

The Cold War vs. the Non-Aligned Movement

by Michael O. Billington

The British objectives in the Pacific theater during World War II were diametrically opposed to those of the United States under Franklin D. Roosevelt. Roosevelt's vision for the peace included a U.S. alliance with a strong, united China, together with Russia, turning the productive power of the war industries toward reconstruction and industrialization of the once-colonized areas of the Third World. FDR's untimely death largely ended the hope that such a vision would be realized.

Eight years later, John Foster Dulles, President Dwight Eisenhower's Secretary of State, demonstrated his advocacy of British objectives, as opposed to those of his own nation, in regard to both Roosevelt's "strong China" policy during the war, and to U.S. policy toward those nations which had subsequently won their independence from the European colonial powers. The date is 1953. Hugh S. Cumming, Jr. has just been appointed U.S. Ambassador to Indonesia, and he records in his notebook his instructions from Secretary Dulles:

"Don't tie yourself irrevocably to a policy of preserving the unity of Indonesia. . . . The territorial integrity of China became a shibboleth. We finally got a territorially integrated China—for whose benefit? The Communists. . . . As between a territorially united Indonesia which is *leaning and progressing toward communism*, and a *break up of that country into racial and geographic units*, I would prefer the latter as furnishing a fulcrum in which the U.S. could work" (emphasis added).¹

The anti-China aspect of this policy reflected Britain's war-time battle with Roosevelt. London insisted that China should be divided up into warring factions, with the British controlling each of them. John Foster Dulles's brother Allen, who ran the New York office of the OSS during the war and became director of the CIA under Eisenhower, had worked directly with the head of Britain's war-time intelligence in China, John Keswick, head of the infamous drug-running firm Jardine Matheson in Hong Kong. The British policy toward China was neither anti-Communist nor pro-Communist, but

classic colonial divide and conquer. The attempted subversion of Indonesia in 1957 had the same purpose, despite the Cold War "anti-communist" rhetoric used by the British and those in Washington who were their allies.

Indonesia was the first Asian country to win its independence by force of arms. Under Dutch control, the country had been run as a federal system, with local autonomy for local matters granted to the many island divisions of the archipelago. Under General Sukarno's leadership, the country was united, and it fought a bloody war for independence, inspired explicitly on the revolutionary struggle of the American colonies. The first name for their nation was the United States of Indonesia, with a constitution modelled on that of the United States. National unity was predicated on religious and ethnic tolerance and equality.

Sukarno refused to take sides in Winston Churchill's Cold War. He suppressed communist insurgency, but permitted a legitimate, law-abiding Communist Party. He admired Ho Chi Minh and Tito as nationalists, not as communists, while maintaining close ties to the Western nations.

To the British, and to John Foster Dulles, refusing to "take sides" was equivalent to membership in the Communist International. The last straw was Sukarno's co-sponsorship of the Asian-African Conference, held in Bandung, Indonesia, in 1955, which formed the seed crystal for the Non-Aligned Movement. One of the primary purposes of the conference was to prevent the Cold War from boiling over into a full-scale military conflict between the United States and China, by beginning diplomatic discussions and economic collaboration between China and its neighbors, of whatever political persuasion, in league with their African brothers. President Sukarno's opening address appealed for peace and unity in combatting colonialism, calling upon the spirit of the American Revolution, as the "first successful anti-colonial war in history." He evoked the memory of Franklin Roosevelt, by referencing the "fear of the future, fear of the hydrogen bomb, fear of ideologies. Perhaps this fear is a greater danger than the danger itself." He also quoted the "words of one of Asia's greatest sons," Sun Yat-sen, to emphasize reason over mindless activism: "To understand is hardest. Once one understands, action is easy," he said.

Rather than recognizing this speech, and the emerging Non-Aligned Movement, as representing hope for global peace and development, the Cold Warriors saw "communism."

Subversion

The British response was subversion. They had already nurtured a general from North Sumatra, Maludin Simbolon, who was engaged in large-scale smuggling through the British Crown Colony of Singapore. He and others in central and south Sumatra were encouraged to declare autonomy (but not independence) in December 1956 and January 1957. President Sukarno and Army chief Abdul Haris Nasution re-

1. This quote, and much of the material in this article, is taken from Audrey R. and George McT. Kahin, *Subversion as Foreign Policy: The Secret Eisenhower and Dulles Debacle in Indonesia* (New York: The New Press, 1995).

sponded cautiously, engaging in dialogue and making limited concessions for local autonomy.

In March 1957, another general, N.H. Ventje Sumual, took over Sulawesi. President Sukarno declared an Emergency and a State of Siege, but continued to negotiate. In May, a former Finance Minister with extensive ties in Holland and England, Dr. Sumitro Djohadikusumo, fled Jakarta and joined the rebelling general in Sumatra.

Sumitro immediately set in motion plans to market all Sumatran goods through London to finance the rebellion, according to a Taiwanese friend of Sumitro. The British granted Sumitro a visa under an alias to facilitate regular travel to Singapore and London, and the generals were all provided with bank accounts in Singapore. Sumitro met in October 1957 with British Commissioner General for Southeast Asia Robert H. Scott. U.S. Ambassador Cumming told Washington that the British were "sympathetic with rebel aims but presently cool toward covert support."

In other words, "Let's get the dumb Americans to do the dirty work." Sometime in late 1957, the United States began supplying large quantities of weapons and supplies to both the Sumatran and the Sulawesi rebels. CIA-contracted aircraft (Civil Air Transport) and submarines provided the matériel, and U.S. bombers and bomber pilots were contracted to "private" agencies to provide the rebels considerable air power. Training camps were set up in Okinawa, and airdrops were flown in via Singapore.

With this support, the rebels declared a Revolutionary Government of the Republic of Indonesia in February 1958. In March, Army Chief General Nasution totally surprised the rebels (and the British and the Dulles brothers) by overwhelming rebel forces in central Sumatra. Within weeks, the Army had retaken all the major centers of Sumatra.

The U.S. support operation did not abate, however. Attention was shifted to Sulawesi, including the provision of clandestine B-25 and B-26 bombers. General Sumual took all of Sulawesi, and began moving into the Molucca islands (Maluku). He even had plans to take over southern Borneo (Kalimantan), leading to an invasion of Java.

But, again, Indonesian military power proved stronger than anticipated, and the rebels were held in check. Dulles recorded in a cable to Washington in May 1958, that British Foreign Secretary Selwyn Lloyd, whom he had just met in Manila, "encouraged we should not give up hope on rebellious forces now principally in Celebes (Sulawesi)." Again, it was, "You guys should keep fighting."

Although it was now obvious to all that the United States and Britain were supporting the subversion, official U.S. policy was that there was no direct support, although Washington could not control American mercenaries who might be helping the rebels. This story was blown to bits on May 18, 1958, when a U.S. B-26, after bombing a port in Ambon, a city in the Moluccas, including some severe "collateral damage" on civilian areas, was shot down by Indonesian anti-aircraft. The

pilot, Allen L. Pope, an American, was carrying U.S. military credentials and passes to Clark Air Force Base in the Philippines. He admitted that he and others had been assigned to the CIA by the U.S. military.

President Sukarno purposely did not allow this exposure of U.S. operations to be leaked to the press, at least as far as was possible, and did not make a diplomatic stink. But, the operation was blown, and within two days, Dulles was talking about the terrible civil war in Indonesia, his hopes for peace, and the need to prevent outside interference. By August, the United States was providing military assistance to Jakarta, hoping Indonesia would not become dependent on the Soviets.

Pope was tried and condemned to death. When President Kennedy sent brother Robert to Jakarta in 1962, he arranged for Pope's release, while also pledging U.S. support for the return of Irian Jaya from the Dutch.

These are the memories provoked by U.S. Congressmen demanding autonomy for integral parts of the Indonesian Republic, and demands that the military relinquish its constitutional role in Indonesian society. The United States failed to support the aspirations of the Non-Aligned nations in the post-war era, and the current descent into global chaos is the result. This time, Washington must provide leadership for nation-building, and not be London's bully once again.

For previews and
information on
LaRouche publications:

Visit EIR's Internet Website!

- Highlights of current issues of EIR
- Pieces by Lyndon LaRouche
- Every week: transcript and audio of the latest **EIR Talks** radio interview.

<http://www.larouchepub.com>

e-mail: larouche@larouchepub.com