakistan, Thailand, Australia, New Zealand, and the Philippines) stand committed to common efforts for the defence of the region against Communist aggression and subversion. The third is the informal but effective consultative arrangement (known as "ANZAM") under which the Commonwealth Strategic Reserve in Malaya was established.

Against this background it was natural, if not inevitable, that Australia should commit what armed forces it had available to assist in collective measures of resistance to aggression both in the confrontation campaign mounted by Indonesia against Malaysia and in halting the North Vietnamese guerilla advance towards the conquest of South Vietnam. In order to increase Australia's military resources to meet expanding responsibilities, moreover, the Government took the unprecedented step, towards the end of 1964, of introducing and carrying, in time of general peace, a law imposing the duty of selective compulsory military service, whether in Australia or overseas.

It would be wrong to leave the impression that these measures have had monolithic support in Australian public opinion. Australia has had its controversial university teach-ins. There have been marches and demonstrations of protest against Australian support of the American involvement in Vietnam. Though the official Opposition has not taken a fixed or uniform position during the present phase of the Vietnam conflict, some of its leaders have declared that Labour would withdraw the Australian forces as soon as practicable. But the Government claims strong majority support hitherto and has willingly accepted, if not indeed chosen, defence and foreign policy as the main issues at the general election in November, 1966.

If fear of Communist expansionism is widespread in Asia, the will to resist it is widespread also. India resisted invasion from the north, and received military aid from the West. So did Malaya, in its long and successful battle

against Chinese Communist terrorist infiltrators. So in the more recent phase did Malaysia in its resistance to "confrontation" by Indonesia. It is of course no accident that Indonesia's "crush Malaysia" campaign was launched during the period of the Djakarta-Peking axis, and that opposition to that axis was the mainspring of the military coup in Indonesia in October 1965, which defeated a Communist attempt, with apparent Peking complicity, to seize power in Indonesia and which has eventually led to an agreement with Indonesia terminating "confrontation".

For Australia, the "confrontation" between Indonesia and Malaysia created a most painful and anxious situation, and its recent termination was very cordially welcomed. Indonesia, a potentially rich and powerful state of more than 100 millions, is Australia's nearest neighbour. Since the Netherlands relinquished West New Guinea, Australia's only land frontier has been that between the Australian New Guinea territories and Indonesia's West Irian. It has always been a primary object of Australian policy to seek with Indonesia a relationship based on understanding and respect. Accordingly, while assisting Malaysia, even with armed forces, to defend itself against armed attack and subversion, Australia did not at any time break off relations with Indonesia, and even continued a limited programme of civil aid. When confrontation ended, the aid programme was at once revived and extended.

"The natural and desirable future to which we look", Mr. Hasluck has said, "is an Indonesia that is joined in a chain of friendship from India through Thailand, the Philippines and Malaysia to Australia."

Though the indispensable military presence of Britain has hitherto been the essential stabilizing element in the general Malayan area, like the military presence of the United States in southeast Asia as a whole, and though in the Australian view military strength from outside Asia may be necessary for a long time to ensure the independence of the non-Communist states around the Asian perimeter, there are already encouraging signs that the non-Communist nations of Asia are beginning to think of the problems of the region as something that they have in common, something that calls for a sharing of ideas and experience, and perhaps for common action too. This was well illustrated in June last by a meeting of Foreign Ministers in Korea, on Korea's own initial suggestion, to plan and organize co-operation in the Pacific and Asian regions. The nine countries represented were (in alphabetical order) Australia, Japan, South Korea, Malaysia, New Zealand, Philippines, Thailand, and South Vietnam, with Laos as an observer. The Ministers adopted the name Asian and Pacific Council ("ASPAC") and agreed to continued con-

sultation. As the Australian Prime Minister, Mr. Holt, said in Washington on June 30, last,

We are, I believe, at an exciting phase of development in human history . . . . Thanks to the United States, Asia is stirring . . . . What the United States has done . . . has put fresh hope into those Asian countries that are at the same time jealous of their independence and depressed by the harsh realities of living close to Communist China . . . . Thanks to the assistance of the United States, we believe the Domino Theory is working in reverse.

From Canada, Australia hopes for sympathetic understanding of its position in this Asian region. Basically, the situation is closely similar to that of the North Atlantic in the late 1940s, when Canada took a leading part in the endeavour to contain Soviet expansionism by organizing NATO for collective defence in the region. The political and strategical position in the Atlantic region is dominated by the apparent nuclear stalemate between the Soviet Union and the United States. But the fact of NATO has doubtless also played its part in producing the climate in which, in the Soviet Union, Khrushchev and the doctrine of peaceful co-existence replaced the policies of Stalin. The Australian hope is that effective military confrontation of the Communist states of Asia will also produce in time a climate in which they will adopt the policies of peaceful co-existence, instead of pursuing their often-professed determination to promote revolution everywhere in the world by the familiar military techniques of subversion and guerilla war. An essential part therefore of the object in Vietnam for instance, is, as has been said, to "buy time". The point is that Canadians will best understand Australia's current relation to Asia if they think of Canada's own place in the North Atlantic region. There is, of course, one vast difference—that the aggression, to prevent which NATO was organized, has not taken place. In Asia it has.

For Australia, therefore, neutralism or non-alignment in the Asian conflicts has simply not seemed a practical choice. But I emphasize that for Australia in Asia, just as for Canada in NATO, defence and security are only means to an end; the end is welfare and development.

The central point I have tried to make in this paper has been admirably summed up by Australia's Minister for External Affairs, Mr. Paul Hasluck, from whose recent addresses I have already quoted:

As an Australian, I do not want to look on our neighbours in Asia as buffer states. I see them rather as part of a structure of hope in which Australia itself, like each of them, is only one of many pillars. The structure weakens if any one of us should fall. The hope must belong not to one, but to all.