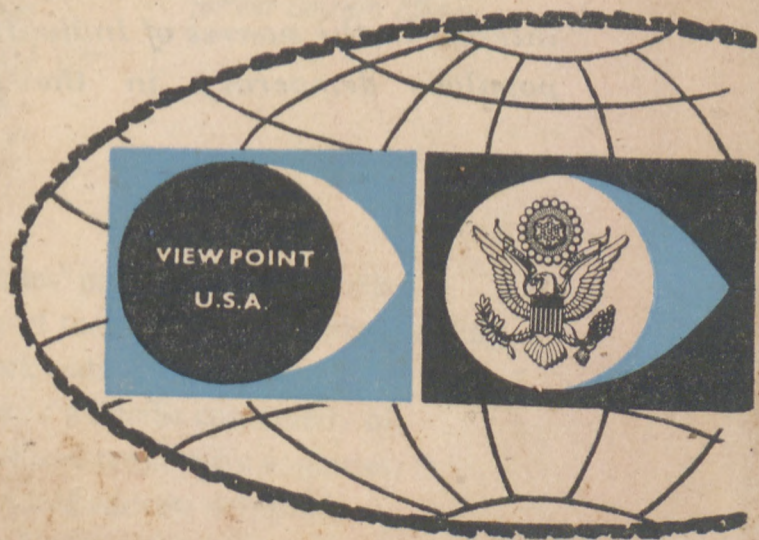


In Defence of Free Asia



Text of speech by Roger Hilsman,
U.S. Assistant Secretary of State
for Far Eastern Affairs, at
Honolulu, Hawaii, August 20, 1963.

“All men who love freedom have a deep interest in the success of India, the most populous democracy in the world.”

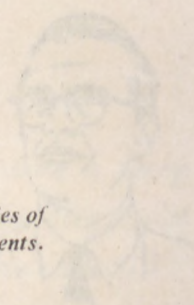
*In Defence
of
Free Asia*



By Roger Hilsman
*U.S. Assistant Secretary of State
for Far Eastern Affairs*

United States' policy (to stand firmly in defence of the free nations in the Far East and to work patiently for the realization of a Pacific community of prosperous and progressive countries) is outlined in this address delivered before the National Legislative Conference in Honolulu, Hawaii, on August 20, 1963.

In Defense
of
Free Asia



Viewpoint U.S.A.

*Number six in a continuing series of
American foreign policy statements.*

In Defence of Free Asia

WHAT IS the stake that America has in Pacific affairs? It is a large one. Along the Asian shores of the Pacific live one billion [one thousand million] of the world's population. If you include the adjacent Indian Ocean, you must add another half billion people. And if you include as well the millions who live on the North and South American shores of the Pacific, the total is nearly two-thirds of the world's population.

Let there be no mistake about the meaning of these figures: the Pacific is not a barrier, but a highway—a great link that unites us, facilitating close trade relations and encouraging the free and friendly contacts that are basic to a peaceful world.

There is a rich diversity in the cultures of the peoples living along the Pacific shores. Many of the civilizations here have ancient and proud traditions. Some are highly industrialized. Others are on the threshold of a self-generating economic growth. And many are barely emerging from a primitive "village" economy.

But all these people share common goals. They want peace. They want a better life—a doctor for their children, a school, a new cash crop, an all-weather road. And in the deepest sense, they want their freedom. They want an opportunity to develop their full potential as individuals

and nations. They want—intensely—to modernize. But they want modernization that preserves the essence of their own cultures.

In this context, it seems to me that the great tasks of United States foreign policy in this Pacific community are two-fold:

First—and most dramatic in terms of daily news headlines—we Americans must help to deter aggression and to maintain peace. We must be ready and willing to respond to crises that demand the use of our military power in the pursuit of peace—the present and continuing threats to the independence of free nations.

But second, and of decisive importance in the long span of history, we must assist the peoples of the Pacific in their process of nation-building. For free-world military power is a means, not an end. Free-world military power holds the ring, but it is what goes on inside the ring, behind the headlines, that builds the future. For progress is not military, but political, economic and cultural.

Let us look, then, at the problems we face and the efforts we are making on both these fronts: in the struggle for peace and independence, and in the struggle for national development.

I turn, first, to the chief sources of danger in the Pacific community: the communist countries, and, in particular, Communist China.

Since 1949 the 700 million people of mainland China have been denied the opportunity of friendly and open interchange with the rest of the Pacific community. Their Stalinist leaders have shut the Chinese people in on themselves and ordered them to regard their neighbours with suspicion and even hate. The enormous numbers of the Chinese, their remarkable human qualities, and the

glories of their ancient culture and civilization only accentuate this tragedy—the tragedy of a revolution that lost its way.

The facade of Communist China is bold and dangerous-looking. The Chinese communist leaders are addicted to reckless words. Turned to creative tasks, in cooperating with the broad mass of humanity, the numbers, energy, ability and cultures of the Chinese could be a powerful force for good in the world. But set in opposition to the rest of humanity, harnessed to the aggressive designs of a tiny, self-serving leadership, the power of China dwindles. For power is relative. The power of China when combined with the power of the rest of humanity in pursuit of common goals is quite different from the power of China in opposition to the rest of humanity and pursuit of the selfish goals of a narrow leadership.

Communist China's Dilemma

From one point of view the large population of Communist China may appear to be an important power asset. But from another point of view it is a grave source of weakness. The pressure of this very large population on a relatively small amount of arable land creates a most serious dilemma for the Peiping regime.

The problem is that the Chinese communists can find a genuine solution for their agricultural problem, for example, only through methods that contradict communist ideology and objectives. It can do so only by increasing incentives to farmers and by a major re-direction of national resources away from development of industry and into agriculture. The Peiping regime moved a little way in those directions in the past year, and, as a result, achieved some improvement in agriculture output. But

the effort appears to be far short of the massive infusion of resources that is required. And the temporary relaxation of controls and increase in individual incentives have led the farmer to concentrate on private production and to neglect public plots. Consequently, the regime recently has begun to revert to repressive practices. It is caught between irreconcilable pressures: the government's demand for total control and the economic need for freedom.

Meanwhile, Communist China's industrial development has dwindled, and many of its factories are idle or working only part time. Its overall trade has shrunk immensely, and a very large fraction of its limited foreign exchange has been used to buy food.

It seems very unlikely that the communist Chinese can resume industrial growth on a major scale in the visible future without the kinds of controls on farm activity that have the effect of decreasing productivity and without large-scale aid from the outside. The Soviet Union closed out its major aid programme three years ago and is showing no interest in reviving it.

The communist Chinese leadership itself has admitted that status as an industrial power—which in 1958 was envisaged as being just around the corner—is now perhaps 30 or 40 years away. And the Chinese communist foreign minister has predicted that the standard of living of the Chinese people cannot be expected to rise significantly for 100 years.

What kind of model is this for the world? Who in his right mind would wish to copy such an example—especially when there are other examples in Asia of much greater success in dealing with the problems of economic development and of agricultural productivity specifically?

Let me be clear on this point: We do not gloat over

the unhappy condition and dismal prospects of the people of mainland China. They are a great people, with whom we have had historic ties of friendship. In the ordeal they are suffering, they have our sympathy, and their sorrow is our sorrow.

Most people realize by now that a large population can be a source of economic weakness as well as a source of economic strength. There may still be, however, a tendency to equate a large population with military strength. In the Korean War, we Americans saw the Chinese communists employing tactics involving large masses of men—with little or no regard for casualties. But let us not forget that in that war North Korea and Communist China had immense help in equipment and material from the Soviet Union. And even today the ability of the Chinese communists to manufacture arms is limited to relatively simple weapons.

Red Chinese-Soviet Relations

So it is pertinent to consider the possible military effects of the great division that has taken place in the communist world—the schisms dramatized by the meetings in Moscow last month. It is now three years since the Soviet Union withdrew its military, as well as its non-military, technicians and drastically curtailed its shipments of military supplies and equipment to Communist China. Consequently, to take one example, the Chinese Communist air force, which is substantial in size and was relatively modern a few years ago, is in a state of rapid obsolescence. Moreover, it is not believed that Communist China is any longer obtaining spare parts for existing Soviet-supplied equipment of any sort. If this situation continues for long, Communist China's ability to mount

major military operations, especially outside its borders, will deteriorate. At the same time, basic economic problems limited severely Communist China's ability to develop its own modern armaments industry and even its present capacity to sustain for a long period large-scale military operations.

We must take care not to overstate the point. Compared to any of its Asian neighbours except the Soviet Union, Communist China is a strong military power. It has a very large army. The leaders of Communist China care little or nothing for human life. And, although up to now they have behaved more circumspectly than they advised Chairman Khrushchev to behave, they may venture reckless, even desperate, actions. At the same time, we cannot rule out the possibility that at some future time Peiping and Moscow will draw together again.

The free nations of Asia are by no means out of danger. Communist China is still capable of grave and costly mischief. But it is not a formidable military power in terms of modern technology. And it lacks the heavy industry, the economic margin—and the outside aid, which the Soviet Union had during the Second World War—in building a formidable military machine. It cannot become a major modern military power, overall, in the foreseeable future.

Implications of Nuclear Capability

The Peiping regime does appear to be concentrating a good deal of scientific and technological effort on a nuclear programme. We hope that it will change its mind and decide to adhere to the recently negotiated test ban treaty. But if it doesn't, we can anticipate that one of

these days it will explode a nuclear device. What would be the meaning of that?

It should be understood, first of all, that there is a vast difference between a first test device and an ability to deliver nuclear weapons on foreign targets. As Governor [Averell] Harriman has reported, Chairman Khrushchev thinks it would take quite a few years for the Chinese communists to develop a significant nuclear force. But even if it had such a force, Peiping would be unable to calculate that the initiation of nuclear warfare would be to its advantage. For it would be within reach of main U.S. and other free world power, while the centres of free world power would be well beyond the reach of Communist China.

Why then is Communist China, although floundering in an economic morass, spending so much effort on trying to make nuclear weapons? One can only speculate about this. Perhaps it hopes that a nuclear capability will restore some of the prestige the regime has lost both at home and abroad. It may hope to add nuclear intimidation to the pressures it can bring to bear on its Asian neighbours.

Objectively analyzed, the effects of a Chinese communist nuclear explosion in the measurable future would be psychological rather than military. And the psychological results—outside mainland China, at least—would be negligible if we and the free nations of Asia understand the facts about nuclear weapons that we have just discussed. The free world has the power to deter or meet aggression; it has the power to support nations under attack—as in Viet-Nam—and to help maintain their freedom; it has the determination to use this power should that be necessary; and it has the will to

maintain that power at full strength for as long as it is needed.

Communists' Delusion

Turning to the other communist countries in Asia, we find in microcosm the same range of problems that we find in Communist China. North Viet-Nam and North Korea are both small rural countries labouring under the delusion spread by communist theory, that the best route to economic development is a policy of autarky and of emphasizing the building of a heavy industrial base, including an advanced steel industry. Both suffer from high costs of industrial production, growing populations, low per capita output, and continuing difficulties with food supplies.

At the same time, North Viet-Nam, with other communist support, has been able to mount campaigns of organized terrorism and other low-level military operations in Laos and South Viet-Nam. These assaults threaten the independence of Laos and South Viet-Nam. The free world must not and will not let these aggressions succeed.

I do not want to minimize the effort it takes to eliminate terrorist aggression based on an adjoining country. But I would suggest that meeting this challenge is less directly connected with Chinese or other communist military power or with the attraction of communist example than with a particular politico-military technique for exploiting weaknesses that are typical of most new and developing countries. The free world has learned a good deal about this technique in the course of dealing with it successfully in Greece, the Philippines, and Malaya. I am optimistic about the ability of the free world to deal

with it not only in Laos and Viet-Nam, but wherever it may occur.

U.S. Commitment to Free Asia

So much for the chief threats to the peace in the Pacific community. They are threats that have produced a resolute American commitment to the defence of those nations under communist assault.

That commitment has been tested in Korea, in the Taiwan Straits, and in Laos. It is now facing a long-term test in Viet-Nam. We may be sure that it will be tested elsewhere from time to time.

Whatever the provocation, we will stand by our defence commitments. We will do so in any case, but we will also do so in the hope that if strength is met with strength, those who guide the policies of Asian communist states will in time move towards more rational, peaceful relationships with their Pacific neighbours.

Such commitments have meaning, however, only where the people of a region are themselves dedicated to their own independence. To the good fortune of the free world, the dedication of Asian nations has been amply demonstrated. The Republic of Korea, with the help of United Nations forces, repelled a major communist aggression. Malaya, the Philippines, and other nations of the area, have defended themselves successfully against lesser communist efforts. Recently we have seen India rise to the defence of its soil against the Chinese Communists.

Both Laos and South Viet-Nam are now under active communist assault. But they—and we—are determined that they shall not lose their independence.

In free Asia generally there is a keener understanding

than there was a decade ago of communist purposes and communist techniques. And there is a wider realization that communism is not only brutal but inefficient.

Communist China and Free Asia

Let us turn now to the free peoples of the Pacific and their progress in the great task of nation-building.

Despite the problems that have beset them, their experience in the post-war period contrasts very favourably with the experience of the communist nations. Although it is difficult to generalize about the varying experiences of a large number of different countries, I would like to try to do so under three broad headings: first, economic achievements; secondly, political progress; and, thirdly, success in defending their independence and finding satisfying and honourable roles in the world.

Beneath the surface of apparent difficulties in free Asia there has been major economic progress. The supreme example is Japan. While Communist China has moved from one disaster to another and has failed to raise the standards of life of its people, Japan has advanced to successive new heights of production and per capita income. It has the highest rate of investment and of growth in the world.

In agricultural production also, the contrast between Communist China and Japan is extraordinary. Japan has only one-third as much cultivated land per person as Communist China. But while food production in Communist China has actually declined, Japan has raised its degree of self-sufficiency in food from 80 to 85 percent—despite a 10 percent increase in population. Japanese rice yields are nearly twice Communist China's.

Japan has achieved these results by precisely the kind

of prescription Communist China finds it hard, or impossible, to accept—by increasing incentives to farmers and devoting major resources to the support of agriculture. The incentives come from the private ownership of land, a fair return to the tiller, and the availability of a wide range of consumer goods. Japanese industry also provides agricultural equipment in substantial quantity. And perhaps the most striking indication of the extent to which Japan devotes industrial resources to agriculture is the fact that Japan uses as much commercial fertilizer on 13 million acres of cultivated land as all the other Far Eastern countries use on 822 million acres.

It may be objected that it's not quite fair to compare Communist China with Japan—because, although Japan had to recover from the destruction of war and did, indeed, effect a major revolution in agriculture, it already had a major industrial base. Very well, then—let's look at what the Republic of China has accomplished on the island of Taiwan. In 10 years—from 1952 to 1962—it increased its agricultural production by 50 percent in value, trebled its industrial output, and doubled its real national income. Even with a high population increase—of 3.4 percent annually—it has increased per capita income by an average of 3.7 percent a year. Its per capita income today is among the highest in the Far East, after Japan, and is at least double Communist China's.

The remarkable advance of agriculture on Taiwan stems from a major redistribution of land into small privately owned holdings—similar to that effected in Japan—and the application of significant resources, better seeds, and modern technology, along with the stimulation of local initiative. In the gratifying progress of Taiwan, a key role has been played by a unique institution, the

Joint Commission on Rural Reconstruction, in which we participate. That commission and its broad programme of rural development—economic, social and political—on Taiwan are models which some other nations might profitably emulate.

Last year Taiwan's exports reached an all-time high of \$218 million. They included such new export lines as cement, canned mushrooms, polyvinyl chloride, and fluorescent lamps. In the past few years, the private sector of Taiwan's industry has greatly expanded.

Likewise, Malaya, Thailand, and the Philippines have scored significant economic gains in recent years. In each of them agricultural production has risen on the order of 40 percent or more. In each the manufacturing sector and foreign trade have grown appreciably. In each, the economic advantages of private initiative, of the free way of life, are being strikingly demonstrated.

It may be contended that it is unfair to compare these countries with Communist China because they are relatively small and not densely populated. Very well, then—let's look at India. Like China it has a large and growing population on a limited supply of arable land, a limited industrial base, and a low per capita income. In the past decade, the population of India increased by more than 21 percent. But its agricultural production expanded by more than 41 percent, its industrial production doubled, its national income increased by 43 percent, and its per capita income by 17 percent.

India has a mixed economy. And it still faces grave economic problems. But it has moved ahead in the same period that per capita income and agricultural production in Communist China declined. All men

who love freedom have a deep interest in the success of India, the most populous democracy in the world.

Pakistan also is advancing economically, despite serious problems. We have a deep interest in her progress, as well as in her security.

Indonesia, which has had many serious troubles since independence, now seems to be grappling seriously with its economic problems.

Not all the free nations of East and South Asia have made much economic headway. But most of them have done strikingly better than Communist China.

Among the great assets of the Pacific are of course Australia and New Zealand, to both of which we are bound by indissoluble ties. They have attained living standards among the highest in the world. New Zealand is the world's lowest-cost producer of agricultural exports. Australia not only produces farm staples and minerals but has become a modern industrial nation. Last year the contribution of manufactures to Australia's gross national product was nearly double that of agriculture and mining. We rejoice in the achievements of New Zealand and Australia and are confident that they both will continue to thrive.

Some of the new nations of South and East Asia have experienced political difficulties—and in several instances these have been severely aggravated if not caused by the communists. But beneath a somewhat disordered surface are both a basic stability and encouraging signs of the growth of deeper roots for democratic institutions.

One of the weakest political and administrative links in many Asian societies, as in most other developing countries, is the connection between city and village, between the central government and the countryside.

Communism seeks to exploit the weakness of these links and, in doing so, forces the central government to pay more attention to them. In several Asian countries, actions taken to cope with terrorist warfare inspired by the communists have led directly to a strengthening of democracy at the grassroots. That happened in Malaya and the Philippines. Somewhat the same process is going on today in South Viet-Nam, where the strategic hamlet programme is establishing local self-government and strengthening the administrative and political links between the rural people and their national government. This programme is not only helping South Viet-Nam to defeat the communists but will help it to advance politically and economically and socially after the communist guerrillas have been completely eliminated. South Viet-Nam has the resources—not least the character of its people—for a quite brilliant future. Actually, its progress from the end of the Indo-China war in 1954 until 1959 was one of the most remarkable in Asia. Probably it was that striking success, especially when contrasted with the failure of the vaunted communist “paradise” in North Viet-Nam, which prompted the latter to resume its assault of organized terrorism on South Viet-Nam in 1959.

Rural Uplift

India's large-scale community development programme has, from its beginning, combined the stimulation of democratic roots with social and economic progress. Pakistan likewise has been strengthening the village roots of democracy.

Some of the new and reborn nations of Asia have not yet achieved fully functioning stable democracies. But nearly all have democracy as their goal. A few are

operating democratic institutions with creditable success. And Japan has illustrated how a democratic system can provide effective leadership that can overcome, in a single generation, the mistakes of the past and lay the social and economic, as well as the political, base for continuing democracy and freedom.

Democracy will develop in free Asia, provided that the free Asian peoples preserve their independence. And generally they have proved themselves to be thoroughly determined to preserve their independence.

We see also in free Asia some encouraging trends toward closer cooperation. Japan and Australia are undertaking larger roles in promoting the development and stability of the Pacific area. The Philippines are manifesting increasing leadership.

Recent weeks have provided striking new evidence that Asian statesmen are deeply conscious of their responsibilities to their neighbours as well as to internal development. The leaders of the Philippines, Indonesia, and the new state of Malaysia have announced their intention to bring their nations together in a "Maphilindo" confederation. They have done this despite difficult disagreements because of their clear sense that regional cooperation is the only path to regional security and prosperity.

Meanwhile, Malaya, Thailand, and the Philippines have formed the Association for Southeast Asia. The cooperative activities of existing regional organizations, such as the U.N.'s Economic Commission for Asia and the Far East (ECAFE) have grown apace and new organizations, such as the Asian Productivity Organization, have been created to respond to new needs as these have been recognized by the countries of the area. SEATO

and ANZUS continue as important symbols of joint commitment to the independence of the countries of the area as well as important centres of cooperative activity to deal with the communist threat. While relatively weak and relatively limited in scope and character, these cooperative activities among the nations of Asia and the Pacific reflect important long-term impulses.

U.S. Far East Policy

In the light of long-term trends in communist and free Asia, let me now review the elements of U.S. strategy and policy. Our policy in the Far East can be summed up in these four points:

- To stand firmly behind our commitments to the defence of independent nations and to turn back any aggressive thrust from communism;

- To contribute, as we are able, to the prosperity and development of nations which request our assistance, as the surest way of helping to build a system of free, viable and strong nations in Asia;

- To recognize the value of initiatives by the Pacific nations themselves to develop their own modes of cooperation and communication and to stand ready to assist when called upon to do so;

- To work patiently for the realization of a Pacific community of nations so prosperous and progressive that its attraction will prove, in the long run, irresistible to those peoples now kept by their rulers from participation in it.

The nuclear test ban treaty is a recent development of considerable importance in man's continuing search for lasting peace. While it is no more than a beginning step toward the general and complete disarmament for

which all people yearn, it is a significant contribution. An immediate advantage of this treaty to the welfare of men, women and children everywhere is the promise it holds for reduction of the radioactive pollution of the air we breathe. The Chinese communist reaction to the treaty has been to condemn it as a "dirty fraud." They claim, in expressing this apparent indifference to the interest of humanity, that they speak for all peace-loving peoples of the world. It is clear, however, that the overwhelming majority of the people of the world have acclaimed the nuclear test ban treaty and that the Chinese communist leaders are in a position of isolation. We hope that an awareness of the clear benefits to all mankind of the nuclear test ban treaty will eventually bring the Chinese communists to reconsider their stand.

Perhaps at some point in the future, the Chinese communist leadership may come to realize that their policy of hostility and isolation is a barren course, perilous to them and to the whole world. Possibly the influence of time and experience will eventually persuade the leadership in Peiping to change their approach and their attitude.

Finally, I want to recall some words from President Kennedy's address, "Toward A Strategy of Peace," made on June 10 at the American University:

We must . . . persevere in the search for peace in the hope that constructive changes within the communist bloc might bring within reach solutions which now seem beyond us. We must conduct our affairs in such a way that it becomes in the communists' interest to agree on a genuine peace.

There would not appear to be any immediate likelihood of those "constructive changes" of which President

Kennedy spoke, appearing on the mainland of China. But the separation between the people in mainland China and the free peoples of the Pacific is such an apparent tragedy of the modern world that it seems reasonable to hope that it is only a temporary phenomenon. The American people surely look forward to the time when all of the Chinese people are reunited with the peoples of the Pacific and the world in friendship, cooperation and freedom.

I am confident that the lasting values we seek, for ourselves and for the peoples of the Pacific, will prevail over the dogmas of war and struggle. To do our part to build a world of peace remains our highest aim. That is our great purpose and our strategy.

“The Pacific is not a barrier, but a highway—a great link that unites us, facilitating close trade relations and encouraging the free and friendly contacts that are basic to a peaceful world.”



Published by the United States Information Service,
New Delhi, and printed at Albion Press, Delhi-6