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MEMORANDUM FOR THE NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL

SUBJECT: Political Implications of Afro-Asian Military Takeovers

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The enclosed report on the subject, prepared as an internal working paper by the Department of State, is transmitted herewith for the information of the National Security Council in connection with a presentation on the subject by the Department of State at the Council meeting on Thursday, May 28, 1959.

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James S. Lay, Jr.
JAMES S. LAY, JR.
Executive Secretary

cc: The Secretary of the Treasury
The Director, Bureau of the Budget
The Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff
The Director of Central Intelligence

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POLITICAL IMPLICATIONS ON AFRO-ASIAN
MILITARY TAKEOVERS

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POLITICAL IMPLICATIONS OF AFRO-ASIAN MILITARY TAKEOVERSSUMMARY OF CONCLUSIONS

A. Political and economic authoritarianism prevails throughout the underdeveloped world in general and represents the predominant environment in which the U. S. must associate its interests with those of the emergent and developing societies of Free Asia. The major interests of these societies are continued national independence and social and economic development within their own ways of life. Our basic interests coincide with these but extend to the encouragement of democratic concepts and an appreciation of Western cultural values. The latter is of great importance in (1) denying developing societies to Communism by (2) maintaining and enlarging those bases of influence which afford opportunities for us to play a more decisive role than Communism in the "management" of the forces of change released by the developmental process.

B. Our experience with the more highly developed Latin American States indicates that authoritarianism is required to lead backward societies through their socio-economic revolutions; that if the break-through occurs under non-Communist authoritarianism, trends toward democratic values emerge with the development of a literate middle class; and that there is some correlation between developmental progress and the wider acceptance of representative institutions. It should be our purpose that this progression repeat itself in the contest for "management" of the developmental process in Free Asia.

C. For a variety of reasons, authoritarianism will remain the norm in Free Asia for a long period. The trend toward military authoritarianism will accelerate as developmental problems become more acute and the facades of democracy left by the colonial powers prove inadequate to immediate tasks. Authoritarianism, centralized planning, governmental direction of the developmental process, and reliance on socialism will in certain countries present a governmental and developmental pattern perilously close to Lenin's "democratic centralism".

D. We can do little in the short run to ameliorate authoritarianism in Asia, but in the long range we can perhaps provide the margin of security, assistance and experiential know-how required to hold Free Asia non-Communist. In this process, we must work through the

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soldier as well as the civilian in encouraging both to modernize their societies by some "middle way" between private enterprise and Communism, thus preserving the residue of human rights and dignity essential to the growth of democratic values.

E. In the circumstances, the essential test from our point of view should be whether a particular military regime responsibly confronts the problems facing it - security and developmental progress--and, in so doing, successfully resists Communist techniques. The military takeovers in Burma, Pakistan and the Sudan have thus far advantaged U. S. interests under this test.

F. Military autocrats do not necessarily threaten U. S. interests if they are effective leaders of their developmental revolution, or if they can be influenced to balance security considerations against developmental necessities. They can benefit U. S. interests by maintaining stability, introducing reforms from which civilian politicians would shirk, and symbolizing national unity during times of hardship and crisis - all essential to the developmental process.

G. There are other reasons why we must support military regimes at this stage of Free Asia's development: (1) A real security threat confronts Red China's free neighbors; (2) officer groups are often the most pro-Western, disciplined, and educated institution-in-being on which backward societies can draw in time of crisis; (3) intervention of the military will continue to be necessary to supplant ineptness, corruption or slippage toward Communism; and (4) it will take decades for Free Asia to develop those institutions which establish in more advanced countries civilian control of the military.

H. Military regimes can, however, pose certain long-range threats to U. S. interests in the crucial developmental process: (1) Only the exceptional military man is by training and temperament equipped to lead developmental revolutions; (2) failure so to do encourages a parallel trend toward "second stage revolutions", e.g., revolutions engendered by the dissatisfaction or stifling of opposition groups (labor, students, intelligentsia, dissident younger officer groups); (3) especially if economic development is deemphasized in favor of armament and popular aspirations are denied or suppressed.

I. To minimize these dangers to stability and orderly development, U. S. civilian and military missions must inculcate in the Asian military a greater appreciation for

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economic development since it is the principal key to locking off dissidence and the search for extreme alternatives. This opportunity is available: eleven of the twelve countries to which we contribute defense support are within underdeveloped Asia. The diplomatic and military arms of U. S. policy must coordinate closely, therefore, in efforts to promote U. S. interests more effectively through military regimes.

J. The incidence of political authoritarianism in Free Asia weakens the fiber of democratic values and points the way toward an easier acceptance of economic controls which trend toward Communist controls. Thus a developing society can be lost to Communism short of military aggression and by failure to manage the developmental revolution by non-Communist methods. This danger must be impressed on military leaders and should remain one of our principal policy guidelines in developing techniques whereby Western values can be grafted on modernized indigenous developmental systems.

K. No loss of prestige should be involved in our supporting non-democratic military regimes who are making some developmental progress. Nor should support of such regimes contribute to a non-democratic militaristic image of the U. S. Our image will depend basically on the example of our own democracy at work, our unequivocal support for the independence and development of emergent nations, and our assisting the regime in power to satisfy popular aspirations. We should make it clear that our interests do not conflict with the republican tendencies of Asian nationalism and not necessarily with its neutralist inclinations. We should stay in touch with the intelligentsia and opposition elements and we should avoid too close identification with any authoritarian regime in power without vitiating opportunities of influencing it.

L. Encouragement of military regimes to emphasize economic development, and our fuller recognition that Asian neutralism is an extension of the anti-colonial bias, can also contribute to off-setting any ill effects stemming from our support of military regimes in Free Asia.

M. Finally, the complexity of the developmental process requires that a military regime utilize civilian competence to the utmost, lest it alienate other elements of the population, including the intelligentsia, and prepare the way for a "second stage revolution". The happy medium from the standpoint of U. S. interests would be a

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military regime "civilianized" to the greatest extent possible and headed by a military leader who saw security and development in perspective and thereby evidenced political leadership of the type required in a developing society.

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POLITICAL IMPLICATIONS OF AFRO-ASIAN MILITARY TAKEOVERS

"Our security requires that both our Allies and the un-committed countries have an opportunity to solve their pressing economic problems within the framework of the free world . . . Without such an opportunity, some of them offer an easy target for communism . . ."

Report of the Draper Committee (1959)

"What are likely to be the chief consequences of this immense increase in world population? . . . the less developed countries will hardly be squeamish about the means they adopt to further their national goals. Caught in the predicament of having an ever larger share of the world's people and an ever smaller share of the world's resources, they will be driven to adopt revolutionary policies . . . Obvious possibilities (include) . . . the transformation of the economy by totalitarian methods."

Kingsley Davis, New York Times Magazine (March 15, 1959)

"The appeal of Communism is . . . its ability to carry backward countries speedily through the tremendous crisis of modernization. It offers a successful pattern of industrial saving and it provides the drive and discipline without which saving, particularly in poor countries, cannot be achieved. It also promises that the fruits of transformation will ultimately be enjoyed 'by each according to his need'."

Barbara Ward, Five Ideas that Change the World (1959)

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POLITICAL IMPLICATIONS OF AFRO-ASIAN MILITARY TAKEOVERSI. SCOPE

1. This paper considers short- and long-range policy implications of the trend toward military takeovers of civilian governments which emerged in the last half of 1958 throughout the Near East (the Sudan, Iraq), South Asia (Pakistan) and the Far East (Burma, Thailand). Staff studies of these five takeovers are annexed,* together with conclusions of the short-range policy implications, underlying reasons for the takeovers, and certain long-range problems posed by authoritarianism in Asia. Long-range policy implications are discussed in Section III.

A. Focus on Free Asia

2. The conclusions reached obviously bear a relationship to the incidence of authoritarianism throughout the whole of the underdeveloped world. This paper, however, focuses inquiry on the Sudan and Free Asia for the reasons that (a) the correlation between authoritarianism, including military takeovers, and underdevelopment is so clearly observable throughout the region and (b) Latin America and Africa, especially Africa South of the Sahara, represent different planes in the evolution of underdeveloped areas.

3. Africa lags behind non-Communist Asia, as Afro-Asia lags behind Latin America, both in the developmental process and in the evolution of societal patterns and attitudes in which the more sophisticated concepts of representative government, separation of powers, and cabinet responsibility can prosper and grow in popular acceptance. Those civilian institutions and attitudes which more advanced democratic societies have perfected to control the military are more developed in Latin America than in Afro-Asia. Hence, though authoritarianism throughout the underdeveloped world poses related challenges to U. S. policy, Asian authoritarianism presents somewhat different problems from those presented by Latin America while also providing a laboratory in which to anticipate similar problems in the emergent states of Africa.

B. Additional Reasons for Excluding Latin America

4. Much of this paper deals with the correlation between authoritarianism and underdevelopment. It is relevant, therefore, to enumerate other reasons why military authoritarianism

* Annexes A and B.

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in Latin America and Free Asia present somewhat different challenges. They are these: Latin America

a. Is more distant from the foci of Communist power, more secure in its military posture, and is encompassed within a unique Organization of American States which reduces the threat of military invasion and the necessity of strong military regimes;

b. Has experienced more than a century and a quarter of self-government and does not share to the same dangerous extent Afro-Asia's anti-colonial and racial biases against the West;

c. Has had long experience with varying degrees of authoritarianism, including good and bad military takeovers;

d. Is part of the Western cultural tradition and has deeper democratic roots in a more responsive soil; and

e. Has in general attained higher standard of living and production growth indices than those of underdeveloped Free Asia.

5. As a consequence, the trend in Latin America is against dictatorship and toward more popularly based governments. Thus, grave as its problems are, Latin America is ahead of the younger countries of the East in the governmental experience and social progress which, viewed in the perspective of developing nations, appears to be required to supplant authoritarianism, however gradually, with more democratic governmental norms.

C. Sequence of Inquiry

6. Consideration of the short-range implications of the five 1958 military takeovers in Afro-Asia is followed by an analysis of the long-range implications of military authoritarianism throughout Free Asia. This analysis admittedly enters the area of speculation but is conducted within the context of these overriding trends now discernible and likely to prevail for the foreseeable future:

a. The Sino-Soviet Bloc will further consolidate its economic and military strength, will narrow the margin of over-all power now enjoyed by the West, and will seek to displace Western power and influence in non-Communist Asia.

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b. Maintenance of independence, economic development, and perfection of their own ways of life will remain the major problems of the countries of Free Asia.

c. These problems are so great that the trend toward military authoritarianism will likely accelerate.

d. There will thus be a parallel trend within Free Asian societies toward "second stage revolution", e.g., revolutions engendered by a certain stifling of opposition groups, labor, students and other elements of the "intellectual proletariat". In many countries under military rule, the stimulus for this revolution may come from dissident and younger officer groups (a distinct possibility in Pakistan and the Sudan).

7. The analysis reaches three broad conclusions:

a. The trend toward military takeovers will continue. Hence, both the diplomatic and military arms of U. S. policy must coordinate in efforts to promote U. S. interests more effectively through military regimes.

b. Military regimes do not necessarily threaten U. S. interests in the underdeveloped world if they can be influenced to deal effectively with the developmental problem, i.e., the gamut of social and economic change involved in the modernization and industrialization of a traditional agricultural society.

c. The complexity of the developmental problem is such that military regimes must be encouraged to utilize civilian competence to the greatest extent possible and to work thereby toward the restoration of civilian governmental responsibility.

II. SHORT-RANGE POLICY IMPLICATIONS

A. The 1958 Takeovers

8. The takeovers in Burma, Pakistan and the Sudan have contributed an element of short-range stability advantageous to U. S. objectives. The dust has not yet settled in Iraq but the trend is toward Communist control of the country. The coup in Thailand does not materially affect U. S. interests because of the traditional oligarchic nature of Thai governments.

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9. A long-range appraisal of each of these takeovers will obviously depend on the record of the regime. However, there is a danger that the new regimes will become progressively isolated from the people by failure to associate themselves with popular aspirations or to make demonstrable developmental progress. Risks are involved in our becoming identified with unpopular and authoritarian regimes, but authoritarianism is the norm throughout the region and this is not without certain short-run advantages to the United States.

B. Authoritarianism as the Norm

10. Factors common to the region explain the five coups in part at least and why authoritarian government and a trend toward military takeovers are the likely prospects in Free Asia for the foreseeable future. These factors are:

- a. Essentially authoritarian traditions and concepts of government and administration, with heavy reliance on the military as a disciplined institution-in-being;
- b. Traditional acceptance of this institution-in-being as a symbol of sovereignty and the guardian of the national pride, especially in times of crisis;
- c. A consequent shallowness of democratic roots and little conception of civilian dominance of the military;
- d. Lack of experience in government administration and management (with the possible exception of India);
- e. A preoccupation with security in the face of (1) an aggressive Communist threat (especially in the Far East) and (2) regional rivalries and disputes (Palestine problem, Nile and Indus waters, Kashmir, etc.);
- f. Educational and technological as well as industrial underdevelopment;
- g. A disposition toward the belief that government should direct development--especially in the over-populated states--and a reliance on socialist cliches; and
- h. Disenchantment in many countries with the corruption, inefficiency, political bickering, and lack of progress associated with the facade of democratic

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institutions left behind by the colonial powers (cf. Ceylon, Indonesia, Pakistan, the Sudan).

11. In short, we find a correlation between authoritarianism and underdevelopment, and, in Free Asia especially, we find that the military are either at the apex of power or the major institution-in-being which supports, or is in a position to overthrow, a government in power. In the short-range, a military takeover can advantage the United States by imposing stability and decisiveness. The long-range balance sheet may be more dubious. But the fact remains that in the future U. S. interests in Free Asia will very probably become increasingly dependent on (a) what military regimes do for good or bad, and (b) the measure of constructive influence which the United States can exert through military authoritarianism.*

III. LONG-RANGE IMPLICATIONS

12. Where authoritarianism is the governmental norm and socialism is the developmental norm, the advancement of U. S. interests does not depend basically on whether civilians or soldiers exercise governmental power. The essential long-run test from our point of view is whether a particular regime responsibly confronts the problems facing it--security and developmental progress--and, in so doing, resists Communist techniques in perfecting its own way of life. The United States can do little to ameliorate political or economic authoritarianism in Asia. But it can, by aligning its own interests with those of developing nations, provide the margin of security, assistance and experimental know-how necessary to keep these nations in the Free World. In this process, we must work through the soldier as well as the civilian.

A. U. S. Interests

13. U. S. long-range interests will be served best in underdeveloped Asia if six conditions prevail:

* The following regimes are not military regimes strictly speaking but are deeply dependent on the military to maintain power by more or less authoritarian means: Jordan, Iran, South Korea, Nationalist China, Laos, Viet Nam and Indonesia. Some might categorize Egypt and Lebanon as military regimes. See also OCB Special Report on Military Training in the U. S. of Foreign Nationals from Selected Countries (February 27, 1959), which lists the following countries as likely candidates for military takeovers within the next two years: Laos, the Philippines, Ceylon, Iran, Jordan, the Lebanon.

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a. Maintenance of the independence of individual countries is an obvious requirement to their continued membership in the Free World and to U. S. association with certain of the nationalistic and anti-colonial biases of emergent nations.

b. Peace provides the best environment for an underdeveloped country to cope with its primary tasks of social and economic reform. Continued tranquility within the underdeveloped world is of vital importance because of the (i) dangers of emergent nationalism sparking major war in a bi-polarized world, and (ii) necessity of deemphasizing military in favor of developmental expenditures to the greatest extent possible.

c. Political stability is an obvious additive to any sustained program of internal reform.

d. Protection of the individual freedoms and values now extant form the basis for (1) the Free World's alliance with human nature and (2) the growth of more Communist-resistant societies.

e. Developmental progress under non-Communist norms is required at a rate sufficient to contain trends toward more extreme or Communist developmental techniques which, if adopted, tend to draw underdeveloped societies within the Communist net of experience and know-how.

f. Continued support of non-Communist developmental norms by the Asian intelligentsia. In a developing society, it is vital to command the support of the "intellectual proletariat", which is the normal spark of any "second stage revolution" and which throughout history has successfully led revolts against the "dominant minority". Communism's appeal to the Asian intellectual is its proven ability to carry backward countries speedily through the crisis of modernization and industrialization. This appeal can never be discounted until Western techniques prove adequate to their developmental tasks. They have not yet done so (cf. Latin America and the Philippines, where U. S. influence has been paramount).

14. U. S. interests thus defined coincide remarkably with the basic interests of any developing non-Communist society. An emergent nation's major interests and preoccupations are security and economic development. Military regimes can be relied on to tend their security fences. But there is always the danger that they may neglect the developmental fences which can also open the gates of an underdeveloped society to Communist invasion. Thus, until acceptable developmental progress is made, the leadership and intelligentsia of a country must continue to weigh the relative advantages of

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Western or Communist techniques in solving their problems and crises. The policy implication to be drawn is that the quality of nationalism which attained fruition in political independence from Western colonialism does not necessarily assure continued independence from the Sino-Soviet threat.

15. Three additional policy implications are pertinent:

a. Where underdevelopment, socialism and governmental authoritarianism coincide as norms, the gap between such norms and Lenin's "democratic centralism" is perilously narrow and will continue to endanger U. S. interests until it is safely widened. Yet the margin cannot be widened until the barrier of self-sustained growth is penetrated.

b. We must learn to work more effectively with indigenous authoritarianism and thereby play a more influential role in the "management" of the internal socio-economic revolution. Though we should encourage and support free enterprise, democratic values, and parliamentary procedures as appropriate, it is essential that non-Communist types of socialism be maintained at a minimum as the developmental pattern and that slippage toward Communism be avoided or held to a minimum.

c. Should a country rely progressively on Communist developmental techniques, U. S. interests will be served best if we continue to identify our interests with the main thrusts of Asian nationalism within the country, e.g., its desire for independence and development. The United States should be prepared to cooperate with national Communist regimes (cf. Yugoslavia) in an effort to maintain national independence and provide resistance to gradual satellization through adoption of Communist norms and/or increased economic dependence on the Bloc (cf. Iraq).

B. Three Basic Questions

16. Long-range policy implications of military takeovers to be derived from the foregoing can perhaps best be focused on the answers to these three questions:

a. Does the observable trend toward military regimes, and the frequent corollary abandonment of parliamentary procedures, threaten U. S. interests?

b. Does this trend toward political authoritarianism presage a trend toward economic authoritarianism and thus pave the way toward an easier acceptance of Communist norms of government and economic development?

c. Does U. S. support of military regimes contribute to a non-democratic militaristic image of the United States damaging to our worldwide interests?

17. An attempt to answer these questions is made in the following paragraphs.

C. Do Military Regimes Threaten U. S. Interests?

18. No short or generalized answer can be given to this question: all depends on the regime and its record. Latin America is replete with examples of good and bad military dictators and history will no doubt repeat itself in Asia. It is probable that in the long-run U. S. interests will best be served by benevolent and experienced civilian politicians who have a broad popular base and are held to some form of accountability by a parliament or organized opposition. This, however, is an ideal which must in most countries be subordinated to the practical and the possible for many years to come.

19. There are several reasons why we must continue to support and learn to work effectively with military regimes,

a. A real military threat confronts Red China's peripheral neighbors (Taiwan, Burma, Laos, Korea, Viet Nam).

b. The officer groups are often the most pro-Western and non-Communist organized cadres within an underdeveloped society (Pakistan, Indonesia). They are frequently the most educated and usually the most disciplined. In small countries especially, where security and trappings of sovereignty are national obsessions, the military can in political or economic crises make demands which civilians would shirk from.

c. It will take decades in most of underdeveloped Asia to develop those institutions which in the most advanced countries establish civilian control of the military (India is the present exception).

d. Situations will continue to arise where the military will intervene in government to (i) supplant ineptness or corruption of civilian governments (Pakistan, Burma) or (ii) furnish strong political leadership in an inherently unstable situation (Indonesia).

e. There is no reason why a military regime cannot safeguard U. S. interests in a given country as well as a non-military regime if it addresses itself to the country's developmental problems. In certain instances, the military has proved more courageous in effecting necessary reform measures than civilian politicians (land reform in Egypt, Iraq and Pakistan). And, as noted above, there are certain advantages in ruling by fiat during times of crisis.

20. Military regimes, however, can pose long-range threats to U. S. interests.

a. It is the exceptional military man who by temperament and training possesses the technical background, political skill and mass leadership which developmental progress in Free Asia demands.

b. A military oligarchy runs the danger always of losing touch with the people and, thereby, of permitting to develop that counterelite which can one day rise against it. This, of course, is a problem inherent in all authoritarian regimes which are not benevolent and which do not make developmental progress.

c. A military oligarchy also risks losing contact with the non-military intelligentsia which, history teaches, ultimately shapes the choices and destinies of society. Thus a military regime can be too conservative to satisfy the left-of-center orientation of the Asian intelligentsia, it can be too pro-Western, or it can alienate itself from a popular acceptance of neutralism (now true to some extent in Pakistan).

d. Because military figures so often do not have the "grass roots" feel of the mass politician, there is the danger that economic development will be under-emphasized or that it will be de-emphasized in favor of armament. By the very nature of things, a military oligarchy is inclined to over-emphasize its armament requirements (cf. Pakistan and Iran).

21. Two conclusions are justified:

a. Military regimes need not necessarily threaten U. S. interests in Asia in the foreseeable future if they can be influenced to attack the developmental problem more seriously and responsibly since developmental progress is the principal key to locking off dissidence and the search for extreme alternatives on the part of the intelligentsia and civilian political spokesmen.

b. It should be within U. S. capabilities to influence such regimes as the United States itself comes more clearly to see that its own interests will be served best by placing greater emphasis and urgency on economic development throughout Free Asia.

22. Our MAP-related training programs offer great opportunities for inculcating in the Asian military a

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greater appreciation of the necessity for economic development and a more rational allocation of resources, both internal and external, as between military and developmental programs.

23. Eleven of the twelve countries to which we contribute defense support fall within underdeveloped Asia. It is possible and necessary that our diplomatic and military arms coordinate their approach to Asian military leaders toward the end of assuring that a given country has both adequate military support and economic development to protect U. S. interests and, in the case of allies, to develop the desired complementary limited war capabilities. This will require a clear understanding on our part and on theirs that the Communist threat is not exclusively a security or military threat.

D. Does Political Authoritarianism Presage a Trend Toward Economic Authoritarianism?

24. Political authoritarianism unquestionably weakens the tenuous fibers of democratic beliefs and values in Asia and points the way toward an easier acceptance of economic controls which trend toward Communist techniques. This does not mean, however, that a given country cannot preserve its independence if it embraces Communism (Yugoslavia). Any trend in this direction, however, endangers U. S. interests and adds to our difficulties in communicating with and influencing a society which must depend more on Sino-Soviet developmental experience than on Western.

25. Hence, the correlation between political authoritarianism and economic authoritarianism, and its dangers, must be impressed on the minds of military leaders and must remain one of our principal policy guidelines in exploring and developing techniques whereby Western values can be grafted on indigenous varieties on non-Leninist socialism.

E. Does U. S. Support of Military Regimes Contribute to a Non-Democratic World-Wide Militaristic Image of the United States?

26. The answer to this appears to be, that it need not. It is perfectly possible for us to perpetuate our image as a democratic and basically non-militaristic power, notwithstanding our support of military regimes and our own armaments posture. If we set an example of liberal democracy at work, mute our own militarists somewhat, show a greater understanding of neutralism, and identify ourselves more firmly with developmental progress, we can certainly remedy a somewhat tarnished U. S. image throughout much of Asia.

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27. In conducting relations with a country ruled by a military regime, the United States should make every effort to make it clear that our overriding interests coincide with those of the mass of the people: continued independence, economic growth, and some progress toward constitutional and democratic norms within their own way of life. We should stay in touch with opposition elements and avoid too close identification with any authoritarian regime in power, while preserving available opportunities of influencing the regime in directions consistent with U. S. interests. Above all, we should seek maximum contact with the main streams of a country's intelligentsia. We shall no doubt find that to make acceptable progress toward these objectives we must allocate greater resources to exchanges and training programs and use such programs as a major arm of policy to influence desired evolutionary trends.

28. Our encouragement of military regimes to emphasize economic development and our recognition that neutralism is basically a prevalent and understandable extension of the anti-colonial bias can also do much to offset any ill effects stemming from our support of military regimes. To the extent that neutralism reflects nationalistic feeling, it serves as a constructive force in containing Sino-Soviet influence and therefore is a force with which the United States should be aligned (India, UAR, Indonesia). Hence, military regimes must be influenced to de-emphasize the military where over-emphasis (a) is detrimental to the development effort (Iran, Pakistan), (b) contributes to regional instability (Pakistan), or (c) alienates neutrals (India) without concomitant advantages.

29. In sum, if the United States quietly proceeds to make its own democracy work, stands unequivocally for the independence and development of emergent nations, and assists the regime in power to confront its problems of security and development--each in balance--we shall have made the best of the necessity of working with and through military authoritarianism in this stage of Asian development.

30. In making a virtue of the necessity of dealing with military regimes, we should nevertheless bear in mind that the complexity of the developmental process requires that the military utilize civilian competence to the utmost lest it alienate the intelligentsia and prepare the way for its own destruction through a "second stage revolution". The other horn of this dilemma is that if this is done, and if the military regime makes progress toward over-coming educational and economic underdevelopment, it prepares the way for its own replacement by a return of civilian power, a restoration of political debate, a more pragmatic approach to problems confronting the society, and a

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re-establishment of what is commonly accepted in non-Communist societies as a traditional division of labor between the civilian and military elements of government.

31. The happy medium from the standpoint of U. S. interests, therefore, would appear to be (a) a military regime "civilianized" to the greatest extent possible (b) headed by a military leader who sees security and development in perspective and thereby evidences political leadership of the type required in a developing society. Our past experience with military regimes testifies eloquently to the difficulties of attaining such a happy medium.

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ANNEX AIMPLICATIONS OF RECENT MILITARY COUPS D'ETAT
IN THE MIDDLE EASTI. Background

1. During 1958 there were three military takeovers in the Middle East.

2. On July 14 the government of Prime Minister Nuri al-Said, who had strongly supported the Baghdad Pact and in other ways demonstrated his friendship for the West, was overthrown by elements of the Iraqi Army. In the accompanying violence and disorder, members of the Iraqi royal family and high officials of the Nuri regime were cruelly murdered and other prominent political and military leaders subjected to unfair and undignified trials. Today there continues to be a large measure of instability in Iraq, and the Communists appear to be the most powerful single political entity in the country. The Qassim regime on the one hand has displayed cordial and friendly attitudes toward the Communist Bloc and on the other hand, while professing friendship for the U. S., has both demonstrated and voiced suspicious and in some cases hostile attitudes toward the United States.

3. On October 7 President Mirza of Pakistan, acting in concert with Army Commander-in-Chief General Ayub Khan and other key officers of the Pakistan military, issued a proclamation through which he assumed full responsibility for the conduct of the Government of Pakistan. In this peaceful takeover the Constitution of 1956 was abrogated, the national and provincial legislatures dissolved, political parties abolished, and martial law declared. After a short period in which Mirza and Ayub acted as a duumvirate, General Ayub on October 27 assumed full powers and in effect exiled Mirza from the country. Ayub continues to exercise full control of the country, but the administration of the country has been ostensibly turned over to the professional civil service.

4. On November 17 General Abboud, Commander-in-Chief of the Sudanese Armed Forces, announced that the Sudanese Army had taken over because of corruption in the country. The leaders of this bloodless coup immediately banned

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political parties and shut down newspapers. The transitional constitution was suspended and the Parliament dissolved. It appeared that the leaders of the Sudan coup may at least partially have been motivated by a desire to prevent and control pro-Nasser and Communist activity in the Sudan. In the first few weeks of its life the new government maintained friendly relations with the UAR and at the same time has demonstrated a friendly attitude toward the United States.

5. Although there are superficial dissimilarities in the immediate causes and circumstances leading up to these three coups d'etat, there is a striking similarity in their basic causes as well as in the structure and development of the political and social base on which they occurred. The policy implications of these three military takeovers can best be understood in terms of the basic similarity of causative factors and socio-political structure.

II. Basic Similarity in Underlying Causes of Three Coups

6. In considering the implications of the military takeovers in Iraq, Pakistan, and the Sudan, it is important to recognize that authoritarian regimes, frequently with military support if not actual participation, have been the rule rather than the exception in the newly independent states of the post-World War II Middle East. For example, the Iraq of Nuri al-Said was in many respects as authoritarian as the Iraq of General Qassim. The previous regime in Pakistan was as authoritarian in practice as its successor but was impeded in its operations by a facade of democratic institutions that did not work. Even states with a relatively long history of independence, such as Afghanistan and Iran, are no less authoritarian than their "recently liberated" sister nations in the Middle East. The authoritarian nature of the current regimes in the UAR, Iran, Jordan, and others is plain for all to see.

7. Nor is the military coup d'etat a phenomenon that suddenly appeared in the Middle East in 1958. In Iraq there had been several military movements, some unsuccessful, since the country obtained its independence in 1932. A succession of coups d'etat, some with violence, plagued Syria from early 1949 (roughly three years after its achievement of independence) until its union with Egypt in early 1958. In Lebanon in 1952 the military had helped to depose President Khoury. The Egyptian Revolution of July 1952 was effected by a military coup d'etat. Even in Saudi Arabia and the Yemen there have been abortive anti-governmental activities by military elements in the past few years.

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8. Perhaps primarily because of their basically authoritarian nature and tradition, the independent states of the Middle East have placed great emphasis on building up the security forces and keeping the military happy. Although it is surely not the only cause, this has been one of the principal causes of the heavy demands on friendly governments for military assistance. Upon the achievement of independence of these countries became responsible for the control of their own armies and police power, both of which had formerly been controlled by a mandatory or colonial nation of the West. Western forces were removed from Lebanon and Syria only in 1946; from Egypt, only with the evacuation of the Suez Canal, although the evacuation of 1946 had taken British forces from most of the country; from Pakistan, in 1947; from the Sudan, after 1953. The bulk of the younger officers of the Middle Eastern armies have derived from social groups that have increasingly challenged the old orders. All of these factors taken together have given the military a key role in the Islamic states of the Middle East.

9. With few exceptions the states of the Middle East pay lip service to democratic forms of government. Although the outward forms of such Western political institutions as parliaments, elections, and political parties have been grafted on to the predominantly Islamic society of the Arab states and Pakistan, in practice these Middle Eastern societies have still retained their own traditional, highly authoritarian concepts of government and administration. When the concept of secular-based government was adopted by Middle Eastern intellectuals in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, Western-type parliamentary government and political forms were part of the leading intellectual movements of the time. On a practical basis these concepts were adopted because the French and the British were then in control of the areas in question. As British and French prestige began to wane in the 1930's and the nationalist quarrel with them grew in intensity, the rising power and prestige of Germany and Italy exerted a powerful attraction for some of the Middle Eastern intelligentsia. Although there had developed disillusionment with Islam as a way of life, the inherent authoritarianism of Islamic society predisposed many Moslems to sympathetic understanding of authoritarian political philosophies. This explains why the anti-democratic aspects of fascism apparently constituted so little intellectual hindrance to the Arab intelligentsia and why, after World War II, many of the same intelligentsia have found a somewhat similar attraction in Communism. It is not an oversimplification to state that basically the attraction of these and other anti-democratic movements has

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been their authoritarian, totalitarian content and their alleged ability to "get things done". Thus, disbelief and disillusionment in the feasibility and desirability of democracy is in many respects the common denominator of the Middle Eastern pro-Communists of today and the pro-fascists of the 1930's.

10. To add to other underlying causes, there has developed widespread disillusionment, particularly on the part of educated groups, with the group of politicians who were in most cases the original leaders of the independence movements. Whether the belief was valid or not it was widely supposed in Iraq, Pakistan, and the Sudan, and in most cases in those countries where coups had occurred earlier, that the civilian politicians had become exceedingly corrupt. It was easy for educated groups to see that these politicians had failed to fulfill their oft-repeated promises of reform and progress. At the same time, there has developed a generally greater faith on the part of the Middle Eastern peoples in the relative honesty, patriotism, and political detachment of the military, particularly the younger element. An authoritarian, repressive regime is not necessarily unpopular with the people, particularly if it appears to be fulfilling popular aspirations.

11. Although the new elites of the Middle East profess to speak in the name of "the people" and have always promised to restore liberties suppressed under previous regimes, power continues to be exercised and monopolized by small circles in almost all of the countries of the Middle East. The new regimes possess the means in arms and communications by which to compel obedience. They know how to use propaganda and mass persuasion and indoctrination. These techniques, however, are a two-edged sword, for in the changing society of the Middle East the new leaders are creating a wide range of expectations, both material and political, that must be satisfied if the leaders of a coup today are to survive without themselves being overthrown by a countercoup tomorrow.

III. Implications of Military Takeovers for U. S. Policy in the Middle East

12. There are obvious embarrassments to the United States, both in its world posture and in the eyes of many Americans, in maintaining friendly relations with what for all practical purposes may be military dictatorships ruthlessly suppressing democratic life. Our major problems, however, derive not from the fact that we maintain relations

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with an authoritarian regime in power but that we may continue to find ourselves in the position of being identified with such a regime and its policies rather than with the aspirations of the people concerned.

13. It is of course essential in the Cold War situation to seek to promote stability in the underdeveloped countries of the Middle East where instability may invite Communism. A new, authoritarian regime, though in appearance less "democratic" than its predecessor, may possess much more stability and may well lay the ground for ultimate return to a more firmly based "democracy". These are compelling reasons for our maintaining relations with regimes in power. On the other hand, to become identified with an authoritarian regime and its policies makes us a target for anti-regime propaganda and activity and creates the impression both inside and outside of the country concerned that we approve of authoritarianism and repression so long as our self-interest is thereby satisfied. This impression once created tends to isolate us from whatever progressive forces may exist in a given country, and it discredits our sincere dedication to the principles of freedom, democracy, economic progress and development, and respect for human dignity.

14. The answer to this general problem of the nature of our relationship with authoritarian regimes, particularly those that may come about through military takeovers, probably lies in our following a policy that would permit us to present openly, clearly, and unmistakably our belief in the principles of human dignity and freedom and to identify ourselves with the aspirations of the peoples of the area. This would give assurance to indigenous opposition groups that though we would not interfere in internal affairs we would not in principle be opposed to peaceful changes brought about by the peoples concerned. Of course, the regimes in power will be suspicious of the most innocent contacts we may maintain with opposition groups. For example, we have been aware of opposition to the Shah in Iran, but the importance of our relationship with the Shah as the leader of the regime in power requires us to exercise great caution in maintaining routine, overt contacts with actual or potential opposition groups. Yet, if we have maintained no contact with opposition groups in the Middle East, we may as in Iraq find ourselves facing a suspicion and latent hostility that seems almost impossible to pierce.

15. The increased Middle Eastern emphasis on the military power of the state poses in itself a serious problem for the U. S., whether the regime in question is a new or an older authoritarian government. The Soviet intrusion

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into the Middle East in 1955 came about largely because of the desire of the Egyptian and Syrian military regimes for arms. One of the first acts of the Iraq regime under General Qassim was to negotiate an arms deal with the Soviet Bloc. It is no secret that our military aid to Pakistan and our connection with the Baghdad Pact of which Pakistan is a member have been significantly persuasive factors in the continuing friendly attitude of the new Pakistan regime toward us. In the bi-polar world of the Cold War, our refusal to deal with a military or authoritarian regime in the Middle East could lead almost necessarily to the establishment of that regime's friendly relations with the Soviet Bloc, if only to gain a cheap arms source. The key role of the military in most of the Middle Eastern states raises further important questions of (1) how the U. S. can go about strengthening its relations with existing military leaders, (2) how the U. S. can either strengthen existing civilian institutions or encourage military leaders to create and strengthen civilian institutions, and (3) whether the U. S. should make a greater effort to challenge the heavy dependence of certain Middle Eastern states on the Soviet Union for military equipment. These questions might conceivably be settled by an internationally-agreed embargo on arms shipments to the Middle East. However, we do not foresee that the almost insuperable obstacles to such an embargo can be overcome at this time or in the near future.

16. The heavy dependence of some Middle Eastern states on the Soviet Union for military equipment may give the Soviet Union a greater degree of long-range influence on the policies of those countries than their present political orientation might indicate. On balance, it might well be found in our interest to make a greater effort to challenge the USSR as a source of supply, but such a decision must take into account other factors such as the effect on Arab-Israeli relations and their military postures. A partial answer would certainly lie, however, in the increased training of Middle Eastern Army personnel in this country at our expense.

17. An important aspect of our relations with the Middle Eastern regimes is in the field of economics. Many of the authoritarian regimes have come to power with promises of reform and economic development that they have been unable to fulfill. Public impatience for the benefits of development has been another factor in the generally widespread support for strong authoritarian regimes. Some of them have turned to the Soviet Bloc to obtain relatively large amounts of economic assistance. Such shifts toward

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the Soviet Bloc for economic assistance may have resulted only partially from the refusal of the West to grant assistance or to extend it only "with strings". Of more significance may be the trend toward "neutralism" or, perhaps more properly, "non-alignment". Many of the Middle Eastern countries appear to be coming around to the view that their national interest can best be served by divorcing themselves from the Cold War and from such close identification with either the United States or the Soviet Union as to invite internal reactions. Such neutralism is not necessarily inconsistent with our interests, if in fact it promotes stability and progress in the country concerned. Our recognition of this fact and greater willingness to assist neutralist countries may reduce tensions and help to reduce the instability that breeds new coups. In addition, the largely agricultural base of the Middle Eastern economies creates a foreign trade problem in that primary export commodities such as cotton and wheat are surplus in the Western world and particularly in the U. S., thus tending to force a dependence upon Sino-Soviet Bloc markets. Other trade problems, including those of oil, must be taken into account in evaluating our relationships with these regimes.

IV. The Outlook for Stability in the Middle East

18. In view of the underlying factors predisposing the Middle Eastern states to the establishment and acceptance of authoritarian, military-based regimes, and the unlikelihood that such groups will be able quickly to solve their countries' basic problems, we must anticipate that there will continue to be military takeovers from time to time in the Middle East. Within the next few years, according to intelligence estimates, there is at least a fair possibility that security forces might be used as the basis for attempted coups d'etat in Ceylon, Iran, Jordan, and perhaps even in Lebanon. Dissatisfied military elements in the new regimes of Iraq, Pakistan, and the Sudan may well attempt to seize power from the military factions now in control. There is at least an outside chance coups d'etat, supported by if not organized through the military forces, may take place in Afghanistan, Ethiopia, Greece, Saudi Arabia, and the Yemen. With this outlook in view, the U. S. must anticipate that it will be called upon to recognize new authoritarian regimes in the Middle East. In view of the implications for U. S. policy pointed out in Section III above, it would appear to be in our interest to take such steps as may be feasible to ensure that, without becoming in any way involved with actual plotters, appropriate contacts have been maintained with opposition groups that might conceivably constitute a

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new regime. It is also in our interest to take such steps as may be feasible to identify ourselves with the aspirations of the peoples of the Middle East and to counter any efforts to depict us as cynically supporting unpopular regimes. Thus, the official public position of the U. S. should be that it is for the peoples concerned to determine the nature of the regime they desire. The U. S. itself is dedicated to the principles of freedom, justice, economic progress and development, and respect for human dignity and believes in the applicability of these principles everywhere. However, it is not our policy to interfere in the internal affairs of other states, and we would hope that all political changes might be made peacefully by the peoples concerned. It is our policy to recognize and to maintain relations with those established governments that seek to maintain relations with us on the basis of proper recognition and due acknowledgment of their international obligations and commitments.

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ANNEX BPOLICY IMPLICATIONS OF RECENT
MILITARY TAKEOVERS: THE FAR EAST AREA

I

1. Attached are two papers, on Burma and Thailand, giving factual background on the only two takeovers to have recently occurred in the Far East. Each of these country papers concludes with comments on what those takeovers portend for U. S. policy.

2. It would be hazardous to draw any general conclusions for the Far East area from these two military takeovers. They do not appear to reflect any area trend in this direction, it being noted that the October 1958 coup in Thailand was typical of past Thai political practices. As to whether these two coups could be regarded as advantageous or disadvantageous from the standpoint of U. S. interests, the Burma takeover seems to have been generally favorable, at least in the short run. No perceptible advantage to the U. S. would appear to flow from the Thai coup; on the other hand, owing to the long-standing oligarchic nature of Thai politics, the coup could not be represented as any major reversal from democratic trends in Thailand.

II

3. Apart from the significance (or lack thereof) of the takeovers in Burma and Thailand, the following factors are likely to make military takeovers or some form of authoritarian control a likelihood in most of the Afro-Asian countries for the foreseeable future:

a. Their lack of experience in government and management. Thus 8 of the 11 East Asian (FE) countries have gained independence since 1945.

b. Their own traditional, authoritarian concepts of government and administration.

c. Their emphasis, which we support, on building up conditions of security and stability in the face of a very real Communist menace. This magnifies the importance of strong armies and police and generally creates a climate conducive to authoritarian control.

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d. Their backwardness, together with their desire for rapid economic advancement and industrialization. The peoples in these countries are widely attracted to the kind of leadership that can "get things done".

e. Conversely, there may be disillusionment in democratic processes which may be associated with corruption, inefficiency and lack of progress.

4. These and other factors will continue to impede democratic growth in most of the Far Eastern countries. We must accept this as a fact of life. Moreover, we must bear in mind that democracy has little or no chance of emergence in a nation which is torn by civil strife, insurgency or general insecurity. The first task of these newly independent nations must be to establish security and stability, though not at the expense of human freedoms, education and enlightenment. Some regimes may be less "democratic" than their predecessors but have the compensating advantage of being more efficient in creating those conditions of stability and progress which are so essential for the long-term growth of democracy.

5. Our Ambassador in Viet-Nam has suggested that perhaps we should concentrate more on assuring as best we can the recognition of certain basic individual rights (including education) and continue to do all we can to contribute to the social well-being and economy rather than worrying too much about the outward forms of democracy. Not that we should encourage totalitarian dictators, he adds, but rather that we should back strong anti-Communist leaders who must act in this formative period in a fairly autocratic manner.

6. Actually there is very little choice for us in the matter of whether or not to support a regime which is in power. To take a cool or unfriendly stance vis-a-vis a regime in, say, Laos or Cambodia or Indonesia, is to risk a replacement of U. S. influence and standing in that country with neutralist or even pro-Communist forces. The Communists are, of course, prepared to step in whenever and wherever we step out.

7. On the other hand, to become closely identified with an authoritarian regime and its policies makes us a target for anti-regime propaganda and activity and creates the impression that we approve of authoritarianism as long as our self-interest is thereby satisfied. This impression tends to alienate us from democratic opposition and progressive forces and it discredits some of the very principles

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for which our country professes to stand. The answer to this general problem of the nature of our relationship with authoritarian regimes probably lies in accenting our belief in the principles of human dignity and freedom and to identify ourselves with the aspirations of the peoples of the area. Without interfering in the internal affairs of these countries, we should maintain personal friendships, or at least contacts, with non-Communist opposition party members. The manner and extent to which this is done must, of course, be decided on a country-by-country basis.

8. Finally, there is the question of what our policy should be toward governments which are corrupt, inefficient and easy prey to the Communists. Should we interfere to the extent of helping to overthrow those governments and replacing them with ones which are more cooperative and useful from our point of view? There is no general answer to this question. Here again each case must be judged on its own merits. Obviously we should only interfere in the internal affairs of a country when and to the extent it is absolutely essential to our national interests that we do so. Any interference runs clear risk of disclosure, and any disclosure could impair the standing of our country all around the globe. Whereas the temptations may be great to seek a short-term solution to problems of inefficiency and corruption by fostering a military coup, in the long run the same problems seem to reappear under dictatorships as well. Furthermore, removing them legally then becomes much more difficult. It is likely to give rise to a succession of coups and general political instability.

Attachments:

1. The recent military takeover in Burma.
2. The recent military takeover in Thailand.

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BURMA

1. The military takeover in Burma was not the result of a sudden coup d'etat but rather the final consequence of a series of disintegrating events which began with a split in the ruling Anti-Fascist Peoples' Freedom League (AFPEL) coalition in the spring of 1958. After that split, U Nu's government lost a good portion of its ministers and more than half of its parliamentary support. In a parliamentary test vote of confidence held early in June, the government was able to remain in office only with the support of the Communist-infiltrated National United Front (NUF). The logic of this situation emboldened the extreme left-wing political groups to place pressure on U Nu to ease the government's policy toward the insurgents. The Communist insurgents themselves attempted to negotiate favorable "peace" terms. A crypto-communist group did arrange a "surrender" and converted itself into a recognized political party dedicated to "achieving a communist world".

2. During the summer months, while these developments were taking place, tensions between the two dissident factions of the old AFPEL became sharper. Some of U Nu's ministers, anxious to consolidate their positions in anticipation of general elections, resorted to force and threats of force in an effort to capture control of significant political positions of strength. By the middle of September, there was a real danger of violence on a national scale as skirmishes developed between the two AFPEL factions.

3. Although the Army has a strong tradition of non-involvement in political affairs, it could hardly be expected to be indifferent to these events. Its leader, General Ne Win attempted as best he could to prevent excessive concessions to the insurgents and seems to have been successful in precluding direct negotiations with the Communists. But, when the fighting between the two AFPEL groups reached such proportions that Army units appeared likely to be involved, he and his senior officers decided to take action in the political sphere. Consequently, they delivered what was in effect an ultimatum to U Nu, giving him approximately 72 hours either to reform the government or to resign.

4. From all accounts, U Nu was also deeply disturbed by the trend of events and, in a sense, welcomed the Army's intervention as a way out of an impossible situation. Consequently, within the time limit allotted by the

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ultimatum, he and the military officers worked out a scheme for the transfer of power which would avoid any rupture of the constitution and which was designed to insure that military control would be temporary. Accordingly, on September 26, it was announced that U Nu intended to summon the parliament, lay before them his resignation and nominate General Ne Win as his successor. Ne Win, on the other hand, expressed his willingness to accept the nomination and to serve six months during which he and his non-partisan government would lay the basis for "free and fair elections". This arrangement came into effect on October 28, and Ne Win was sworn into office on October 29. He appointed a cabinet of distinguished non-political figures and took over control of Burma in a general atmosphere of relief and political relaxation. Only the Communists and the extreme left-wing expressed unqualified disapproval.

5. Upon his assumption of office, Ne Win announced that his first task was to restore law and order throughout the country. He let it be known that he intended to launch a military campaign against the insurgents and to clean up corruption, gangsterism and general racketeering at all levels, government and private. He repeated his intention to hold elections within six months, but qualified this by stating that fulfillment of this intention depended on "cooperation" of all parties concerned.

6. The translation of this program into action is as yet far from complete, but enough has happened in the last two months to give some general indications of the trend. In the first place, it is patent that the Army has every intention of becoming a fairly permanent fixture on the Burmese political scene. While leaving nominal control of government in the hands of the cabinet, military officers have established a sort of "shadow" regime by insinuating their own members into various strategic positions in the bureaucracy where they have control over such significant functions of government as agricultural policy, the railroads, public information, food distribution, the police, trade unions, national registration, state-owned industry, and even the administration of the City of Rangoon.

7. In the second place, it appears that the Army attaches more significance to rooting out above-ground Communist contact men than to actual military operations against the underground insurgents. Despite its announced intention to take to the field against these guerrilla units during the current dry season, the Army has as yet mounted no serious campaign. The dry season has less than

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three months to run. On the other hand, legislation has been passed by the parliament and administrative action is in hand to prosecute vigorously those left-wing leaders who have been in active touch with the underground. A number of arrests have already been made and more are reportedly scheduled.

8. In the third place, the direct, blunt military mentality of the new regime is being applied to most aspects of national policy. Because of Burma's precarious international position, the official policy of neutrality will be preserved. Because of Burma's relative impoverishment, "fancy" economic development schemes will be dropped and stress will be placed on hard work to convert the country's normal resources into a reasonable standard of living for the country's population. Dependence upon foreign assistance will be eschewed unless such assistance is given freely in response to Burmese requests.

9. As for the politicians, the issue seems open to speculation. U Nu, who, in the eyes of the Army, brought the country to the brink of disaster, is decidedly in disfavor. On the other hand, U Ba Swe, who was former Minister of Defense, is generally appreciated by the military men. However, he is associated so closely with U Kyaw Nyein, the principal architect of the "fancy" economic development schemes, that it is doubtful the Army would freely turn over complete control of the country to his leadership. Rumors suggest that some negotiations are now taking place to devise a means, within the letter of the constitution, which will permit Ne Win to relinquish nominal control of Government to U Ba Swe at the end of the prescribed six month period, but to let the Army exercise continued direction of policy indefinitely through the instrumentality of its "shadow" regime of political colonels.

10. A general evaluation of the policy implications for the U. S. inherent in this military takeover is difficult to make until the end of six months "interim" period has been reached. The manner in which this critical moment will be bridged could be determinative of the entire future relationship between the United States and Burma. However, pending this event and its consequences, the following preliminary judgments can be registered.

a. On balance, the military takeover was a good thing. It checked a serious leftward drift in Burma and prevented the outbreak of serious violence which could only have led to further chaos in a country sick almost to death of civil strife.

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b. The current regime can be expected to be militantly anti-Communist and to deal firmly with both guerrilla insurgents and their above-ground agents.

c. The sharp shaking being given to public corruption, inefficiency, and sheer slovenly laziness is long overdue and well merited. There is a danger, however, that it will be done in such a heavyhanded manner that the Army will become extremely unpopular and will create deepseated popular currents of resentment which can eventually be exploited by the Communists.

d. Despite their anti-Communism, the Army leaders are not necessarily pro-American and are inclined to view U. S. policy in Burma with suspicion. This will continue to make it difficult to do business with them in an atmosphere of mutual confidence. They may bend over backwards to avoid being labelled as the "tools of the Americans".

e. The blunt military approach to national policy matters, especially in the field of economic aid, will make it difficult for the U. S. to be effective in assisting Burma with the means now at our disposal. The Development Loan Fund, for example, is considered by the current regime to be in the "fancy" category, and will probably not be utilized by Burma.

f. On the other hand, deliveries under the U. S.-Burmese military sales agreement are extremely well received and seem to afford the current best means of continuing rapport between the U. S. and the present Burmese leadership.

11. In summary, the situation produced in Burma as a result of the military takeover makes it probable that the government will be more willing and able than its predecessor to defend itself against Communist subversion and manipulation. At the same time, the new government presents us with a new series of complications which may require certain revisions in the tactics which we have developed for the conduct of relations with Burma. The exact shape of these complications will not become firm until April of this year. In the meantime, our best tactic in relations with Burma would seem to involve continued close contact with the Burmese military through fulfillment of our military sales deliveries, coupled with a quiet acquiescence in the general trend of national policy developments over which we have no control. Aside from making minor adjustments to meet

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specific Burmese requests, we should refrain from any major policy commitments in the field of economic aid until after the critical decisions of next April are resolved.

THAILAND

Change of Government

1. In October, 1958, a group of officials and military officers led by Field Marshal Sarit, Supreme Commander of the Thai Armed Forces, announced that it had abolished the constitution and parliament, on grounds that these institutions could not cope with the Communist threat. The group immediately declared its support of the throne, and there have been no signs of significant non-Communist opposition to its control. Since the change of government, the group has ruled by decree, but it has announced that an interim government and constituent assembly will be formed to govern Thailand and prepare a new constitution. The group is virtually the same as that which overthrew Phibun in September, 1957, and contains many of the officers who had previously supported his government. The October change of government appears to have been made largely for the purpose of ridding the military leaders of a parliament which they found it troublesome to have to control chiefly by money and intimidation. Nevertheless, the group's leadership has made particular efforts to gain popular support, thereby demonstrating that it is not totally unconcerned regarding public opinion.

Comment

2. In Thailand military leaders have traditionally been the chief determinant of the nation's political leadership. Whenever the chief political leader has lost control over the leaders of the armed forces his downfall has become inevitable. This was true in the days of the absolute monarchy and has continued to be true since the formation of a constitutional monarchy by military coup d'etat in 1932. As a result the accepted means of altering the national political leadership in Thailand has been the coup d'etat rather than elections. The recent change of government, however, was not even a coup d'etat, as Field Marshal Sarit already exercised power through the Army General he had named as Prime Minister.

3. Owing to the oligarchic nature of Thai politics the parliamentary institutions created in 1932 have been largely a pretense. The military group in power has ensured passage

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of desired measures by cash and/or cajolery, and the legislative assemblies have seldom performed representative functions. The Assembly abolished on October 20 was much the same as its predecessors in this respect.

4. The use of force to change the government in October, 1958, the continued maintenance of political power by Thai political leaders, and the abolition of a legislative body which the leaders had controlled by undemocratic means, do not constitute a new trend in Thai politics. These developments are but a continuation of past practice, with both advantageous and disadvantageous aspects. From the standpoint of Thailand's stability and security, continued political control by military leaders helps ensure continuity over the long run, in spite of periodic competition for leadership, and also tends to inhibit Communist infiltration and subversion. On the other hand more attention will have to be paid in future to the views of nonmilitary opinion leaders. There has never been a popular revolt in Thailand and there are no signs that one is in the offing; nevertheless, there is a growing political consciousness among urban Thai, and continued social and economic progress, as well as some progress toward more representative government over a period of years, are essential to the long-term maintenance of Thailand's stability. There are serious obstacles to such progress, but encouragement can be found in indications that the present regime desires public approbation.

5. Assisting Thailand to develop toward representative government continues to be one of our important long-term objectives. In the meantime, however, we should maintain a constructive relationship with the top leaders of the present regime, at the same time avoiding such close identification with them as to prejudice prospects of cooperation with their eventual successors. We should also continue to assist Thailand's efforts to strengthen itself economically and militarily, in order that this nation may have the time and means to achieve stability and progress.

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