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THE POLICY PROPOSALS: "A NEGOTIATED STALEMATE"

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The appearance of a crisis, such as that we now face in Vietnam, tends to encourage tactics at the expense of strategy and imprison thought in the immediate demands of action. Yet it is precisely in such a crisis, when the routine operations of diplomacy are frustrated and the lessons of experience equivocal, that the guidance of long-range policy is most needed. Without it, the domination of events over intentions becomes almost complete.

The present unstable and dangerous situation in Vietnam has many roots. In part, it is the result of past errors of judgment; in part, of mere accidents of world politics. However, in part, it is also the result of a failure of the United States to generate a foreign policy for Southeast Asia with the same combination of realism, enlightened self-interest, and sense of responsibility that was applied to the formulation of policy for Europe beginning in 1948. In fact, one of the problems of American foreign policy has been that the successful European policy of military alliance and economic assistance has been applied to Southeast Asia without very much consideration of the vastly different political environments of the two regions. This fact is now being recognized, after the general failure of the Seato approach to military security and the absence of a dramatic impact of the foreign aid programs in these areas, but a new general policy has not yet emerged. The U.S. has retreated to a series of ad hoc actions based on dubious analogies with noncomparable situations—Greece in 1948, Korea in 1950, Cuba in 1962—and the result has been an extremely unmanageable confrontation in Southeast Asia.

A long-range foreign policy for Southeast Asia is urgently required. It should include the following elements:

1. A basic reappraisal and refashioning of our policies toward China.
2. A more precise definition of our long-term political aims in Southeast Asia over the next ten years.
3. A reexamination of our relations with each of the countries of Southeast Asia in the light of the clarification of our long-term aims.
4. The adaptation of short-run policy—especially in Vietnam—to the long-run objectives and an abandonment of the essentially ad hoc, experimental approach.
5. An integration of policy in Southeast Asia with concordant policies toward India and Japan.

● CHINA AND THE U.S.

The U.S. needs a new and more effective foreign policy toward China. It is within our power to develop such a foreign policy, even though there can be no certainty of China's response. However, a reorientation in our relations toward China seems the best strategy for achieving our political objectives if it includes the following:

1. A clear declaration of U.S. opposition to Chinese imperialist and expansionist ambitions in Southeast Asia and a commitment to resist them. This means, concretely, a reassertion of our continuing national interest in Southeast Asia and our determined intention to maintain our presence in the area.
2. The termination of our version of the "Hallstein doctrine" toward China and an open recognition and acknowledgment of China as a major power in Asia. This would supply the basis for developing a "two-China" policy, in which U.S. relations with Taiwan would not prevent initiatives on our part in our relations with mainland China. A "two-China" policy is compatible with a U.S. military presence in Southeast Asia, including forms of nuclear power.
3. The development of direct and normal diplomatic relations with China as a substitute for the indirect and abnormal ones that we now have. This involves the diplomatic recognition of

multilateral arrangements, could be encouraged to play an intermediary role, especially as it becomes clear that they are developing no independent military force and that they are relying on the strategic protection of the U.S. In the case of India, the grave economic problems the country faces prevent it from playing a more positive role in Southeast Asia. But a meaningful U.S. foreign policy in the area is likely to serve the domestic needs of India and thereby contribute to stability in that whole region.

● TO FORMULATE POLICY

Foreign policy rests on domestic politics. The evolution of a long-range foreign policy in Southeast Asia will engage the attention of our political leaders over the next decade. Foreign policy centers in the office of the presidency. Because of the gravity and complexity of these matters, the only approach is that of Winston Churchill—to give the public the facts and to outline the dangers and struggles involved. A democratic society must rely on popular understanding. Clearly, the President must be able to conduct international negotiation with necessary diplomatic privacy. In the limelight of publicity, international political settlements cannot be achieved. Yet in marked contrast to his approach to the civil rights issue, President Johnson has not displayed the candor and directness with respect to the Vietnam crisis which the American people require and which is the basis for sound popular support.

The formulation of a bipartisan foreign policy has deep historic meaning for the U.S. It implies that foreign policy cannot be conducted on ideological terms or along such lines as to produce deep internal political cleavages. Nevertheless, continuous congressional debate is part of the process of evolving a bipartisan foreign policy. A rigid foreign policy in Southeast Asia is not only unrealistic and unattainable; it also overtaxes our political resources by running the risk of polarizing domestic politics.

American foreign policy should be animated, not by an ideological desire to destroy communism, but by an attempt to establish a peaceful world. We are not engaged in a world civil war, but in a desperate attempt to avoid one.

