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Imagining (In)Dependence

The United States and Philippine Freedom in the Age of Decolonization

1945-1956

Elliot Newbold

Illustration: Filipinos protest American influence over the Philippines during the 1950s. Courtesy of the American Historical Collection, Rizal Library, Ateneo de Manila University, Quezon City, Philippines.

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Abbreviations

- Asian Relations Conference (1947) — ARC
- Australia, New Zealand, United States Security Treaty (1951) — ANZUS
- Bell Trade Act (1946) — BTA
- Mutual Defense Treaty (1951) — MDT
- North Atlantic Treaty Organization — NATO
- Philippine Rehabilitation Act (1946) — PRA
- Southeast Asia Treaty Organization — SEATO
- United Nations — UN
- United States Information Agency — USIA

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Introduction

The 'Trappings of Sovereignty': Empire and Occupation in Philippine Approaches to Decolonization

'Independence will not mean, for the Philippines, being cast loose, with all the trappings of sovereignty, all the responsibilities of nationhood, and as much security and protection as the Filipinos, unaided, could find for themselves in a world in which the strongest ruled supreme, while the weak had to hitch his wagon to a star (and make sure it was the right star) in order to survive.'[1]

The Filipino statesman Maximo Kalaw wrote these words in April 1945. After centuries of colonial rule and four years of Japanese occupation during World War II, General Douglas MacArthur returned to put the Philippines back on the path to independence promised by American policymakers ten years earlier.[2] Distributed during MacArthur's advance, Kalaw's pamphlet located the Philippines within a changing international system. The collapse of Japanese and European imperialism started a period of decolonization that remapped the world. Freedom movements in India, Burma, Malaya, Indochina, and Indonesia intensified their battles against European rule. Together, their leaders participated in a global conversation about anti-imperialist struggle built on shared experiences of Western racism, imperialism, and underdevelopment.[3] Although open to assistance from colonial powers such as Britain and the United States, India's Jawaharlal Nehru felt 'the West' had 'driven us into wars and conflicts without number.' He wanted to build a "Third World" devoid of superpower politics that prioritised sovereignty above all else.[4]

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[1] Speech of Secretary of Instruction and Information Kalaw on Philippine Independence and Post-War Security, 5 April 1945, *Official Gazette of the Republic of the Philippines*, vol. 41, no. 2 (1945), pp. 173-175.

[2] For a general history of the Philippines, see Luis H. Francia, *A History of the Philippines: From Indios Bravos to Filipinos* (New York, NY: Overlook Press, 2010). For a detailed history of US-Philippine relations prior to independence, see Frank H. Golay, *Face of Empire: United States-Philippine Relations, 1898-1946* (Quezon City, Manila: Ateneo de Manila University Press, 2010).

[3] Christopher Bayly & Tim Harper, *Forgotten Wars: The End of Britain's Asian Empire* (London, UK: Penguin, 2007). Kathryn Statler, *Replacing France: The Origins of American Intervention in Vietnam* (Lexington, KY: University Press of Kentucky, 2007). Andrew Roadnight, *United States Policy Towards Indonesia in the Truman and Eisenhower Years* (London, UK: Palgrave-Macmillan, 2002).

[4] Quoted in Anon, *Asian Relations: Being a Report on the Proceedings and Documentation of the First Asian Relations Conference, New Delhi, March-April 1947* (New Delhi, India: Asian Relations Organization, 1948), p. 24. Sinderpal Singh, 'From Delhi to Bandung: Nehru, 'Indian-ness' and 'Pan-Asian-ness'', *South Asia: Journal of South Asian Studies*, vol. 34, no. 1 (2011), pp. 51-64. Manu Bhagavan, *India and the Quest for One World: The Peacemakers* (London, UK: Palgrave-Macmillan,

Yet, Kalaw had something Nehru did not. He believed in his colonizer. Like other Filipino elites, he felt independence confirmed 'American empire's unselfish ambitions' and shared in the exceptionalist belief that the Philippines were a 'conduit for East and West' that could 'bridge the gap that divides the have countries from the have-nots.'[5] The creation of the United Nations (UN) and the guarantees of self-determination embodied in the Four Freedoms and the Atlantic Charter meant the Philippines could enter statehood confident that 'every nation, great or small, will be represented.[6] They might have to sacrifice some sovereignty. But this was a small price to pay for keeping their freedoms safe. Filipinos could look forward to a brighter future knowing they had the promise of independence *and* the protection of the United States.

Ten years later, and Kalaw's prediction could not have been further from the truth. The independence that he and his colleagues had created relied entirely on the United States and everybody knew it. Manila was riddled with corruption, beset by nationalist rivalries, and confronted a sustained communist uprising by an armed group of peasants known as the Hukbalahap.[7] The Cold War loomed large as American attempts to contain Soviet influence clashed with wartime commitments to self-determination.[8] Nehru's message of antiracism,

2013). For overviews of the Third World as an intellectual project, see Vijay Prashad, *The Darker Nations*: *A People's History of the Third World* (New York, NY: The New Press, 2008). Prashad, *The Poorer Nations: A Possible History of the Global South* (New York, NY: Verso Books, 2014).

[5] Carlos P. Romulo, UN and the New Asian States [proof], *The Yale Review*, February 1950, pp. 193-200, digitised copy made available to author, Carlos P. Romulo Foundation for Peace and Development [hereafter CRF], Manila, Philippines.

[6] Franklin D. Roosevelt, 1941 State of the Union Address, The Four Freedoms, 6 January 1941, available online: https://voicesofdemocracy.umd.edu/fdr-the-four-freedoms-speech-text/ (accessed 7 August 2022). FDR & Winston S. Churchill, The Atlantic Charter, 14 August 1941, available online: https://avalon.law.yale.edu/wwii/atlantic.asp (accessed 7 August 2022). Elizabeth Borgwardt, *A New Deal for the World: America's Vision for Human Rights* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2005). Stephen Wertheim, *Tomorrow, the World: The Birth of US Global Supremacy* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2020). Kalaw on Philippine Independence and Post-War Security, p. 173.

[7] Patricio N. Abinales & Donna J. Amoroso, *State and Society in the Philippines* (New York, NY: Rowman & Littlefield, 2017), pp. 167-189. Sharon Delmendo, *The Star-Entangled Banner: One Hundred Years of America in the Philippines* (Quezon City, Philippines: University of the Philippines Press, 2005), pp. 1-20. Augusto V. De Viana, *Kulaboretor!: The Issue of Political Collaboration during World War II* (Manila, Philippines: University of Santo Tomas Publishing House, 2003). The Hukbalahap were formed in 1942 by the Philippine Communist Party to fight the Japanese. For histories of the Huks and communism in the Philippines, see Ken Fuller, *Forcing the Pace: The Partido Komunista ng Pilipinas: From Foundation to Armed Struggle* (Quezon City, Philippines: University of Hawai'i Press, 2014). Alfredo B. Saulo, *Communism in the Philippines: An Introduction* (Quezon City, Philippines: Ateneo de Manila University Press, 2002).

[8] Bradley R. Simpson, 'The United States and the Curious History of Self-Determination', *Diplomatic History*, vol. 36, no. 4 (2012), pp. 675-694. Most historians agree that self-determination forms an integral part of the US national identity. However, there is debate about how this rhetoric impacted foreign policy. Simpson, *The First Right: Self-Determination and the Transformation of Post-1941 International Relations* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press,

anticolonialism, and Cold War non-alignment resonated with other postcolonial elites and found expression at meetings in New Delhi, Baguio, and Bandung.[9] During these conferences, Filipinos confronted accusations that their sovereignty was part of a larger 'US imperialist conspiracy.'[10] Communist parties across the world derided independence as a 'reign of terror' perpetuated by the elite at the behest of their 'imperialist masters.'[11] European metropoles viewed Washington's influence as a sign that the United States did not really mean what it said about ending colonialism. As one British diplomat put it, 'in spite of all the mutual protestations and compliments on the achievement of independence, I seemed to sense an air of unreality about their proceedings.'[12] In most people's eyes, the Philippines were independent in name alone. The 'trappings of sovereignty' that Kalaw hoped to avoid had come to pass.[13] According to the Filipino diplomat Carlos Romulo, the Philippines were 'caught between two worlds.'[14] Not quite part of the Third World or the "Free World," their contradictory position within these competing spaces dictated their commitment to the United States and the Cold War. The Philippines could either embrace American imperial power or risk being consumed by the 'responsibilities of nationhood.'[15]

Using archival material from Asia, Europe, and the United States, this thesis argues that Philippine independence played a contested role in the creation of a postwar American empire and

forthcoming). Tony Smith, *America's Mission: The United States and the Worldwide Struggle for Democracy in the Twentieth Century* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2012). Mark Philip Bradley, *Imagining Vietnam & America: The Making of Postcolonial Vietnam, 1919-1950* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2000). Sarah Ellen Graham, 'American Propaganda, the Anglo-American Alliance, and the 'Delicate Question' of Indian Self-Determination', *Diplomatic History*, vol. 33, no. 2 (April 2009), pp. 223-259.

[9] Natasa Miskovic, Harald Fischer-Tiné & Nada Boskovska, eds., *The Non-Aligned Movement and the Cold War: Delhi – Bandung – Belgrade* (London, UK: Routledge, 2014). Amitav Acharya, *Whose Ideas Matter?: Agency and Power in Asian Regionalism* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2009).

[10] Anon, 'View of the Asian-African Conference from the Bogor Conference', 1955, History and Public Policy Program Digital Archive [hereafter HPDA], PRC FMA 207-00001-03, 7-12. Obtained by Amitav Acharya and translated by Yang Shanhou, https://digitalarchive.wilsoncenter.org/document/113181 (accessed 11 December 2019).

[11] Juan Mendoza, 'Philippine Workers in the Struggle for National Independence', *World Trade Union Movement*, no. 14 (20 July 1951), p. 19.

[12] Lord Killearn, Special Commissioner in Southeast Asia, Telegram No. 41 from Manila Reporting Presentation of Credentials, 5 July 1946, p. 1, India Office Records [hereafter IOR] /Q/21/1, British Library, St. Pancras, London, UK.

[13] Kalaw on Philippine Independence and Post-War Security, p.175.

[14] Romulo, UN and the New Asian States, p. 198.

[15] Kalaw on Philippine Independence and Post-War Security, p. 175.

the Third World. It uses the vantage point of US-Philippine relations to demonstrate how a right-leaning neocolonial ally navigated the complex terrain between Cold War cooperation and conciliation with an emerging Afro-Asian bloc in order to chart its own course through the uneasy age of decolonization. In doing so, it makes interventions in the interlinking histories of American empire, decolonization, and the political trajectory of the Third World in the global Cold War. Previous scholarship on US-Philippine relations focuses on the islands' occupation and colonization, often using a US-centric approach.[16] The same is true for broader histories of decolonization and security in the Third World, where analytical emphasis remains on the West.[17] This thesis redresses these imbalances by turning attention towards the Philippines and the Global South. Philippine security was not defined by the United States. Nor was it beholden to the Cold War imperatives that galvanised American action. By examining how Filipino leaders created their own understandings of security, this project helps decentre a US-centric literature. It puts the Global South at the centre to explore how the United States influenced, and was influenced by, Philippine independence to project its understanding of decolonization to the Third World.

[16] Colleen Woods, 'The Burden of Empire: The United States in the Philippines, 1898-1965', in Christopher Dietrich, ed., *A Companion to US Foreign Relations: Colonial Era to the Present, Volume I* (New York, NY: John Wiley & Sons, 2020), pp. 509-527. Essential texts include Julian Go & Anne L. Foster, eds., *The American Colonial State in the Philippines: Global Perspectives* (London, UK: Duke University Press, 2003). Go, *American Empire and the Politics of Meaning: Elite Political Cultures in the Philippines and Puerto Rico during US Colonialism* (London, UK: Duke University Press, 2008). Kristin L. Hoganson, *Fighting for American Manhood: How Gender Politics Provoked the Spanish-American and Philippine-American Wars* (London, UK: Yale University Press, 1998). Warwick Anderson, *Colonial Pathologies: American Tropical Medicine, Race, and Hygiene in the Philippines* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2006). Paul A. Kramer, *The Blood of Government: Race, Empire, the United States, & the Philippines* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2006). Kramer, 'Race-Making and Colonial Violence in the US Empire: The Philippine-American War as Race War', *Diplomatic History*, vol. 30, no. 2 (April 2006), pp. 169-210. Alfred W. McCoy, *Policing America's Empire: The United States, the Philippines, and the Rise of the Surveillance State* (Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 2009). Lanny Thompson, *Imperial Archipelago: Representation and Rule in the Insular Territories under US Dominion after 1898* (Honolulu, HI: University of Hawai'i Press, 2010). Paul T. McCartney, 'Religion, the Spanish-American War, and the Idea of American Mission', *Journal of Church and State*, vol. 54, no. 2 (June 2012), pp. 257-278.

[17] Marco Wyss, *Postcolonial Security: Britain, France, and West Africa's Cold War* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2021). Tarak Barkawi & Mark Laffey, 'The Postcolonial Moment in Security Studies', *Review of International Studies*, vol. 32, no. 2 (2006), pp. 329-352. Bayly & Harper, *Forgotten Wars*. Kathryn Edwards, *Contesting Indochina: French Remembrance between Decolonization and Cold War* (Oakland, CA: University of California Press, 2016). Andrea Benvenuti, *Cold War and Decolonization: Australia's Policy towards Britain's End of Empire in Southeast Asia* (Singapore, NUS Press, 2017). John Kent, *America, the UN and Decolonization: Cold War Conflict in the Congo* (New York, NY: Routledge, 2010). Ebere Nwaubani, *The United States and Decolonization in West Africa, 1950-1960* (Rochester, NY: University of Rochester Press, 2001). Jason C. Parker, 'Decolonization, the Cold War, and the Post-Columbian Era', in Robert J. McMahon, ed., *The Cold War in the Third World: Reinterpreting History* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2013), pp. 126-129. David Ryan & Victor Pungong, eds., *The United States and Decolonization: Power and Freedom* (London, UK: Macmillan, 2000).

At its heart, then, this thesis aims to answer one question: whilst most leaders around them were trying to rid their countries of Western influence, why did Filipino elites stay so close to their colonizer? For many scholars, the simple answer was the Cold War. As Nick Cullather argues, 'the Philippines is commonly cited as an example – often the preeminent example – of the successful application of US pressure on a Third World country.'[18] Although acknowledging the longer histories of empire and exceptionalism that bound the United States and the Filipino elite together, Colleen Woods agrees that 'Americans and Filipinos collaborated to produce an anticommunist ideology' that fuelled 'large-scale US-driven projects, such as the promotion of capitalist development and the spread of US military bases.'[19] Mindful of Asian nationalism and keen to contain communist advances, the United States looked at the Philippines as a valuable ally in the fight for decolonizing hearts and minds. Independence aided wartime rhetoric about self-determination. It also furthered the exceptionalist narrative that the United States had developed a formula for decolonization that could inspire other Western powers and arouse support amongst the colonial masses.[20] Crippled by war and eager to restore their control over the country, the Filipino elite went along in the hope of extracting aid and assistance. By espousing anticommunism, they used "illusions of influence" to piggyback on Washington's objectives and position themselves within a "decolonized" American empire.[21]

Although this goes a long way to explaining how the Philippines turned from colony to client state, it does not fully explain why. This is one problem with a US-centric approach and with studies of American intervention in the Third World more broadly. By focusing on American ambitions, studies of US-Philippine relations have neglected the longer histories of empire and

[18] Nick Cullather, *Illusions of Influence: The Political Economy of United States-Philippines Relations, 1942-1960* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1994), p. 2.
[19] Colleen Woods, *Freedom Incorporated: Anticommunism and Philippine Independence in the Age of Decolonization* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2020), p. 19.
[20] Daniel Immerwahr, 'Philippine Independence in US History: A Car, Not a Train', *Pacific Historical Review*, vol. 91, no. 2 (2022), pp. 220-248. Bradley, *Imagining Vietnam & America*, pp. 53-89. Anne L. Foster, 'Before the War: Legacies from the Early Twentieth Century in United States-Vietnam Relations', in Marilyn B. Young & Robert Buzzanco, eds., *A Companion to the Vietnam War* (Oxford, UK: Blackwell Publishing, 2002), pp. 115-129.
[21] Cullather, *Illusions of Influence*, pp. 1-5. Woods, *Freedom Incorporated*, pp. 1-19.

occupation that dictated Manila's relationship with the United States. This agency is often boiled down to self-interest, as if Filipino elites had no concerns beyond staying in power. Philippine scholars have continually questioned the motivations that drove this asymmetrical alliance. Initially, nationalist historians like Teodoro Agoncillo and Renato Constantino agreed that Filipino elites were effectively collaborators in a larger American neocolonial project.[22] Since then, Augusto Espiritu and Lisandro Claudio have nuanced such arguments by investigating how these leaders balanced considerations of nationalism and anticolonialism against practical issues like economic underdevelopment and the threat of revolution.[23] Building on their work, this thesis offers a narrative of independence rooted in the country's postcolonial insecurity. The Cold War mattered to Filipino elites, but decolonization mattered more. The Philippines were colonized by three different countries - the Spanish, the Americans, and the Japanese. Their economy was reliant on access to a metropolitan market and their security was dependent on the protection of a stronger nation. World War II compounded this anxiety as an imperial conflict between the United States and Japan played out across the archipelago on a vast and destructive scale.[24] Filipino elites perceived decolonization through a lens of economic, political, and military uncertainty that determined their status as an American neocolony. As Romulo put it at Bandung, 'in this world of contending great powers, the independence of the small or weak nation is at best a precarious and fragile thing.'[25] In contrast to Nehru, they prioritised security over self-determination and accepted

[22] Teodoro Agoncillo, *Revolt of the Masses: The Story of Bonifacio and the Katipunan* (Quezon City, Philippines: University of the Philippines Press, 1956). Renato Constantino, *The Philippines: A Past Revisited* (Manila, Philippines: Renato Constantino Publishing, 1975). Constantino, *The Philippines: The Continuing Past* (Quezon City, Philippines: The Foundation for Nationalist Studies, 1999). Reynaldo Clemeña Ileto, *Filipinos and Their Revolution: Event, Discourse, and Historiography* (Quezon City, Philippines: Ateneo de Manila University Press, 1998). Ileto, *Knowledge and Pacification: On the US Conquest and the Writing of Philippine History* (Quezon City, Philippines: Ateneo de Manila University Press, 2017).
[23] Augusto Espiritu, "'To Carry Water on Both Shoulders": Carlos P. Romulo, American Empire, and the Meanings of Bandung', *Radical History Review*, vol. 95 (spring 2006), pp. 173-190. Lisandro E. Claudio, 'The Anti-Communist Third World: Carlos Romulo and the Other Bandung', *Southeast Asian Studies*, vol. 4, no. 1 (2015), pp. 125-156. Claudio, *Liberalism and the Postcolony: Thinking the State in 20th-Century Philippines* (Singapore: NUS Press, 2017).
[24] Daniel B. Schirmer & Stephen R. Shalom, eds., *The Philippines Reader: A History of Colonialism, Neocolonialism, Dictatorship, and Resistance* (Boston, MA: South End Press, 1987), pp. 69-86. Daniel Immerwahr, *How to Hide an Empire: A Short History of the Greater United States* (London, UK: Vintage, 2019), pp. 187-212. James Kelly Morningstar, *War and Resistance in the Philippines, 1942-1944* (Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 2021).
[25] Carlos P. Romulo, 'Statement of Carlos P. Romulo to the Asian-African Conference', undated, in Romulo, ed., *The Meaning of Bandung* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1956), p. 68.

infringements on their sovereignty if it earnt them a better rank in the American orbit. This policy of "empire by invitation" presented their search for security as an expression of self-determination.[26] It showed how the Global South was moulded by American imperialism and highlighted the opposing ways that Asian leaders approached decolonization in the postwar world.

Recalculating Filipino agency helps rebalance the focus on the United States in studies of US-Philippine relations. Yet, there is more to be said for how independence interacted with the larger historical developments that surrounded it. Namely, American empire, decolonization, and the advent of the Third World during the global Cold War. Historians tend to characterise postwar American empire and the formation of the Third World as 'two distinct, if overlapping and intertwined, historical phenomena.'[27] Fundamentally, that is because they see their developments in opposition to each other. Since the "imperial" turn in US foreign relations, scholars have embraced empire to categorize postwar projections of American power such as economic intrusion, military basing, and dominance over supranational institutions like the UN and the International Monetary Fund.[28] Cyrus Veeser, Catherine Lutz, and David Vine have established how these interventions contributed to American imperialism in the Third World, often describing neocolonial allies like the Philippines as part of a "networked empire" that exerted its influence indirectly through the sovereignty of others.[29] However, in their rush to distinguish more

[26] Geir Lundestad, 'Empire by Invitation? The United States and Western Europe, 1945-1952', *Journal of Peace Research*, vol. 23, no. 3 (September 1986), pp. 263-277. For critiques of Lundestad's thesis, see Andrew Barker, 'American Empire – A Dangerous Distortion?', *Review of International Studies*, vol. 36 (2010), pp. e1-e11.
[27] Robert J. McMahon, 'Introduction', in *The Cold War in the Third World*, p. 1.
[28] Antoinette M. Burton, ed., *After the Imperial Turn: Thinking with and Through the Nation* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2003). Paul A. Kramer, 'Power and Connection: Imperial Histories of the United States in the World', *The American Historical Review*, vol. 116, no. 5 (December 2011), pp. 1348-1391. Emily S. Rosenberg, *Spreading the American Dream: American Economic and Cultural Expansion, 1890-1945* (New York, NY: Hill & Wang, 1982). Rosenberg, *Financial Missionaries: to the World: The Politics and Culture of Dollar Diplomacy, 1900-1930* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1999). C.T. Sandaris, *America's Overseas Garrisons: The Leasehold of Empire* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2000). Maria Höhn & Seungsook Moon, eds., *Over There: Living with the US Military Empire from World War Two to the Present* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2010). Bruce Cumings, *Dominion from Sea to Sea: Pacific Ascendancy and American Power* (London, UK: Yale University Press, 2009). Mark Mazower, *No Enchanted Palace: The End of Empire and the Ideological Origins of the United Nations* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2009). Richard W. Miller, *Globalizing Justice: The Ethics of Poverty and Power* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2010).
[29] Cyrus Veeser, *A World Safe for Capitalism: Dollar Diplomacy and America's Rise to Global Power* (New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 2002). Catherine Lutz, ed., *The Bases of Empire: The Global Struggle against US Military Posts* (New York, NY: New York University Press, 2009). David Vine, *Base Nation: How US Military Bases Abroad Harm America and the World* (New York, NY: Metropolitan Books, 2015). Ruth Oldenziel, 'Islands: The United States as a Networked

unceremonious forms of imperial power, scholars have neglected how the decolonization of the Philippines (and other American colonies) helped lay the groundwork for what was to come. According to Daniel Immerwahr and Kornel Chang, studies of American empire largely avoid discussing decolonization as a process that the United States actively participated in. Instead, they focus on European empires and Cold War flashpoints like Indochina.[30] This means historians do not know enough about how America's imperial subjects approached decolonization. Or how their ideas for independence interacted with Washington's desire to counter Soviet influence and court anticolonial legitimacy in the Global South. Engaging with their interpretation, this thesis establishes decolonization as part of a wider pattern of postwar American empire building. It presents the Philippines as a case study for understanding how the Cold War required the United States to relinquish territory in order to better pursue its imperial ambitions in the postwar world.

In contrast, histories of the Third World have openly addressed how decolonization and American empire helped shape the political contours of the Global South. Evolving out of the "new" Cold War history, leaders in this field such as Odd Arne Westad, Robert McMahon, and Mark Philip Bradley have interrogated the imperial dimensions of US Cold War strategy by framing the battle for ideological supremacy as a 'continuation of colonialism through slightly different means.'[31] Locked in a rhetorical discussion with the Soviet Union over who held the surest path

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Empire', in Gabrielle Hecht, ed., *Entangled Geographies: Empire and Technopolitics in the Global Cold War* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2011), pp. 13-42.

[30] Immerwahr, *How to Hide an Empire*, pp. 227-241. Immerwahr, 'The Moon Landing: Twilight of Empire', *Modern American History*, vol. 1 (March 2018), pp. 129-133. Kornel Chang, 'Independence without Liberation: Democratization as Decolonization Management in US-Occupied Korea, 1945-1948', *Journal of American History*, vol. 107, no. 1 (June 2020), pp. 77-106. See, for example, Bradley, *Imagining Vietnam & America*. Fredrick Logevall, *Embers of War: The Fall of an Empire and the Making of America's Vietnam* (New York, NY: Random House, 2012). Robert J. McMahon, *Colonialism and Cold War: The United States and the Struggle for Indonesian Independence, 1945-1949* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1981). Andrew J. Rotter, *Comrades at Odds: The United States and India, 1947-1964* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2000). Jason C. Parker, *Brother's Keeper: The United States, Race, and Empire in the British Caribbean, 1937-1962* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2008). Matthew J. Connelly, *A Diplomatic Revolution: Algeria's Fight for Independence and the Origins of the Post-Cold War Era* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2002). Bradley R. Simpson, *Economists with Guns: Authoritarian Development and US-Indonesian Relations, 1960-1968* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2008).

[31] Odd Arne Westad, *The Global Cold War: Third World Interventions and the Making of our Times* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2005), p. 396. Westad, *The Cold War: A World History* (London, UK: Allen Lane, 2017). Robert J. McMahon, *The Cold War on the Periphery: The United States, India, and Pakistan* (New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 1994). McMahon, *The Limits of Empire: The United States and Southeast Asia Since World War II* (New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 1999). McMahon, ed., *The Cold War in the Third World*. Mark Philip Bradley,

to modernity, the United States intervened in decolonization struggles as a way of asserting economic, military, and cultural power. Portrayed as a defensive measure to protect newly independent peoples from totalitarian communism, this project emphasised anticolonialism, capitalist economic development, and ordered democratic government as signals of American leadership in the superpower struggle for ideological influence. Connected to the "international" and "cultural" turns in Cold War history, scholars such as Jason Parker and Michael Latham have used a dizzying array of methodological approaches to interrogate how decolonization informed American power in the Third World.[32] Studies ranging from public diplomacy to international development have demonstrated the friction between anticolonialism and anticommunism that clung to US policy. They highlight how Washington's patient approach to European colonialism and unwavering focus on liberal capitalist democracy fostered an "us vs. them" mentality within the "Free" North and the decolonizing South.[33] Alongside considerations of race, gender, and culture, this literature has revealed how Cold War objectives complicated American commitments to self-determination and turned decolonization into a contradictory part of American imperial influence in the Third World.[34]

Vietnam at War (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2009). Bradley, *Imagining Vietnam & America*. Bradley, *The World Reimagined: Americans and Human Rights in the Twentieth Century* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2016). Peter L. Hahn & Mary Ann Heiss, eds., *Empire and Revolution: The United States and the Third World Since 1945* (Columbus, OH: Ohio State University Press, 2001). Kathryn Statler & Andrew L. Johns, eds., *The Eisenhower Administration, the Third World, and the Globalization of the Cold War* (New York, NY: Rowman & Littlefield, 2006).

[32] Odd Arne Westad, 'The New International History of the Cold War: Three (Possible) Paradigms', *Diplomatic History*, vol. 24, no. 4 (2000), pp. 551-565. Robert Griffith, 'Review: The Cultural Turn in Cold War Studies', *Reviews in American History*, vol. 29, no. 1 (2001), pp. 150-157.

[33] Jason C. Parker, *Hearts, Minds, Voices: US Cold War Public Diplomacy and the Formation of the Third World* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2016). Justin Hart*, Empire of Ideas: The Origins of Public Diplomacy and the Transformation of US Foreign Policy* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2013). Kenneth Osgood & Brian C. Etheridge, eds., *The United States and Public Diplomacy: New Directions in Cultural and International History* (Boston, MA: Brill, 2010). Laura A. Belmonte, *Selling the American Way: US Propaganda and the Cold War* (Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2008). Michael E. Latham, *Modernization as Ideology: American Social Science and "Nation Building" in the Kennedy Era* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2000). Latham, *The Right Kind of Revolution: Modernization, Development, and US Foreign Policy from the Cold War to the Present* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2011). David C. Engerman, Nils Gilman, Latham & Mark H. Haefele, eds., *Staging Growth: Modernization, Development, and the Global Cold War* (Boston, MA: University of Massachusetts Press, 2003). Michael Adas, *Dominance by Design: Technological Imperatives and America's Civilizing Mission* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2009). Nick Cullather, *The Hungry World: America's Cold War Battle against Poverty in Asia* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2010). David Ekbladh, *The Great American Mission: Modernization and the Construction of an American World Order* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2010).

[34] Brenda Gayle Plummer, 'Race and the Cold War', in Richard H. Immerman & Petra Goedde, eds., *The Oxford Handbook of the Cold War* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2013), pp. 503-522. Plummer, *In Search of Power: African Americans in the Era of Decolonization, 1956-1974* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2012). Christina

Unsurprisingly, the main debate in this field revolves around agency. Despite articulating profound links with colonial history, postcolonialism, and Cold War history, decolonization is still predominantly discussed in terms of superpower interests. Westad's *Global Cold War* stimulated a rich vein of scholarship that delved into the neglected North-South dynamic. Yet in their attempts to capture the kaleidoscopic nature of the Cold War, historians such as Westad have occasionally overemphasised its importance to postcolonial elites. Following calls to remove the "Cold War lens" and decentre the United States, scholars have tracked how earlier conversations about anticolonial internationalism at meetings like the 1927 Brussels Conference helped influence later debates about Cold War non-alignment.[35] Meanwhile, Area Studies scholars have focused on redressing the 'interpretive baggage' of the Cold War by examining how Third World leaders in India, Indonesia, or Algeria worked outside ideological rivalries to construct their own paths towards statehood.[36] Armed with this multidisciplinary research, scholars such as Cindy Ewing,

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Klein, *Cold War Orientalism: Asia in the Middlebrow Imagination, 1945-1961* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2003). John Munro, *The Anticolonial Front: The African American Freedom Struggle and Global Decolonization, 1945-1960* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2017). Nancy Mitchell, *Jimmy Carter in Africa: Race and the Cold War* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2016). Philip E. Muehlenbeck, ed., *Race, Ethnicity, and the Cold War: A Global Perspective* (Nashville, TN: Vanderbilt University Press, 2012). Muehlenbeck, ed., *Gender, Sexuality, and the Cold War: A Global Perspective* (Nashville, TN: Vanderbilt University Press, 2017). Elaine Tyler May, *Homeward Bound: American Families in the Cold War Era* (New York, NY: Basic Books, 1988). Victoria Grieve, *Little Cold Warriors: American Childhood in the 1950s* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2018). Stephen J. Whitfield, *The Culture of the Cold War* (Baltimore, MD: John Hopkins University Press, 1991). Frances Stoner Saunders, *Who Paid the Piper?: The CIA and the Cultural Cold War* (London, UK: Granta Books, 2000). John Fousek, *To Lead the Free World: American Nationalism and the Cultural Roots of the Cold War* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2000). Scott Lucas, *Freedom's War: The American Crusade Against the Soviet Union* (New York, NY: New York University Press, 1999). Penny Von Eschen, *Satchmo Blows Up the World: Jazz Ambassadors Play the Cold War* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2004). Amy Kaplan & Donald E. Pease, eds., *Cultures of United States Imperialism* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1993). Roland Végső, *The Naked Communist: Cold War Modernism and the Politics of Popular Culture* (New York, NY: Fordham University Press, 2013). David Caute, *The Dancer Defects: The Struggle for Cultural Supremacy during the Cold War* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2003). Andrew N. Rubin, *Archives of Authority: Empire, Culture, and the Cold War* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2012).

[35] Jessica C.E. Gienow-Hecht, ed., *Decentering America* (New York, NY: Berghahn Books, 2007). Matthew J. Connelly, 'Taking Off the Cold War Lens: Visions of North-South Conflict during the Algerian War for Independence', *American Historical Review*, vol. 5, no. 3 (2000), pp. 739-769. Michele L. Louro, *Comrades Against Imperialism: Nehru, India, and Interwar Internationalism* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2018). Louro, Carolien Stolte, Heather Streets-Salter & Sana Tannoury-Karam, eds., *The League Against Imperialism: Lives and Afterlives* (Zuid-Holland, Netherlands: Leiden University Press, 2020). Jürgen Dinkel, *The Non-Aligned Movement: Genesis, Organization and Politics, 1927-1992* (Leiden, Netherlands: Brill, 2018). Christopher E. Goscha, 'Widening the Colonial Encounter: Asian Connections inside French Indochina during the Interwar Period', *Modern Asian Studies*, vol. 43, no.5 (2009), pp. 1189-1228. Sandra Bott, Jussi M. Hanhimäki, Janick Marina Schaufelbuehl & Marco Wyss, eds., *Neutrality and Neutralism in the Global Cold War: Between or Within the Blocs?* (London, UK: Routledge, 2016). Miškovic, Fischer-Tiné & Boškovska, eds., *The Non-Aligned Movement and the Cold War*.

[36] Melvyn P. Leffler, 'Roundtable Review: The Cold War: A World History', *H-Diplo*, vol. XIX, no. 31 (2018), available online: https://networks.h-net.org/node/28443/discussions/1773280/h-diplo-roundtable-xix-31-cold-war-world-history (accessed 14 December 2020). Singh, 'From Delhi to Bandung'. Itty Abraham, 'From Bandung to NAM: Non-

Elisabeth Leake, and Jeffrey Byrne have built a new literature that transcends the Cold War's analytical omnipotence. They have questioned the saliency of the Cold War as a historical period and extended understandings of the Third World as an intellectual and geographical space. As Byrne notes, 'even as the Cold War shaped decolonization and the postcolonial order, decolonization also changed the nature of the Cold War.'[37] This work pushes past binary understandings of East vs. West to explore how the Third World was nurtured by the Cold War, and how superpower attempts to influence decolonization struggles helped solidify the Global South into a cohesive political bloc.

In essence, historians now have a clear picture of how decolonization and the Cold War aided American imperial power in the Third World. This has led to a thriving new field looking at how postcolonial leaders created their own understandings of decolonization beyond superpower intervention. But what about those countries that fall through the cracks? Nations like the Philippines that were neither firmly part of the Third World or fully accepted as part of the "Free World." Scholarship on American empire has shown how neocolonial allies like the Philippines helped expand Washington's influence in the Global South by highlighting "informal" modes of

Alignment and Indian Foreign Policy, 1947-65', *Commonwealth and Comparative Politics*, vol. 46, no. 2 (April 2008), pp. 195-219. Axel Weber, *Sukarno and the Idea of Indonesia: A History of Indonesian Nationalism* (Norderstedt, Germany: Books on Demand, 2020). Dewi Fortuna Anwar, 'Indonesia and the Bandung Conference: Then and Now', in Seng Tan & Amitav Acharya, eds., *Making a World: The Legacy of the 1955 Asian-African Conference for International Order* (Singapore: Singapore University Press, 2008), pp. 180-197. Jeffrey James Byrne, *Mecca of Revolution: Algeria, Decolonization, and the Third World Order* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2016). Connelly, *A Diplomatic Revolution*. Christopher E. Goscha & Christian F. Ostermann, eds., *Connecting Histories: Decolonization and the Cold War in Southeast Asia, 1945-1962* (Washington, DC: Woodrow Wilson Center Press, 2009). Prasenjit Duara, ed., *Decolonization: Perspectives from Now and Then* (London, UK: Routledge, 2004). Heonik Kwon, *The Other Cold War* (New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 2010). Kuan-Hsing Chen, *Asia as Method: Toward Deimperialization* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2010). Gyan Prakash, Michael Laffan, & Nikhil Menon, eds., *The Postcolonial Moment in South and Southeast Asia* (London, UK: Bloomsbury, 2018).

[37] Byrne, *Mecca of Revolution*, p. 294. Cindy Ewing, 'The Colombo Powers: Crafting Diplomacy in the Third World and Launching Afro-Asia at Bandung', *Cold War History*, vol. 18, no. 2 (2018), pp. 1-19. Ewing, "With a Minimum of Bitterness': Decolonization, the Right to Self-Determination, and the Arab-Asian Group', *Journal of Global History*, vol. 17, no. 2 (2022), pp. 254-271. Elisabeth Leake, *The Defiant Border: The Afghan-Pakistan Borderlands in the Era of Decolonization, 1936-1965* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2017). Leslie James & Leake, eds., *Decolonization and the Cold War: Negotiating Independence* (London, UK: Bloomsbury, 2015). Also, see the special edition of the *Journal of Cold War Studies* on neutralism and non-alignment, vol. 18, no. 4 (2016). For debates on the Cold War as an analytical frame, see Prasenjit Duara, 'The Cold War as a Historical Period: An Interpretive Essay', *Journal of Global History*, vol. 6 (2011), pp. 457-480. Federico Romero, 'Cold War Historiography at the Crossroads', *Cold War History*, vol. 14, no. 4 (2014), pp. 685-703.

imperial power like economic dominance and military basing. Yet, this "empire of bases" or "leasehold empire" fails to see how decolonization provided the framework for the United States to expand this power elsewhere.[38] Meanwhile, prevailing understandings of the Third World portray decolonization as an integral part of American Cold War strategy that turned colonial subjects into 'developmental subjects' and reinforced non-aligned criticisms of American intervention.[39] However, these depictions often place the Global South in a dichotomy with Western imperialism and the Cold War. The truth was much more complicated. Philippine leaders did not passively accept American influence. Nor did they take criticisms from postcolonial peers lightly. Instead, they organised the Third World in a distinctive way by balancing their desire for self-determination against their commitment to the United States. What is needed is a history that moves beyond the analytical rigidity of East and West, North and South, to expose how one strengthened the other. This would provide insights into the mutually reinforcing histories of decolonization, the Cold War, and American imperialism. Most importantly, it would complicate ideas about anticolonial solidarity after World War II and identify the Third World as a contested space where postcolonial leaders imagined divergent routes towards decolonization both with and without superpower assistance.

Using the Philippines as a lens to track these two narratives helps historians illustrate the disputed meanings of American empire and the Third World. Motivated by the Cold War, the United States regarded the Philippines as a useful tool for promoting its understanding of decolonization to the Global South. Subsequent administrations perceived the country as an intermediary for US interests because their relationship helped combat communism and spread American ideas to other decolonizing nations.[40] Filipino leaders viewed the conflicts with East and

[38] Lutz, ed., *The Bases of Empire*. Sandaris, *America's Overseas Garrisons*. Michael H. Hunt & Steven I. Levine, *Arc of Empire: America's Wars in Asia from the Philippines to Vietnam* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2012).
[39] Cullather, *The Hungry World*, p. 8.
[40] Anon, 'US Policy on the Philippines, National Security Council', 9 November 1950, in *Philippines Reader*, pp. 105-110.

West, North and South, as an opportunity to position their country as a powerful link between them. As Romulo put it, 'we are a bridge between two worlds.'[41] Their independence was a sign that the United States was the right country to lead decolonizing states into freedom and a warning that Washington had to be ready to embrace them in an 'equal partnership and voluntary association with Western peoples.'[42] These perspectives created a vision for the Third World marked by the competing pressures of American imperial power and the search for self-determination. It displayed anticolonialism and anticommunism as reciprocal objectives and established the Philippines as a barometer for other nations to gauge the American commitment to decolonization.

Unfortunately for Manila and Washington, other postcolonial elites rarely shared this belief. Nehru looked at Philippine independence as an obvious example of the dangers of too closely 'associating with the Western empires.'[43] To be sure, Nehru grappled with issues of sovereignty more than he was willing to concede. As debates over Pakistan, China, and the Indian Communist Party proved, the break between colonizer and colonized was never as absolute as the Indian Prime Minister suggested.[44] Yet, Nehru would not accept Western influence if he could avoid it. He saw the Cold War as an interference and used his stature as a 'voice of freedom' to advocate for non-alignment and anticolonial solidarity.[45] These differing conclusions proved that

[41] Speech of Honorable Carlos P. Romulo, Secretary of Foreign Affairs, Before the Harvard University Alumni Association, New York, 22 June 1950, p. 14, digitised copy made available to author, CRF.
[42] Speech by Carlos Romulo entitled 'Understanding Asia', delivered before the Asia Institute in New York, 24 September 1952, p. 52, Box CPR0012 – SD, Carlos P. Romulo Papers [hereafter CPRP], Philippine Department of Foreign Affairs Archive, Manila, Philippines.
[43] Quoted in Romulo speech on Philippine place in Pacific security, undated, pp. 3-4, digitised copy made available to author, CRF.
[44] Paul M. McGarr, *The Cold War in South Asia: Britain, the United States, and the Indian Subcontinent, 1945-1965* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2013). McMahon, *The Cold War on the Periphery*. Zorawar Daulet Singh, *Power and Diplomacy: India's Foreign Policies During the Cold War* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2019). Rakesh Ankit, *The Kashmir Conflict: From Empire to the Cold War, 1945-66* (London, UK: Routledge, 2016). Andrea Benvenuti, 'Constructing Peaceful Coexistence: Nehru's Approach to Regional Security and India's Rapprochement with Communist China in the Mid-1950s', *Diplomacy & Statecraft*, vol. 31, no. 1 (2020), pp. 91-117. Taylor C. Sherman, 'A Gandhian Answer to the Threat of Communism?: Sarvodaya and Postcolonial Nationalism in India', *The Indian Economic & Social History Review*, vol. 53, no. 2 (2016), pp. 249-270.
[45] K. M. Panikkar & A. Pershad, eds., *The Voice of Freedom: The Speeches of Pandit Motilal Nehru* (New York, NY: Asia Publishing House, 1961).

the parameters of the Third World were not so neatly drawn. They highlighted the degrees of sovereignty that existed in the US-Philippine relationship and illuminated the cooperation and coercion that epitomised American empire. Philippine freedom emphasised the entangled histories of American empire, decolonization, and the global Cold War. It revealed how this neocolonial ally helped reinforce and reject American imperial power by demonstrating the diverse ways that Third World leaders approached self-determination after World War II.

Rather than removing the Cold War lens altogether, this thesis frames the Philippine transition from colony to neocolony as a disruptive part of the Third World project. It situates their independence within the chaotic chronology of postwar decolonization and the emergence of an "informal" American empire. Studies of US-Philippine relations are often bilateral, thereby neglecting Manila's relationships with other Third World powers.[46] Historians have discussed how anticolonialism inspired Washington's ideological competition with the Soviet Union.[47] However, there is less information on how neocolonial allies like the Philippines informed the way other Third World countries interpreted American imperial power. The decolonization of the Philippines was an important part of Washington's Cold War strategy that projected the exceptionalist narrative of independence that Filipino and American policymakers wanted the world to see. Filipino leaders championed their relationship as a model for postcolonial relations

[46] Theodore Friend, *Between Two Empires: The Ordeal of the Philippines, 1929-1946* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1965). Stephen R. Shalom, *The United States and the Philippines: A Study of Neocolonialism* (Quezon City, Philippines: New Day Publishers, 1986). McCoy, *Policing America's Empire*. Golay, *Face of Empire*. Cullather, *Illusions of Influence*. H.W. Brands, *Bound to Empire: The United States and the Philippines* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 1992). William J. Pomeroy, *American Neocolonialism: Its Emergence in the Philippines and Asia* (New York, NY: International Publishers, 1970. Pomeroy, *An American Made Tragedy: Neocolonialism & Dictatorship in the Philippines* (New York, NY: International Publishers, 1974). Stanley Karnow, *In Our Image: America's Empire in the Philippines* (New York, NY: Ballantine Books, 1989). Keith Thor Carlson, *The Twisted Road to Freedom: America's Granting of Independence to the Philippines* (Quezon City, Philippines: University of the Philippines Press, 1995).

[47] Walter L. Hixson, *The Myth of American Diplomacy: National Identity and US Foreign Policy* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2008). Gregg A. Brazinsky, *Winning the Third World: Sino-American Rivalry during the Cold War* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2017). William Roger Louis, 'American Anti-Colonialism and the Dissolution of the British Empire', *Royal Institute of International Affairs*, vol. 61, no. 3 (summer 1985), pp. 395-420. Louis & Ronald Robinson, 'Empire Preserv'd: How the Americans Put Anti-Communism Before Anti-imperialism', in *Decolonization: Perspectives from Now and Then*, pp. 152-161. Michael H. Hunt, *Ideology and US Foreign Policy* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1987). Erez Manela, *The Wilsonian Moment: Self-Determination and the International Origins of Anticolonial Nationalism* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2009). Susan Pederson, *The Guardians: The League of Nations and the Crisis of Empire* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2015). Frank Costigliola, *Roosevelt's Lost Alliances: How Personal Politics Helped Start the Cold War* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2011).

in exchange for guarantees of protection and assistance. American policymakers got to differentiate their rule as more benevolent than European colonialism and used this as an example of anticolonial legitimacy to other Third World elites. As the first American ambassador to the Philippines Paul McNutt put it, 'we stand in the role of a parent whose child has come of age… but that does not end our responsibility, nor our interest.'[48] The problem was that Filipino leaders had different priorities that pitted local concerns about self-determination against Cold War objectives such as countering communist influence. Filipino criticisms of inadequate aid, unequal treatment, and Washington's reluctance to confront European colonialism helped portray the United States as another imperial power to contend with. These conversations made an impression on leaders like Nehru, who felt their alliance confirmed 'our worst apprehensions' about ongoing Western influence.[49] Their relationship pointed to American imperialism's profound impact on the Third World and the opposing ways that postcolonial elites understood the Cold War.

In order to illuminate this argument, the thesis focuses on the decade or so immediately after independence, specifically, 1945 to 1956. This period neatly captures the Philippines' transition from colony to client state as well as the formation of the Third World as a political project. Economically and materially devastated by World War II, Filipino elites looked at American assistance as the only way to prop up their fledgling government. Obsessed with their insecurity (both real and imagined), they signed a series of treaties that kept the islands close to the United States. The Bell Trade Act, the Military Bases & Assistance Agreements, the Mutual Defense Agreement, and the creation of the Southeast Asia Treaty Organization gave the Philippines a privileged status in US policy that kept the islands under American supervision.[50]

[48] Remarks by Ambassador Paul V. McNutt at the Democratic Women's Club, 2 December 1946, Box 22, Paul V. McNutt Papers [hereafter PVMP], Lilly Library, University of Indiana, Bloomington, IN.
[49] Quoted in A.M. Rosenthal, 'Nehru Denounces West's Alliances: Calls Them Threat to Peace', *New York Times*, 21 March 1956, p. 1.
[50] Anon, 'Summary, Bell Trade Act', in *Philippines Reader*, pp. 88-90. Anon, 'Military Bases Agreement, March 14, 1947', in ibid, pp. 96-100. Anon, 'Military Assistance Agreement, March 21, 1947', in ibid, pp. 100-103. Mutual Defense Treaty Between the United States and the Republic of the Philippines, 30 August 1951, available online: https://avalon.law.yale.edu/20th_century/phil001.asp (accessed 19 September 2018). Pacific Charter, 8 September 1954, available online: https://avalon.law.yale.edu/20th_century/usmu005.asp (accessed 14 October 2019).

These interchanges had drastic implications for Philippine prestige in the Third World, often harming American objectives in the process. The "loss" of China, the Korean War, and the nationalist revolutions in Indochina and elsewhere in Asia made anticommunism the priority in Washington. Already unsure about colonial peoples' aptitude for self-government, the onset of Cold War rivalries forced American policymakers to rethink wartime promises about self-determination. To them, the strength of non-alignment confirmed that Western influence was a necessary part of achieving an ordered transition from colony to liberal democracy. 'As the lines between the Communist bloc and the Western coalition have come to be more clearly drawn,' argued one National Security Council report, the 'failure of the free world to deal more effectively with the problems of less developed areas will weaken the free world and benefit international communism.'[51] This forced Filipino leaders to walk a tricky path towards appeasing their neocolonial sponsor and justifying their actions to the decolonizing world. In this sense, the time frame offers a useful avenue for mapping the fractured genealogy of the Third World in the early Cold War. It shows how American imperialism overshadowed inter-Asian debates about self-determination and illustrates how the Philippines pursued a different path toward decolonization that relied on the ongoing colonial patronage of the United States.

Much like the period under discussion, the focus on security has been chosen because it helps explain why the Philippines turned into an American neocolony amidst a wider turn towards anticolonial solidarity and Cold War non-alignment. Concerns about security were always at the forefront of Filipino minds when it came to decolonization. 'The present state of the world,' argued Romulo, 'is such that all national questions have become subordinate to the central issue of survival.'[52] Of course, what he really meant was survival for himself and the elite. Historians are

[51] National Security Council Report, 7 January 1955, Foreign Relations of the United States [hereafter FRUS], 1955-1957, Volume XIX, National Security Policy, Document 6, https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1955-57v19/d6 (accessed 22 June 2019).
[52] Speech by Romulo entitled 'Fundamentals of Our Foreign Policy', Address before the Faculty and Student Body of the Far Eastern University, 25 May 1951, Box 7, John F. Melby Papers [hereafter JMP], Harry S. Truman Presidential Library [hereafter HTL], Independence, MO.

only just beginning to understand the importance of security to Third World leaders. Security Studies scholars have interrogated the Western-centrism that dominates the discipline, offering a postcolonial definition that highlights 'colonialism, expansionist imperialism, imperialist competition, and other forms of intervention' as the 'principal drivers regarding security matters with the Third World.'[53] However, as Marcus Wyss notes, more effort could be made to narrow the divide between historical analysis and international relations theory to address how security influenced decolonization and vice versa.[54] Putting a spotlight on the Philippines allows for a transnational analysis of how Third World leaders understood security and how their attempts to achieve it interacted with larger historical currents such as decolonization, the Cold War, and the expansion of American imperial power. As Tarak Barkawi and Mark Laffey put it, 'making sense of security relations requires putting the weak and the strong in a common analytic frame.'[55] The Philippines are an ideal vehicle for sharing why this neocolonial American ally saw security as an integral part of decolonization and how other postcolonial leaders weighed this priority against ambitions like self-determination.

To this end, the thesis tracks the history of Philippine independence in chronological order. Each chapter focuses on a recurring cast of Filipino presidents, policymakers, and diplomats who continued their pre-war responsibilities at the head of the Philippine state. The decision to focus on this set of actors rests on the availability of archival material and their undeniable influence on the Philippines.[56] These individuals were responsible for charting Manila's course as a sovereign government. They worked closely with Washington as well as on the international stage to craft a foreign policy that was both dependent and independent of the United States. Although not always representative of the myriad nationalist priorities in the Philippines, these people were the

[53] Randolph B. Persaud, 'Security Studies, Postcolonialism and the Third World', in Persaud & Alina Sajed, eds., *Race, Gender, and Culture in International Relations: Postcolonial Perspectives* (London, UK: Taylor & Francis, 2018), p. 159.
[54] Wyss, *Postcolonial Security*, pp. 15-16.
[55] Barkawi & Laffey, 'The Postcolonial Moment in Security Studies', p. 349.
[56] On the issues with colonial archives, see Ann Laura Stoler, *Along the Archival Grain: Epistemic Anxieties and Colonial Common Sense* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2009). Cheryl Beredo, *Import of the Archive: US Colonial Rule of the Philippines and the Making of American Archival History* (Sacramento, CA: Litwin Books, 2013).

vanguard for decolonization.[57] They dictated policy. They negotiated with American policymakers and other postcolonial leaders. For better or worse, they are integral for understanding how the Philippines approached independence and how the United States reacted to their ambitions. The study is not a remedy for "top-down" histories that obscure the agency of social movements and popular actors.[58] Rather, it seeks to explore how this specific clique of postcolonial elites formulated their own vision for independence that attempted to 'reconcile the stern demands of international security with the irreducible requirements of Asian nationalism.'[59] By focusing on the way these actors projected their freedom to the watching world, this thesis adds to histories of decolonization in the Global South by highlighting how neocolonial allies like the Philippines helped advance and impede American imperial power in postwar Asia.

The conclusion that this study draws, evidenced in the chapters that follow, is that Philippine freedom actually hindered American attempts to win decolonizing hearts and minds. Instead of bringing North and South closer, it forced them further apart. American interventions reinforced non-aligned and communist accusations of neocolonialism. They drove a wedge between Washington and its Western allies, who repeatedly highlighted the American hypocrisy of preaching self-determination for European empires whilst infringing on the sovereignty of their own.[60] Most alarmingly, decolonization remoulded a pattern of colonial dependence that kept

[57] Nicole CuUnjieng Aboitiz, 'Cultures of Empire, Nation, and Universe in President Jose P. Laurel's Political Thought, 1927-1949', *Philippine Studies: Historical and Ethnographic Viewpoints*, vol. 65, no. 1 (2017), pp. 3-30. Aboitiz, *Asian Place, Filipino Nation: A Global Intellectual History of the Philippine Revolution, 1887-1912* (New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 2020). Sven Matthiesen, *Japanese Pan-Asianism and the Philippines from the Late Nineteenth Century to the End of World War II* (Leiden, Netherlands: Koninklijke Brill, 2016). E. San Juan Jr., *After Postcolonialism: Remapping Philippines-United States Confrontation* (New York, NY: Rowman & Littlefield, 2000). San Juan Jr., *US Imperialism and Revolution in the Philippines* (London, UK: Palgrave-Macmillan, 2007). Reynaldo Clemeña Ileto, 'Orientalism and the Study of Philippine Politics', *Philippine Political Science Journal*, vol. 22, no. 45 (2001), pp. 1-32.

[58] Leslie James, *George Padmore and Decolonization from Below: Pan-Africanism, the Cold War, and the End of Empire, 1939-1959* (London, UK: Palgrave, 2015). Reynaldo Clemeña Ileto, *Pasyon and Revolution: Popular Movements in the Philippines, 1840-1910* (Quezon City, Philippines: Ateneo de Manila University Press, 1979). Jeffrey A. Engel, ed., *Local Consequences of the Global Cold War* (Washington, DC: Woodrow Wilson Center Press, 2007).

[59] Speech by Romulo on America's Stake in Asia, Associated Industries of New York State, 26 September 1952, p. 2, digitised copy made available to author, CRF.

[60] Address of Indian Minister Ali Baig, 31 August 1954, pp. 1-23, Box 1, Action copies of Telegrams, Memorandums, and despatches, 1953-1967, Record Group [hereafter RG] 306: Records of the United States Information Agency, National Archives of the United States, College Park, MD. Report from the Chinese Foreign Ministry, 'Attitudes of Various Countries towards the Asian-African Conference on the Eve of the Conference', 11 April 1955, HPDA, PRC FMA 207-00084-19, 211-214, Obtained by Amitav Acharya and translated by Yang Shanhou,

Filipino elites tied to the United States rather than the country they served. United by their belief in American power, Filipino elites collaborated with Washington to produce a novel vision for decolonization. They shared similar exceptionalist ideas that the islands were a 'pilot plant' for North-South relations and believed they could set an example for decolonization that appealed to colonizer and colonized alike.[61] However, this "special relationship" was counterproductive for both countries as it was always predicated on contradictory assumptions. American administrations assumed the Philippines would adopt an anticommunist posture with few concessions. They assumed the Cold War mattered more than local considerations about decolonization and thought they could mould Philippine foreign policy without considering how this would look to others. Filipino elites assumed anticommunism would be enough to ensure Washington's patronage. They believed American power would be used more evenly in defence of the "Free World" and hoped the United States had learnt its lessons about honouring nationalist aspirations during World War II. These misunderstandings pulled the Philippines in opposing directions, damaging the islands' reputation as an independent nation and exposing the limits of neocolonial collaboration to other decolonizing leaders. Philippine independence illuminates the ambiguities of Third Worldism and the enduring role that American empire played in uniting and dividing postcolonial elites after World War II.

The first chapter analyses how postwar discussions about rehabilitation and independence informed the creation of the Third World and a "decolonized" American empire. Conscious of nationalist sentiment and keen to retain their economic and military influence, American postwar planners used the Philippines as a neocolonial testing ground that gave them the best of both.[62] Philippine leaders had their own plans for independence that demanded much more from the

https://digitalarchive.wilsoncenter.org/document/114668 (accessed 11 December 2019). Lord Killearn, Special Commissioner in Southeast Asia, Telegram No. 41 from Manila Reporting Presentation of Credentials, 5 July 1946, pp. 1-3.

[61] Address by General Carlos P. Romulo before the National Board of Fire Underwriters, New York City, 22 May 1952, Box CPR0012 – SD, CPRP.

[62] Stephen R. Shalom, 'Philippine Acceptance of the Bell Trade Act of 1946: A Study of Manipulatory Democracy', *Pacific Historical Review*, vol. 49, no. 3 (August 1980), pp. 499-517.

United States. Aware that allies and adversaries were scrutinizing their freedom, Filipino elites presented independence as a chance to close the divide with East and West, North and South. This diplomacy urged American policymakers not to lose the goodwill they had generated during World War II by failing to rehabilitate their largest colony. It disrupted inter-Asian conversations about self-determination in favour of a new vision for decolonization with American influence at the centre.[63] These debates contributed to a broader conversation about what independence should look like that helped push Third World leaders like Nehru closer to non-alignment and further away from the United States.

Chapter two examines the hardening of Cold War tensions in Asia as well as the implications for Philippine security and American foreign policy. After Mao Zedong's victory in the Chinese Civil War, the threat of communism seemed closer than ever for the Philippines. Anxious about Mao's advances and desperate to stop the Huks, Philippine President Elpidio Quirino proposed a Pacific Pact similar to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization in Europe that would unite non-communist states in a collective security alliance with Washington. Unlike Nehru, Quirino saw cooperation with the West as a practical necessity. He collaborated with like-minded allies like South Korea's Syngman Rhee and Nationalist China's Chiang Kai-shek in the hope of developing a greater commitment to their defence.[64] But President Harry Truman and his administration were so preoccupied with controlling Soviet expansion in Europe that they failed to consider how containment would apply elsewhere. The collapse of the Pacific Pact taught the Philippines that anticommunism had its limits when it came to influencing American Cold War strategy. It also highlighted the disjointed history of the Third World project and the different internationalisms that emerged in Asia after World War II.

[63] Anon, *Asian Relations*, pp. 153-310.
[64] Junghyun Park, 'Frustrated Alignment: The Pacific Pact Proposals from 1949 to 1954 and South Korea-Taiwan Relations', *International Journal of Asian Studies*, vol 12, no. 2 (2015), pp. 217-237.

Although the Pacific Pact was the first sign that the United States needed to do more to ensure local participation in the Cold War, it was the Korean War that finally gave the Truman administration the incentive it needed to turn its attention to the Pacific. Chapter three investigates how Filipino policymakers used Korea to further their client-patron relationship with the United States. The Truman administration deemed Philippine participation in Korea as important because it could help legitimise American intervention and give the impression that the United States was willing to work with regional partners. Bogged down by governmental inefficiency and economic stagnation, the Quirino administration took advantage of Washington's sudden focus on Asia to bring the Philippines further into the Cold War geography of a "Free World."[65] Once again, Washington's anticommunism clashed with Manila's concerns for self-determination as non-aligned leaders like Nehru questioned the motivations behind American intervention in Korea. Disagreements over the Japanese peace treaty and the marginalisation of Asian voices in the Australia, New Zealand, United States (ANZUS) Security Treaty threatened the "special relationship" at a time when both parties needed it most.[66] Korea embodied the tension between decolonization and Cold War confrontation that governed US-Philippine relations.

The last chapter interrogates how Philippine involvement in the Southeast Asia Treaty Organization (SEATO) interacted with calls for anticolonial solidarity and Cold War non-alignment during the "Bandung moment."[67] Frustrated by French losses in Vietnam, President Dwight D. Eisenhower wanted to create a collective security agreement with Western and Asian states that could curtail communist aspirations as well as contain Chinese power. He turned to the Philippines' charismatic new leader, Ramon Magsaysay, who agreed to host the negotiations in

[65] William Stueck, *The Korean War: An International History* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1995).
[66] Treaty of Peace with Japan, 8 September 1951, available online: https://worldjpn.grips.ac.jp/documents/texts/docs/19510908.T1E.html (accessed 15 January 2019). Security Treaty between Australia, New Zealand and the United States of America [ANZUS], 1 September 1951, available online: https://www.austlii.edu.au/au/other/dfat/treaties/1952/2.html (accessed 15 February 2022).
[67] Christopher J. Lee, *Making a World After Empire: The Bandung Moment and Its Political Afterlives* (Athens, OH: Ohio University Press, 2010).

Manila.[68] Magsaysay did not make things easy for Eisenhower. Aware that the United States could no longer go it alone in Asia, he used the rising tide of anticolonial internationalism to turn SEATO into something more than a mechanism for containing communism. His government's focus on self-determination forced Western powers to acknowledge local security problems and granted the islands even greater American protection under the guise of collective security. In return, his government collaborated with US policymakers at Bandung to interrupt Nehru's appeals for non-alignment and counter Chinese accusations of American neocolonialism.[69] Their involvement illustrated how American imperial power helped shape the fractured history of the Third World and the struggle for decolonization in the Global South.

SEATO was the final stage in the Philippines' transition from colony to client state. Manila got the security guarantees it wanted and the United States got the legitimacy it needed to continue expanding the Cold War into Asia. This was always the deal, but it came at a price. Filipino leaders used Washington's sponsorship to entrench their monopoly on power. Afraid of losing one of their strongest postcolonial allies, American policymakers ignored the violent democratic dysfunction that blighted the country.[70] As a result, the Philippines never turned into the benchmark of decolonization that the United States hoped they would. Yet, the idea that the islands were a bridge for North and South persisted, even as independence continued to be undermined by the unequal relationship between them. Why did this peripheral former colony play such a proactive role in the formation of a postwar American empire? And why did this have such a peculiar influence on the political trajectory of the Third World? Manila's disputed place within these conflicting spaces is what this thesis interrogates.

[68] James Waite, *The End of the First Indochina War: A Global History* (London, UK: Routledge, 2012), pp. 15-120. Carlos P. Romulo, *Crusade in Asia: Philippine Victory* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1955), pp. 274-275.
[69] Romulo, *The Meaning of Bandung*, pp. 1-28.
[70] Cullather, *Illusions of Influence*, pp. 181-196.

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Chapter One

A 'Bridge or a Chasm': Philippine Independence and the Formation of the Third World, 1945-1947

'Domination may not always mean exploitation.'[1]

Carlos P. Romulo, Filipino diplomat & statesman

'There are few Asian countries which are not cursed by poverty… one of the special things we have to undertake, wherever we go, is to tackle this problem of raising the standards of the people.' On 2 April 1947, Jawaharlal Nehru's voice rang out to rapturous applause at the closing session of the Asian Relations Conference (ARC) in New Delhi. Organised by the Indian Prime Minister on the eve of his country's independence, the meeting gathered delegations from across the continent to assert their place on the world stage and show they would 'no longer be used as pawns by others.' Nehru wanted to rebuild postwar Asia whilst resisting Western influence and urged the attendees to refashion their colonial economies to 'stand on our own feet.' Like the fight against colonialism, the struggle for development was a 'common problem for all Asia' that required the delegations to overturn the centuries of imperial exploitation that united them. Decolonization was an opportunity to destroy archaic economic relationships so Asian nations could 'advance together' in control of their own destinies.[2]

Much has been made of Nehru's words at New Delhi.[3] They signposted, as the British High Commissioner to India put it, a 'clear desire for political and economic self-assertion' in postwar Asia and the creation of a nascent '*third world* which had its part to play in restoring to equilibrium a balance of power at present too exclusively dependent on the opposed worlds of

[1] Carlos P. Romulo, *I See the Philippines Rise* (New York, NY: Doubleday, 1946), p. 257.
[2] Anon, *Asian Relations*, pp. 246-251.
[3] Vineet Thakur, 'An Asian Drama: The Asian Relations Conference, 1947', *The International History Review*, vol. 41, no. 3 (2018), pp. 673-695. Carolien Stolte, 'The Asiatic Hour: New Perspectives on the Asian Relations Conference, New Delhi, 1947', in *The Non-Aligned Movement and the Cold War*, pp. 57-75. Singh, 'From Delhi to Bandung', pp. 51-64.

America and Russia.'[4] Yet, Nehru's perspective only tells half the story. Many delegations praised the Indian Prime Minister for his determination to eschew superpower politics and develop a more independent foreign policy. Others insisted it was unrealistic to think their independence would survive without the help of Western powers like the United States.[5] Amongst the detractors was the head of the Philippine delegation, Anastacio De Castro. Moments before Nehru's speech, Castro 'stunned the audience into almost complete silence' by defending the US colonial record in the Philippines and insisting that Asian criticisms of American imperialism were 'bunk.'[6] He agreed with Nehru that 'no country today can be economically independent' but disagreed that this interdependence had to be free from Western influence.[7] Reported as an 'unusual feature' of the conference's 'anti-imperialist tenor,' Castro highlighted the conflicting visions of development facing the Third World.[8] Filipino elites could not be picky when it came to accepting outside assistance. 'The last global war has ruined the economy of our country,' announced Castro. 'What we are aspiring to do now is combine our political independence with economic and social security.'[9] This meant prioritising economic recovery over postcolonial autonomy and negotiating a series of treaties that kept the islands tightly bound to their former colonizer. Castro stood apart from Nehru's vision of a politically and economically independent Asia. He viewed empire and development as interrelated. His delegation put their faith in American leadership and encouraged others to do the same. In doing so, they imagined a different path for the Third World built on the promise of liberal capitalist modernity and the strength of postwar American power.

Historians have often positioned the Third World in opposition to Western colonialism and the bipolar Cold War system. This scholarship has engaged with the longer histories of empire

[4] Terence Shone to Secretary of the Cabinet, 25 April 1947, Despatch No. 36, IOR/L/I/1/152. Emphasis mine. See Prashad's *The Darker Nations* and *The Poorer Nations* for detailed analyses of the Third World as a geographical and political space.
[5] Shone to Secretary of the Cabinet, 25 April 1947, Despatch No. 38, IOR/M/4/3067. Anon, *Asian Relations*, pp. 90-127.
[6] Quoted in Anon, 'Asian Group Agrees to Use Alien Capital', *New York Times*, 30 March 1947, p. 49.
[7] Anon, *Asian Relations*, p. 235.
[8] George E. Jones, 'Gandhi Says East Must Spread Love', *New York Times*, 3 April 1947, p. 3.
[9] Quoted in Anon, *Asian Relations*, p. 235.

and anti-imperial activism that developed the Global South as a conceptual entity, tracing how earlier internationalist projects like the 1927 Brussels Conference impacted later debates about anticolonial solidarity and Cold War non-alignment.[10] Some have questioned its validity as an analytical frame all together. For Robert McMahon, the very term "Third World" is a 'Cold War construction,' denoting an imagined space of economically underdeveloped non-white peoples whose decolonization struggles served primarily as flashpoints for East/ West competition.[11] What unites this research is a sense of postcolonial camaraderie dictated by resistance to Western imperialism and superpower conflict. The reality was more nuanced. Neocolonial American allies like the Philippines held different ideas about decolonization and development that organised the Third World in competing and contradictory ways. Exploring this story would be worthwhile for understanding how the Philippines transitioned from colony to client state amid a flourishing inter-Asian movement towards anticolonialism and Cold War non-alignment. More importantly, it provides insights into the mutually reinforcing histories between American empire, decolonization, and the formation of the Third World. It shows how the Global South was nurtured in the shadow of US imperial power and demonstrates how the Philippines pushed back against prevailing ideas around economic nationalism and anti-imperialism to plot their own course for independence.

In contrast, the literature on US-Philippine relations has openly explored how the islands helped expand American power in the Third World, using examples such as overseas military basing and economic intrusion to track a "deterritorialized" and "democratized" American empire.[12] Yet, these accounts largely ignore formal processes of decolonization. As Kornel Chang points out, this means historians have 'precious few details about the process that lay between the

[10] Dinkel, *The Non-Aligned Movement*. Goscha, 'Widening the Colonial Encounter', pp. 1189-1228. Louro, *Comrades Against Imperialism*. Louro, Stolte, Streets-Salter & Tannoury-Karam, eds., *The League Against Imperialism*. Bott, Hanhimäki, Schaufelbuehl & Wyss, eds., *Neutrality and Neutralism in the Global Cold War*. Miškovic, Fischer-Tiné & Boškovska, eds., *The Non-Aligned Movement and the Cold War*.
[11] McMahon, 'Introduction', p. 3.
[12] Oldenziel, 'Islands: The United States as a Networked Empire', pp. 13-42. Rosenberg, *Spreading the American Dream*. Rosenberg, *Financial Missionaries: to the World*. Veeser, *A World Safe for Capitalism*. Lutz, *The Bases of Empire*. Vine, *Base Nation*. Sandaris, *America's Overseas Garrisons*. Höhn & Moon, eds., *Over There*.

"colonial" and the "post.""[13] Scholarship on American empire in the Philippines focuses on the islands' acquisition and colonization, often adopting a US-centric point of view.[14] The same is true for studies of development in the Third World, where analytical attention remains on Western ideas and actors.[15] This blind spot has obscured the role of former US colonies like the Philippines in building an informal, "decolonized" American empire. A fuller picture would put Philippine agents on an analytically equal footing to explore how their ideas about decolonization and development helped support and distort American imperial power in the postwar world.

This chapter frames Philippine independence as a disruptive part of the Third World project and makes interventions in the histories of American empire, decolonization, and the political trajectory of the Global South. The United States argued about rehabilitation wherever it fought in World War II. Yet in reacting to Asian aspirations, Washington struggled to keep wartime promises about self-determination whilst maintaining alliances with European allies. By signing the Atlantic Charter in 1941, the United States endorsed self-determination as a basic principle of the postwar order. Once the war ended, the collapse of Japanese and European colonialism created a power struggle in Asia plagued by internal conflict and communist subversion. Fearful of Soviet influence and unsure of colonial peoples' capacity for self-rule, American policymakers made exceptions for the British, French, and Dutch empires, pushing for a "trusteeship" system with gradual self-determination.[16] Micromanaging decolonization damaged relations with European partners and fuelled the perception that Washington was inheriting the imperial mantle. 'The plain fact,' argued Secretary of State George Marshall, 'is that [the] Western democratic system is on

[13] Chang, 'Independence without Liberation', p. 80.
[14] Woods, 'The Burden of Empire', pp. 509-527.
[15] David C. Engerman & Corinna R. Unger, 'Towards a Global History of Modernization', *Diplomatic History*, vol. 33, no. 3 (2009), pp. 375-385. Sebeka Richard Plaatjie, 'Beyond Western-Centric and Eurocentric Development: A Case for Decolonizing Development', *Africanus*, vol. 43, no. 2 (2013), pp. 118-130.
[16] Simpson, 'The United States and the Curious History of Self-Determination', pp. 675-694. Simpson, *The First Right*. Smith, *America's Mission*. Bradley, *Imagining Vietnam & America*. Graham, 'American Propaganda, the Anglo-American Alliance, and the 'Delicate Question' of Indian Self-Determination', pp. 223-259.

[the] defensive in almost all emerging nations… signs [of an] anti-Western Asiatic consciousness [are] already multiplying, of which [the] inter-Asian Conf [sic] [is] an example.'[17]

Confined by a commitment to decolonization and a desire to protect American power, the United States adopted economic rehabilitation in the Philippines as a novel strategy for empire building that satisfied both criteria. Philippine rehabilitation reinforced Washington's wartime rhetoric about supporting subjugated peoples and played into the exceptionalist mentality that the United States created a model for decolonization that European empires could follow. US policymakers sold their recovery package as a safety net for Philippine independence that would serve 'as an example and as an inspiration' for American leadership.[18] Meanwhile, they carved out new and integral spaces for American capital, tying the Philippine economy to the liberal capitalist orbit and reserving huge military installations under US sovereignty. In return, Philippine leaders gained the economic and military support they required to re-establish control over the islands. This strategy allowed the United States to exert its imperial power indirectly through the sovereignty of others. It showed how Philippine independence actually expanded American imperial power in postwar Asia by using rehabilitation as a strategy for decolonization management that served as a benchmark for European powers and an act of leadership to the colonized world.

Washington's plans differed from the objectives of Filipino elites, who often held more demanding views of what American leadership should look like. Philippine understandings of rehabilitation and development were driven by their relationship with American empire, decolonization, and the emergence of the Third World. They knew other nations were scrutinising their independence and using their impressions to gauge the US approach to decolonization. Colonial powers like Britain highlighted Washington's hypocrisy in preaching self-determination whilst keeping the Philippines 'entirely economically dependent on the United States.'[19] Soviet

[17] The Secretary of State (Marshall) to the Embassy in France, 13 May 1947, FRUS, 1947, Volume VI, The Far East, Document 114, https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1947v06/d114 (accessed 21 May 2017).
[18] NBC Broadcast by Paul V. McNutt, US High Commissioner to the Philippines, 23 February 1946, Box 22, PVMP.
[19] Ian Wilson-Young to Alexander Morley, 20 February 1946, IOR/Q/21/11.

officials labelled the relationship as 'a new method of colonial domination,' whilst Nehru questioned whether Philippine freedom 'really signifies independence' given Washington's ongoing economic and military influence.[20] Aware of their position within 'the vortex of basic conflicts between East and West,' Filipino elites positioned themselves as a link between them. As one Filipino delegate at the ARC noted, 'the Philippines can either be a bridge or a chasm between the two great divisions of mankind in our time.'[21] Philippine criticisms of lacklustre rehabilitation assistance and American support for European imperialism encouraged the United States not to squander the prestige it had cultivated during World War II. This diplomacy portrayed Philippine independence as a litmus test for American leadership in postwar Asia. It positioned the islands as together and apart from the emerging intellectual and political geography of the Third World, demonstrating how this American neocolony justified its place within the Global South as a nation capable of exhibiting the best and worst of Washington's expanding postwar power.

The chapter starts by outlining how Filipino elites interpreted independence after World War II. Focusing on the Philippine Rehabilitation Act (PRA) and Bell Trade Act (BTA) – legislation that provided war damages and dictated economic relations – it shows how Filipino elites portrayed their recovery as a way of appealing to Asian hearts and minds. Section two explores the challenges that Filipino policymakers encountered when presenting this package. It focuses on Manila's campaign to ratify the BTA and the implications of the 1946 presidential election for Philippine prestige. The chapter ends by analysing the ARC. It argues that as a liminal moment in the construction of the Third World, the Philippine delegation occupied a confused position between North and South that reinforced their reputation as an American neocolony and pushed non-aligned nations away from the United States and closer to their Third World partners.

[20] Anon, 'Asian Relations Conference: Soviet Criticism', *Times of India*, 3 June 1947, p. 9. Nehru, 'Message to the People of the Philippines', 5 July 1946, in *Selected Works of Jawaharlal Nehru* [hereafter *SWJN*], First Series, vol. 15, February 1946 – September 1946 (New Delhi, India: Jawaharlal Nehru Memorial Fund, 2000), p. 545.
[21] Manuel Enverga, Racial Problems in the Philippines, paper submitted for Group B discussion on Migration and Racial Problems, Asian Relations Conference, March-April 1947, p. 13, IOR/Q/26/31/6.

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After World War II, the Philippines were on the brink of collapse. Four years of war left the economy in tatters. Inflation ran riot. Banks were insolvent. Food was scarce. The country's infrastructure deteriorated – power and water systems were destroyed; bridges and roads obliterated. One US official estimated that 15% of all buildings were levelled.[22] War did not just shatter the economy. Philippine politics was also broken. The head of the Philippine Commonwealth Manuel Quezon died in August 1944 whilst exiled in Washington. Vice President Sergio Osmeña succeeded him, but Washington felt that an election should be held before independence on 4 July 1946.[23] This was complicated by the number of Filipino politicians who worked with the Japanese. Prior to his death in April 1945, President Roosevelt insisted that 'those who have collaborated with the enemy must be removed from authority and influence.'[24] As a result, Osmeña found it hard to form a government given the amount of collaboration amongst Filipino elites. One person in particular split opinion. Manuel Roxas was a prominent politician who agreed to join the puppet regime. He served as food administrator and helped draft the constitution for President Jose Laurel's "Second Republic." Once US forces returned, Roxas was "liberated" and returned to duty as a colonel in General MacArthur's staff. MacArthur's absolution of Roxas nullified Roosevelt's collaborationist policy and put Osmeña in a difficult position. With so many elites tainted by collaboration, Roxas formed a new Liberal Party that promised to forgive such indiscretions.[25] The split within the Nacionalista Party coalition fractured the Filipino elite and inhibited Osmeña's ability to extract concessions from the United States. It also showed how quickly US officials were willing to forget collaboration in the face of more immediate priorities.

[22] Immerwahr, *How to Hide an Empire*, pp. 187-212. Millard Tydings, Report on the Philippine Islands, 7 June 1945, Philippine Rehabilitation Commission Folder, Box 2, Series 4: Philippine Islands, Millard E. Tydings Papers, Hornbake Library, University of Maryland – College Park, College Park, MD.
[23] Golay, *Face of Empire*, pp. 443-452.
[24] Quoted in the Consul General at Manila (Steintorf) to the Secretary of State, 5 September 1945, FRUS, 1945, Volume VI, The British Commonwealth, The Far East, Document 911, https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1945v06/d911 (accessed 14 September 2020).
[25] Immerwahr, *How to Hide an Empire*, pp. 237-238. David Joel Steinberg, *Philippine Collaboration in World War II* (Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press, 1967), pp. 115-163.

MacArthur was relying on elites like Roxas to restore order and provide stable leadership.[26] Following through on Roosevelt's pledge would mean dismantling the ruling class and admitting that American colonialism inspired no more loyalty than their European counterparts.

Filipinos like Roxas chose collaboration over imprisonment or execution. Some were enticed by the racialised rhetoric of Japan's Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere.[27] Others chose to fight. After MacArthur's retreat, guerrilla units banded together to harry the Japanese. The most powerful was the Hukbalahap – an armed group of peasants formed by the Philippine Communist Party in 1942. Patterned after the Chinese Red Army, the Huks organised an effective resistance. By the time Japan surrendered in September 1945, they controlled much of Central Luzon (the highlands that surround Manila).[28] In "Huklandia" as some called it, guerrillas set up governments, evicted landlords, and broke up the large sugar and tobacco estates that kept Filipino peasants in poverty.[29] Tensions with returning American forces began immediately. Huk leaders refused MacArthur's commands to disarm. Instead, they fortified their positions and formed a new political party, the Democratic Alliance, to contest the election.[30] World War II entrenched popular dissatisfaction with the Filipino elite and pushed previously maligned communist movements closer to armed rebellion. The Huks saw their wartime struggle as a continuing process

[26] The Consul General at Manila (Steintorf) to the Secretary of State, 13 August 1945, FRUS, 1945, Volume VI, The British Commonwealth, The Far East, Document 910, https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1945v06/d910 (accessed 14 September 2020).
[27] Steinberg, *Philippine Collaboration in World War II*, pp. 163-200. Matthiesen, *Japanese Pan-Asianism and the Philippines*, pp. 78-183. Translated article entitled 'Appealing to the Japanese People', undated, Box 19, Joseph Ralston Hayden Papers [hereafter JRHP], Bentley Historical Library – University of Michigan, Ann Abor, MI. Motoe Terami-Wada, *Sakdalistas' Struggle for Philippine Independence, 1930-1945* (Quezon City, Philippines: Ateneo de Manila University Press, 2014), pp. 165-198.
[28] Memorandum on the Organization of the Hukbalahap, September 1946, Box 18, Manuel A. Roxas Papers [hereafter MARP], Main Library, University of the Philippines – Diliman [hereafter UPD], Quezon City, Philippines. United States Army Forces in the Far East Memorandum on the Hukbalahap, 3 March 1945, Box 42, JRHP. Fuller, *Forcing the Pace*, pp. 208-295. Jason Ridler, 'The Fertile Ground of Hell's Carnival: Charles T.R. Bohannan and the US Army's Counter Intelligence Corps' Investigations of War Criminals, Collaborators, and the Huk, in the Philippines, 1945-1947', *Defense & Security Analysis,* DOI: 10.1080/14751798.2016.1269391 (accessed 10 July 2017), pp. 15-29.
[29] H. Ford Wilkins, 'Outlaws Disturb Philippines; 'Huks' a State Within State', *New York Times*, 20 May 1946, p. 1.
[30] Saulo, *Communism in the Philippines*, pp. 29-38.

of national liberation from foreign domination.[31] They represented the strongest challenge to American influence after the war.

This was the situation Sergio Osmeña inherited. The economy was broken, the countryside was in rebellion, and collaboration had divided the elite. His administration approached independence through a lens of political, economic, and military insecurity that dictated their commitment to Washington and the liberal capitalist orbit. Manila wanted to manufacture a freedom that was independent and intertwined with America. Leaders like Osmeña and Roxas had financially and politically benefited from American colonialism and wanted to return to the pre-war status quo in the face of radical alternatives like the Huks. The relationship between economic and political security was not lost on these elites. They had protested earlier decisions to tie exports to the US market. Now they worried Washington would leave the islands 'alone to survive against economic forces.' The wartime "Europe first" policy and the slow pace of reoccupation compounded their discontent. The Philippine Resident Commissioner to the United States Carlos Romulo argued 'it was the sovereignty of the United States in the Philippines that Japan attacked.'[32] Their sacrifices during World War II convinced them that American assistance had to come without strings. As Romulo put it, 'economic security is not enough… peace can be made possible only by men or nations who meet on equal terms.'[33] By positioning the Philippines as a 'liaison between Occident and Orient,' Filipino elites sold their rehabilitation as an important part of Washington's decolonization policy.[34] They portrayed their freedom as a bellwether for American leadership, hoping to engender a stronger responsibility for decolonization that would turn into greater economic and political stability at home. In this sense, it was Filipino leaders themselves

[31] Memorandum from Luis Taruc to Douglas MacArthur & Sergio Osmeña, 13 February 1945, Box 42, JRHP. Statement by Mateo del Castillo & Luis Taruc sent to the President of the Philippines, Manuel Roxas, on the stand of the Hukbalahap, 17 August 1946, pp. 1-3, Box 18, MARP.
[32] Philippine Trade Act of 1945, Hearings before Committee on Ways & Means, House of Representatives, 19 October 1945, p. 112, Box CPR0012 – SD, CPRP. Ibid, 17 October 1945, pp. 90-111. Ibid, 15 February 1946, pp. 3-18.
[33] Quoted in Cornelia Spencer, *Romulo: Voice of Freedom* (New York, NY: John Day Company, 1953), p. 224.
[34] Philippine Trade Act of 1945, Hearings before Committee on Ways & Means, House of Representatives, 19 October 1945, p. 111.

pushing hardest for a neocolonial relationship with Washington. This policy of "empire by invitation" allowed them to carve out a unique place within US foreign policy that exploited Washington's exceptionalism and forced the United States to consider their needs over others.[35]

Manila's insistence that the United States should pay for the cost of war led Osmeña's administration to lobby for the Philippine Rehabilitation and Bell Trade Acts. Approved by Truman in April 1946, the PRA granted the Philippines $120 million for infrastructure, $100 million for military equipment, and $400 million to restart the economy. The BTA focused on aiding the islands' economic recovery through trade, offering special bilateral trading privileges in return for American access to Philippine natural resources.[36] The legislation has been cited as a case study in 'manipulatory democracy' because of the concessions that Manila was forced to grant.[37] The PRA withheld payments until the Philippines amended its constitution to create a special place for US capital. Alongside this "parity provision," the BTA also placed restrictions on the economy by creating a series of preferential tariffs and tying the Philippine peso to the American dollar.[38] For the Osmeña administration, it was the best they could get out of a bad situation. Filipino leaders wanted to separate their economic recovery from other wartime allies. They knew the Philippines were dependent on American aid but worried Congress was only focused on rebuilding Europe.[39] Believing decolonization was just around the corner, they contended that neglecting the Philippines' economic recovery would damage Washington's prestige and undo the positive rhetoric cultivated during World War II. 'I speak as a Filipino and an oriental,' argued Romulo before Congress, 'and almost every day I receive indications from political leaders in all parts of the colonial world – from Southeast Asia, from the Far East generally, and from all those other regions where the hundreds of millions of subject people look

[35] Lundestad, 'Empire by Invitation?', pp. 263-277.
[36] Constantino, *The Philippines: The Continuing Past*, p. 202. Anon, 'Summary, Bell Trade Act', in *Philippines Reader*, pp. 88-90.
[37] Shalom, 'Philippine Acceptance of the Bell Trade Act of 1946', pp. 499-517.
[38] Anon, 'Summary, Bell Trade Act', pp. 88-90.
[39] Romulo to Osmeña, 28 August 1945, p. 1, Box 8, Sergio Osmeña Papers [hereafter SOP], National Library of the Philippines, Manila, Philippines.

to the United States for moral leadership that will help them to achieve the freedom they deserve.'[40] Rehabilitation was a chance to show that the United States recognised the Philippines' role in bolstering this appeal.

By pushing for better rehabilitation legislation, Manila wanted to show that independence was not the end of American responsibility. After returning to the Philippines with MacArthur in October 1944, Romulo took up the position of Resident Commissioner at Osmeña's behest. In the spring of 1945, he travelled to Washington to help push the PRA and BTA through Congress.[41] Osmeña picked the right man for the job. Prior to World War II, Romulo was a successful journalist who published the *Philippine Herald* in Manila. In 1942, he won a Pulitzer Prize for his reporting on the Japanese invasion of China and Southeast Asia.[42] After escaping from the Philippines, Romulo spent the rest of the war in the United States working as MacArthur's press officer. It was this role that earnt him a reputation in Washington and around the world as an articulate spokesman for Asian freedom.[43] Like many Filipino elites, Romulo harboured a strong belief in the sanctity of liberal democracy. He earnt a graduate degree at Columbia in 1921 and wrote eloquently about his admiration for 'Mother America.'[44] Yet underneath this pro-Americanism lay a strong and articulate nationalism, one that recognised American power without subscribing to its imperialist excesses. As he travelled across Southeast Asia in the late 1930s, Romulo witnessed first-hand the poverty and underdevelopment that afflicted the region under Western rule. In Burma, Malaya, and Indochina, he encountered a 'sense of betrayal at White hands.'[45] These experiences taught him that freedom was the only solution to lessening the divide between East and West and that colonial powers had to reconcile themselves to that fact. This

[40] Philippine Trade Act of 1946, Hearings before the Committee on Finance, United States Senate, 5 April 1946, p. 81, Box CPR0012 – SD, CPRP.
[41] Carlos P. Romulo, *I Walked with Heroes* (New York, NY: Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1961), pp. 235-277. Spencer, *Romulo: Voice of Freedom*, p. 219.
[42] Eric Pace, 'Carlos Romulo of Philippines, A Founder of UN, Dies at 86', *New York Times*, 15 December 1985, p. 1.
[43] Spencer, *Romulo: Voice of Freedom*, pp. 141-177.
[44] Carlos P. Romulo, *Mother America: A Living Story of Democracy* (New York, NY: Doubleday, 1943).
[45] Romulo, *I Walked with Heroes*, pp. 212-238. Romulo, 'Asia Must be Free', *Collier's*, 20 October 1945, p. 12.

part of Romulo's intellectual matrix helped influence his position on rehabilitation. He saw the United States as obligated to provide for the Philippines in the face of its wartime commitment to decolonization. As he put it, 'a billion Asiatics – watching the Philippines, have seen what freedom really means.' Now, it was up 'to the American people to see that they get it.'[46]

For the next year, Romulo worked tirelessly with officials in the State and Interior Departments, drafting legislation and serving as a contact between the Truman administration and Manila.[47] His goal was to convince American policymakers that Philippine rehabilitation would be a boon in the battle for colonized hearts and minds. First, Romulo used publishing contacts from his journalism days to produce several books about the Philippines. Titles such as *Mother America*, *I Saw the Fall of the Philippines*, and *I See the Philippines Rise* detailed the importance of Philippine independence for American prestige in Asia.[48] He also stepped up his speaking engagements, jumping at every opportunity to talk about America's 'spearhead of democracy in the Far East.'[49] Privately, Romulo worked with the US High Commissioner to the Philippines Paul McNutt to pressure the administration into clarifying what the Philippines could expect from American aid.[50] Most importantly, Romulo testified before the US Congress during the debates to ratify the PRA and BTA. His argument was simple: rehabilitation could help bridge the gap between East and West. He reminded Washington that the world was 'watching the United States to see what it will do to help its friends' and that these debates would help influence the behaviour of other empires.[51] By emphasising its importance as a signal of American leadership, Romulo highlighted the propaganda value of rehabilitation for other colonial peoples struggling with the cost of war.

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[46] Ibid, pp. 11-74.
[47] Spencer, *Romulo: Voice of Freedom*, pp. 219-222. Romulo, *I See the Philippines Rise*, pp. 250-258. Dean J. Kotlowski, *Paul V. McNutt and the Age of FDR* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2015), p. 380.
[48] Romulo, *Mother America*. Carlos P. Romulo, *I Saw the Fall of the Philippines* (New York, NY: Doubleday, 1943). Romulo, *I See the Philippines Rise*.
[49] Romulo, *I Walked with Heroes*, pp. 242-245. Philippine Trade Act of 1945, Hearings before Committee on Ways & Means, House of Representatives, 19 October 1945, p. 111.
[50] Kotlowski, *Paul V. McNutt*, pp. 330-381.
[51] Philippine Trade Act of 1946, Hearings before the Committee on Finance, United States Senate, 5 April 1946, pp. 80-81.

Romulo's work helped, but it did not remove the biggest obstacle in the way of rehabilitation. Fundamentally, Filipino leaders were asking for an economic relationship that contradicted what Washington was doing with other wartime allies. US postwar planners wanted to regulate the global economy by bankrolling new institutions such as the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank. At Bretton Woods, they hammered out a financial and monetary system that sought to end the economic isolationism of the pre-war era. The PRA and BTA were a sharp contrast to broader American demands for multilateralism, tariff reductions, and an end to nationalistic trade barriers. It also damaged relations with colonial allies like Britain. During the war, Roosevelt tried to remove the imperial trading preferences that ringfenced the British empire by tying American aid initiatives such as the Lend-Lease Agreement to British commitments to free trade.[52] The irony was not lost on Washington. In the Congressional debates to ratify the legislation, representatives pointed out that other countries were 'beginning to complain and protest' about the restrictions.[53] Secretary of State James Byrnes told Truman it was 'unfortunate that we should insist upon a highly privileged position for Americans in the Philippines in the future when we protest strongly against such policies which discriminate against Americans in other countries.'[54] This put the President in an unenviable position. If his administration failed to bankroll the Philippines, there was a real chance that Osmeña's government could collapse. If they did, they risked upsetting their European allies, alienating other nationalist movements in Asia, and weakening their economic policy elsewhere.

Part of the predicament was that American officials openly disagreed about the best way to rehabilitate the Philippines. The Department of the Interior was in charge of overseas territories and responsible for drafting the legislation. The Secretary of the Interior Harold Ickes favoured a

[52] Jeffry A. Frieden, *Global Capitalism: Its Fall and Rise in the Twentieth Century* (New York, NY: W.W. Norton & Company, 2006), pp. 253-277.
[53] Philippine Trade Act of 1945, Hearings before Committee on Ways & Means, House of Representatives, 19 October 1945, p. 115.
[54] Memorandum by the Secretary of State to President Truman, 18 April 1946, FRUS, 1946, Volume VIII, The Far East, Document 659, https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1946v08/d659 (accessed 2 October 2018).

lengthy period of preferential trade that would bolster the Philippine economy whilst giving it time to diversify. His view was that the Philippines would be unable to cope without access to the US market and that American capital had to be used to give the economy time to recover. This position was supported by key members of the department such as Undersecretary Abe Fortas as well as the highest American authority in the Philippines, High Commissioner McNutt.[55] State Department officials disagreed. They felt that reserving such privileges would be 'inconsistent with our promise to grant the Philippines genuine independence and may be expected to have unfortunate repercussions on our international relations, especially in the Far East.'[56] Secretary Byrnes found an important ally in Senator Millard Tydings, an influential member of the Senate Foreign Relations committee and a leading figure in Philippine colonial matters. Byrnes and Tydings wanted to use aid rather than trade. They homed in on the damaging implications of the legislation by suggesting that Interior's position was essentially 'to keep the Philippines economically even though we lose them politically.'[57]

These tensions were indicative of Washington's changing security role in Asia and the uncertainty that decolonization afforded it. In one respect, Truman wanted to follow through on Roosevelt's pledge to build a more interdependent global economy that could provide greater international stability and integrate former colonies into the liberal capitalist orbit. His advisers felt that clinging onto outdated empires undermined Washington's wartime rhetoric and aided the Soviets in appealing to colonized hearts and minds. As one paper prepared by the Department of State put it, 'the interests of the United States and of its European Allies require that the Far East be removed as a source of colonial rivalry and conflict, not only between the Great Powers, but between the Great Powers and the peoples of Asia.'[58] Yet when it came to the Philippines, US

[55] Kotlowski, *Paul V. McNutt*, pp. 384-388. Cullather, *Illusions of Influence*, pp. 23-34.
[56] Memorandum by the Secretary of State to President Truman, 18 April 1946, FRUS.
[57] Kotlowski, *Paul V. McNutt*, p. 387. Cullather, *Illusions of Influence*, pp. 37-38. Philippine Trade Act of 1945, Hearings before Committee on Ways & Means, House of Representatives, 17 October 1945, p. 92.
[58] Policy Paper Prepared in the Department of State, An Estimate of Conditions in Asia and the Pacific at the Close of the War in the Far East and the Objectives and Policies of the United States, 22 June 1945, FRUS, 1945, Volume

policymakers were hamstrung by their own exceptionalism. Preferential trade agreements contradicted US policy, but even reluctant State Department officials agreed that the 'collapse of the Philippine experiment from whatever cause will sacrifice virtually all the goodwill' they had generated during World War II.[59] 'We have made our policy in the Philippine islands the basis of our propaganda in the Far East,' argued Ickes.[60] Neglecting the Philippines would undermine Washington's promise to lead Asia towards freedom. Trapped between an embarrassing deterioration in Philippine stability and damaging accusations of neocolonial intervention, US policymakers struggled to make their wartime rhetoric match the reality facing the Philippines. Their mistake was thinking their propaganda about independence would translate into convincing support for Philippine rehabilitation amongst other European and Asian powers. This meant the United States invested more time and money keeping an independent Philippines afloat without any real advantages for American prestige in the colonized world. Political independence meant very little in the context of Washington's ongoing economic and military influence.

Filipino leaders preferred Interior's position because it included a longer period of preferential trade but resented the catches that came with it.[61] Aware of the American sensitivity to accusations of imperialism, they argued that the Philippines needed fairer treatment if the United States wanted their freedom to mean something to other Asian peoples. As Osmeña put it, 'we chose to help defend your sovereignty in the Philippines not as slaves defending a master but as free men fighting beside others fighting to be free.'[62] In their view, failing to rehabilitate the Philippines was a failure to support their independence. Romulo generated leverage through his country's insecurity. Conscious of nationalist sentiment at home and abroad, he urged American

VI, The British Commonwealth, The Far East, Document 386, https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1945v06/d386 (accessed 14 October 2020).
[59] Quoted in Cullather, *Illusions of Influence*, p. 32.
[60] Article draft by Harold L. Ickes entitled 'The Philippines Come of Age', undated, Box 226, Harold L. Ickes Papers [hereafter HIP], Library of Congress, Washington, DC.
[61] Osmeña to Truman, 8 November 1945, President's Secretary's Files [hereafter PSF], Harry S. Truman Papers, HTL.
[62] Speech by President Sergio Osmeña for the Herald Tribune Forum in New York entitled, 'The Future of US-Philippine Cooperation', 29 October 1945, Box 4, SOP.

policymakers not to squander 'the glimmer of hope you gave Asia' by neglecting their colonial protégé. He reminded them that they needed the country to be stable if it was going to serve as a bastion for American power in the Pacific. By tying the legislation to the American desire for military bases, Romulo helped connect ideas about economic and political security in Washington's thinking. As Romulo asked Congress, 'do you want to have air and naval bases in a country where there is social unrest?'[63] Romulo made it clear that rehabilitation would help rather than hinder American prestige. Instead of letting it 'sever East from West, it could be made to bring the two closer.' Together, the PRA and BTA were an opportunity to build a 'bulwark of democracy' that could put the Philippines at the forefront of Washington's decolonization strategy.[64]

As much as Osmeña would deny it, his government was relatively unsuccessful in getting what it wanted out of Congress. Romulo's work attracted some attention. Editorials encouraged the Truman administration to 'help the islands stand on their own feet,' whilst policymakers such as McNutt insisted that the Philippines had 'a claim [on] the United States superior to [that] of any country or any economic group.'[65] Congressional leaders were undeterred. The early years of the Cold War were invariably focused on Europe, where widespread political turmoil and economic prostration threatened America's immediate strategic priorities.[66] Whilst concentrating on this perceivably more important theatre, lawmakers also faced domestic pressures from powerful agricultural sectors like the sugar industry who felt that free trade with the Philippines threatened their livelihoods. Conscious of these constituents and occupied with the return to a peacetime economy, many representatives were unwilling to increase expenditure on a dependency that most

[63] Philippine Trade Act of 1945, Hearings before Committee on Ways & Means, House of Representatives, 19 October 1945, p 112.
[64] Romulo, 'Asia Must be Free', p. 11.
[65] American Public Opinion Supports Philippine Rehabilitation, Extension of Remarks of Hon. Carlos P. Romulo, House of Representatives, 7 February 1946, Box CPR0012 – SD, CPRP. The United States High Commissioner in the Philippines (McNutt) to Mr. Richard R. Ely, of the Office of United States High Commissioner, Washington, 18 January 1946, FRUS, 1946, Volume VIII, The Far East, Document 651, https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1946v08/d651 (accessed 17 September 2019).
[66] David W. Ellwood, *Rebuilding Europe: Western Europe, America, and Postwar Reconstruction* (New York, NY: Routledge, 1992). Mark Mazower, Jessica Reinisch & David Feldman, eds., *Post-War Reconstruction in Europe: International Perspectives, 1945-1949* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2011).

considered low on the pecking order. McNutt sweetened the deal by granting the United States even more privileges. It was his suggestion to tie PRA payments to Manila's acceptance of the BTA, forcing the Philippines to amend its constitution.[67] This Congressional bickering exasperated Romulo, who complained about the 'frightening lack of interest in Philippine rehabilitation in Washington.'[68] Osmeña was irate. He protested that the measures were 'a curtailment of Philippine sovereignty and a virtual nullification of Philippine independence.'[69] Byrnes agreed, but the State Department could not interfere once Interior's position took hold. The PRA and BTA were approved by Truman on 30 April 1946 after only four days of debate in the Senate.[70]

In truth, neither side were particularly happy. Truman and the State Department complained about the break in foreign policy that the legislation represented. As the President himself admitted, 'preferential trade relations are alien to the policy of this administration.'[71] State Department officials felt it would be 'very costly to United States prestige and will do much to impair the laudable record of fair dealing hitherto maintained by the United States in its Philippine relations.' The issue was clear for everyone to see. In its bid to liberalise the global economy, the Truman administration lost a lot of clout through its dealings with the Philippines. The acting Secretary of State Dean Acheson knew that a substantial amount of 'domestic and foreign criticism' was already being directed at American rehabilitation in the islands.[72] As a result, the United States squandered the moral high ground over other imperial powers and damaged its ability to demand economic change elsewhere.

[67] Kotlowski, *Paul V. McNutt*, pp. 389-390.
[68] Romulo to Osmeña, 28 August 1945, pp. 1-2.
[69] Quoted in Bernard Seeman & Laurence Salisbury, *Cross-Currents in the Philippines* (New York, NY: Institute of Pacific Relations, 1946), p. 8.
[70] Cullather, *Illusions of Influence*, pp. 38-39.
[71] Statement by the President Upon Signing Bills Providing for Philippine Rehabilitation and Trade, 30 April 1946, available online: https://www.trumanlibrary.gov/library/public-papers/90/statement-president-upon-signing-bills-providing-philippine-rehabilitation (accessed 19 November 2020).
[72] Memorandum by the Acting Secretary of State to President Truman, 26 June 1946, FRUS, 1946, Volume VIII, The Far East, Document 676, https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1946v08/d676 (accessed 24 November 2019).

These inconsistencies reflected the contradictions in US foreign policy that would blight Washington's bid for international leadership throughout the Cold War. The United States supported self-determination, in principle. Yet, uncertainty over how to manage this transition meant Washington was always going to exploit its economic and military power to ensure adherence to the liberal capitalist orbit. For McNutt and other policymakers, a heavy hand in Philippine rehabilitation was an easy choice between attracting modest international condemnation and keeping a strategically useful ally close to the United States. They recognised that Washington was still responsible for Philippine security and felt this influence was an important part of reinforcing American power in the Pacific. As McNutt put it, 'we must remain strong… [in the Far East] if we are to exert our influence. To accomplish these ends we must depend in good measure on the Philippines.'[73] Ultimately, the Truman administration fudged the opportunity to use rehabilitation as part of its bid for anticolonial legitimacy. Policymakers prioritised expediency and made a rod for their own back. Washington used the Philippines as a focal point for wartime propaganda in Asia. The Four Freedoms and the Atlantic Charter tied into American rhetoric about the Philippines being a model for orderly decolonization.[74] Now, the United States was dangerously close to reneging on those promises. They failed to help the Filipino elite help themselves and were unwilling to make bolder choices about collaboration or rehabilitation for fear of losing their grip over the independent Philippine state.

For their part, Filipino leaders lost a good deal in fighting for rehabilitation. Yes they had succeeded in securing preferential trade, but at what cost? They sacrificed sovereignty for better economic security and now they had to live with the drawbacks of this approach. Congress played on Manila's desperation to get what they wanted. As Romulo lamented, 'hungry, suffering people

[73] Radio Interview between Paul V. McNutt & Barnet Nover, 10 April 1946, Box 22, PVMP.
[74] Anon, 'United Nations' Pledge to Smash Aggressors: President Roosevelt Stresses Faith in Four Freedoms', *Times of Indi*a, 15 June 1942, p. 1. Harold Callender, 'Allied Aims Shape a Post-War World: Atlantic Charter and the Four Freedoms Contrast Sharply with the Axis Plans', *New York Times*, 21 October 1942, p. 8. John Robert Badger, 'World View: Moscow and The Four Freedoms', *Chicago Defender*, 4 December 1943, p. 15.

cannot live on discussion and debate and reports.'[75] Knowing that further opposition would mean further delay, Osmeña quietly accepted the terms and turned his attention to the election. Roxas assured McNutt that he also had his support but grumbled that the legislation would face strong resistance at home.[76] Their acceptance reflected the dire reality that faced the Philippines. Osmeña and Roxas knew that American aid was the only thing holding the government together. They reasoned that a bad deal was better than no deal, often conflating what was best for themselves with what was best for the country. This was an error. Rehabilitation divided Manila from its postcolonial peers and entrenched the idea that the country was a tool of the United States. As the islands hurtled towards independence, many observers felt the Philippines would be unable to shoulder the burden of sovereignty without America standing watch.[77] Filipino leaders now had to sell rehabilitation to their own people. With Philippine politics dramatically altered by World War II, they struggled to reach a consensus in a landscape marred by instability, infighting, and competing nationalist priorities. The fight for rehabilitation at home had drastic implications for Philippine posture abroad, in turn helping to determine the country's position as an American client state and pushing the Philippines further away from their Third World neighbours.

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On 4 July 1946, surrounded by the ruins of Manila Bay, a vast crowd of over 200,000 people gathered at the Luneta Park to witness the end of American colonial rule in the Philippines. Dignitaries from across the world attended the ceremony, with broadcasters and journalists clamouring to hear the day's oratory.[78] In his first address as a sovereign leader, the newly elected Manuel Roxas declared: 'America is the source of almost all of the assistance furnished to the

[75] Philippine Trade Act of 1945, Hearings before Committee on Ways & Means, House of Representatives, 15 February 1946, p. 7.
[76] Statement by Sergio Osmeña delivered by Carlos Romulo to the Senate Committee on Finance, 15 March 1946, Box CPR0012 – SD, CPRP. Roxas to McNutt, 7 January 1946, Box 8, MARP.
[77] John C. Metcalf, 'Unrest Complicates Aid, Independence Plans, But World Still Waits US Philippine Action', *Washington Post*, 28 October 1945, p. B1. Anon, 'Current Topics: Filipinos Clash American Inflation', *Times of India*, 9 July 1946, p. 4.
[78] Lord Killearn, Special Commissioner in Southeast Asia, Telegram No. 41 from Manila Reporting Presentation of Credentials, 5 July 1946, pp. 1-3.

stricken areas of the world; and the American Congress, appropriating with troubled and divided conscience for the bare relief needs of these lands, looks askance at the political complexions of the governments in some of those areas. We, of the Philippines, are spared that trial. American aid to us is direct and whole-hearted.'[79] Roxas positioned rehabilitation as a benchmark for American leadership in postwar Asia. The PRA and BTA provided 'the security of our freedom' so the Philippines could join the theatre of nations not as a blight on America's record but as a model for orderly democratic transition.[80] 'Thus,' as Romulo put it, 'the precedent was set that broke all the rules of a colonial era.'[81]

Romulo was right, just not in the way that he thought. Philippine independence suffered from a lack of legitimacy that divided Washington from its European partners and separated the Philippines from other nationalist movements in Asia. Political independence accompanied total reliance on the United States and colonial powers like Britain knew it. French diplomats saw the Philippines as a blueprint for neocolonial expansion and wanted to grant their own dependencies the 'same measure of independence granted to the Philippines with orientation in economic and political matters toward France.'[82] Communist parties across Asia derided Philippine freedom as meaningless and vowed not to let 'foreign aggression' turn their countries into a 'Philippine-type "independent" nation.'[83] Other Asian states looked at Philippine independence as a cautionary tale. As one Indian commentator put it, 'the Philippines have been given freedom – on paper.'[84] To most observers, the Philippines were nominally independent at best. The Truman administration hoped to project rehabilitation as an effective example of decolonization management. Instead,

[79] Manuel Roxas address on inauguration of Philippine Republic, 4 July 1946, Box 22, PVMP.
[80] Inaugural Address of Roxas, 28 May 1946, Box 2, MARP.
[81] Romulo statement on Philippine independence, undated, Box CPR0012 – SD, CPRP.
[82] The Ambassador in Siam (Stanton) to the Secretary of State, 8 August 1947, FRUS, 1947, Volume VI, The Far East, p. 130.
[83] Draft of New China News Agency, 7 July 1946, FRUS, 1946, Volume IX, The Far East: China, Document 645, https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1946v09/d645 (accessed 28 October 2019).
[84] Kumar Goshal, 'As an Indian Sees it', *Pittsburgh Courier*, 11 January 1947, p. 7.

they exacerbated local political conflicts and reinforced the impression that the United States was never really on the side of Asia's colonial peoples.

Philippine problems started at home. Mired by collaboration, challenged by the Huks, and confronting systemic structural deficiencies inherent to the independent Philippine state, the freedom that Osmeña and other Filipino leaders had manufactured predominantly benefited themselves and the established economic and political elite. The PRA and BTA offered no real stability. Instead, they entrenched existing nationalist divisions and widened the gap between the Filipino masses and the ruling class. Jose Laurel (a vocal nationalist leader and the President of the Philippines under Japan) admonished Osmeña and Roxas for kowtowing to American demands. He felt parity was an 'obnoxious' affront to Philippine sovereignty that would 'sow the seeds of discrimination' and incite 'bitter internecine conflict.'[85]

Laurel's analysis was not hyperbole. In parts of the country, orderly government did not exist. Parity was a pivotal issue at the election and Huk leaders looked at Roxas' victory as a sign that democratic struggle would not succeed.[86] Who could blame them? There was no real difference between the two candidates. Roxas and Osmeña agreed that American aid was essential and both wanted to make sure this assistance would be used to keep them in power. In this regard, Roxas had the upper hand. He had powerful allies in General MacArthur and High Commissioner McNutt. His youthful demeanour, Western emulations of speech and dress, and incessant overtures towards liberal democracy made him an attractive prospect for advancing American ambitions. McNutt stressed Roxas' indication 'by word and deed' to 'follow American pattern[s] of government and retain closest ties with us in all matters.'[87] In contrast, Osmeña was perceived

[85] Untitled speech by Jose P. Laurel on parity, March 1947, Box 3, Speeches & Articles Series, Jose P. Laurel Papers [hereafter JLP], Jose P. Laurel Memorial Foundation, Manila, Philippines.
[86] Statement by Mateo del Castillo & Luis Taruc sent to the President of the Philippines, Manuel Roxas, on the stand of the Hukbalahap, 17 August 1946, pp. 1-3. Saulo, *Communism in the Philippines*, pp. 38-39.
[87] Kotlowski, *Paul V. McNutt*, pp. 381-382. United States High Commissioner in the Philippines (McNutt) to Richard R. Ely, 14 June 1946, FRUS, 1946, Volume VIII, The Far East, Document 668, https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1946v08/d668 (accessed 8 December 2015).

as parochial, emotional, and ignorant to the challenges that faced the Philippines. He accepted the endorsement of the Huk-sponsored Democratic Alliance which disturbed US officials and gave Roxas a powerful stick to beat him with.[88] Roxas claimed the election was being undermined by 'subversives and foreign elements.'[89] He played on Osmeña's Chinese heritage by accusing him of cosying up to the Huks and Chinese communism. McNutt influenced proceedings by publicly lending credence to the accusations. Osmeña was ousted with 46% of the vote.[90]

The 1946 Presidential election was a pivotal moment in the Philippines' transition from colony to client state that had far reaching implications for the country's posture abroad. International observers felt Roxas' ascendancy had American hands all over it. As the acting British Consul General FS Tomlinson reported to Whitehall, 'High Commissioner [McNutt] seems satisfied that Roxas will be elected president and he is clearly pleased at the prospect.'[91] After all, the new President was friends with MacArthur and McNutt. Roxas served as MacArthur's aide before the war, whilst he and McNutt enjoyed many late nights drinking, debating, and playing poker during the latter's first stint as High Commissioner in the late 1930s. Accusations of 'nepotism and political partisanship' were rife.[92] It was obvious that McNutt and MacArthur helped exonerate Roxas to assist his candidacy. As a result, Roxas' stock was low in other Asian countries. At best, he was portrayed as an opportunist. At worst, he was seen as a quisling whose unambiguous reliance on the United States was an affront to genuine self-determination. His election proved to be 'a sore problem in America's model republic' that damaged the Philippines'

[88] John Grover, 'Collaborationist Issue Likely to Be Decisive in Philippine Election', *Washington Post*, 26 January 1946, p. B2. Radio Letter from Paul V. McNutt to Sergio Osmeña on allegations of "Terroristic Practices" during Philippine Presidential Election, 12 April 1946, Box 11, PVMP. Cullather, *Illusions of influence*, pp. 48-50. Anon, 'Election 'Terrorism' in Philippines Sifted', *New York Times*, 16 April 1946, p. 2.
[89] Roxas to McNutt, 4 April 1946, Box 8, MARP.
[90] Radio Letter from Paul V. McNutt to Sergio Osmeña on allegations of "Terroristic Practices" during Philippine Presidential Election, 12 April 1946. Cullather, *Illusions of influence*, pp. 48-50.
[91] Acting British Consul General to Foreign Office, 25 April 1946, IOR/M/4/2988.
[92] Kotlowski, *Paul V. McNutt*, pp. 381-382. Roxas to McNutt, 12 March 1947, Box 8, MARP. The Consul General at Manila (Steintorf) to the Secretary of State, 13 August 1945, FRUS.

reputation in the United States and abroad.[93] It helped push the islands further away from their neighbours and deepened the political schisms within the postcolonial Philippine state.

Nothing did more to exacerbate these divisions than the debate to ratify the BTA's "parity" provision. Beginning after the election in April 1946 and culminating in a national plebiscite on 11 March 1947, the campaign was a hard-fought victory for Roxas that allowed the Philippines to amend the constitution to guarantee a privileged place for American capital. Roxas placed a premium on defending parity at home and abroad. Conscious of his country's reputation as a "banana republic," he portrayed the measure as an effort to ensure rather than undermine independence. As the President himself put it, 'in a world far from stabilized, no small nation today is without its special ties with a greater or stronger power.' By presenting parity as an expression of sovereignty rather than as an act of neocolonialism, Roxas pushed against prevailing ideas about nationalism and economic self-sufficiency peddled by Nehru and other postcolonial elites. Roxas focused on the benefits of American association rather than its downsides. This was his biggest strength and his biggest weakness. He saw American power as 'our greatest asset' and was willing to accept infringements on Philippine sovereignty in return for 'prestige, strength, security, and economic support."[94] His administration viewed parity as a necessary evil that ensured the United States would remain responsible for the Philippines. In reality, he had little choice. Acutely aware of his government's fragility, Roxas and other Filipino elites focused first-and-foremost on keeping themselves in power. They allowed immediate security considerations to replace more diffuse objectives like postcolonial autonomy. This fostered a pattern of neocolonial intervention that kept the Philippines economically and militarily dependent on the United States.

[93] H. Ford Wilkins, 'Roxas, Figure of Controversy, Takes Helm', *New York Times*, 12 May 1946, p. 99. Anon, 'Current Topics Civic Affairs Far Eastern Troubles', *Times of India*, 30 October 1946, p. 4.
[94] Message of President Roxas to the Filipino People urging approval of the Parity Amendment to the Constitution at the Plebiscite of March 11, 1947, 6 March 1947, available online: https://www.officialgazette.gov.ph/1947/03/06/message-of-president-roxas-to-the-filipino-people-urging-approval-of-the-parity-amendment-to-the-constitution-at-the-plebiscite-of-march-11-1947-march-6-1947/ (accessed 24 November 2019).

Roxas' first step was to shore up American assistance in anticipation of a difficult campaign at home. He knew he had a poor reputation because of his collaborationist record and he needed to reinforce his commitment to the United States if he was to secure further aid.[95] In May 1946, Roxas travelled to Washington with McNutt. The pair embarked on a whirlwind tour to discuss rehabilitation with Truman. During his eight-day stay, Roxas made six major speeches whilst liaising with Congressional officials and members of the cabinet.[96] Indicative of his all-out charm-offensive, the trip encompassed radio broadcasts, film reels, and public meetings in an effort to project rehabilitation as a benchmark for American intentions in Asia. The journey ended with a statement from the White House. In a segment shared across American cinemas and radio stations, Roxas claimed that 'if a prosperous and free democracy can be built in the Philippines upon the ruins of war, the prestige of America, and the American way of life, will be raised to towering heights, and the millions of people of the Far East will look to us, and to you, as their models.'[97] Like Osmeña and other Filipino elites, Roxas saw the islands as an 'ideological bridge' between East and West.[98] He portrayed Philippine independence as a powerful symbolic gesture that needed to be protected if it was going to reinforce American leadership in the colonized world.

Roxas' position was inward and outward facing. At home, Roxas played on his American connections as a way of winning votes. He knew that coming back empty handed would harm his chances of seeing parity through Congress. As he argued in a letter to his adviser Joaquin Elizalde, 'it is desirable to take maximum advantage of the great interest and emotional attachment which millions of Americans have towards the Philippines.'[99] His trip helped portray an aura of decisive action that would prove he was capable of extracting the best out of the United States. In

[95] Anon, 'The Unhappy Philippines', *New York Times*, 27 May 1946, p. 15.
[96] President-Elect Roxas Visits the United States, Extension of Remarks by Hon. Carlos P. Romulo, House of Representatives, 27 May 1946, Box CPR0012 – SD, CPRP.
[97] Public Domain Footage, President Roxas Philippines meets Truman and gives speech thanking America Newsreel, 6 May 2012 [video], https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4oOE3iYn1RU&list=PLmaMb1AQ91bIz8p_f5Y-jiKh15WpUi7x9&index=41 (accessed 23 November 2015).
[98] Quoted in Washington to Foreign Office, Supplementary to Weekly Political Summary, 22 May 1946, IOR M/4/1617.
[99] Roxas to Elizalde, 31 October 1946, Box 3, MARP.

Washington, Roxas wanted to reinforce his loyalty to liberal democracy and promote himself as a stable and reliable leader. He was aware of the bad press that surrounded him and he was keen to ensure his credentials would not be questioned by American officials. As the President Elect put it in front of reporters in Washington, 'relations with the United States are and always will be, I hope, the keystone of our foreign policy.[100] Roxas was under no illusions about the urgency of securing further support. 'Our cash resources are almost to disappearing point,' claimed Roxas in a letter to the US Treasury Secretary.[101] Yet he felt that Washington would back him out of necessity and believed in American power almost to the point of naivety. As he put it, 'the success of the Philippine experiment in democracy is the brightest jewel in the crown of US policy in the Far East.'[102] This confidence that Philippine security would always go hand in hand with the United States helped nurture his reputation as an American proxy and moved his government further away from its postcolonial peers.

Despite his best efforts, Roxas' stateside sojourn attracted a relatively cool reception in the United States. One British official admitted that 'in view of the paternal interest and pride of Americans in the… Philippines… it is somewhat surprising that the visit did not receive more publicity.'[103] Roxas' trip was revealing as it highlighted the divisions in Washington's approach to the Philippines. In many respects, Roxas was right to think that the Truman administration would support him. They did not have much choice. Roxas won the election. They needed him to get parity through Congress and knew that any attempt to undermine his leadership would 'indicate to the Philippine people and the world that we do not trust the ability of the Philippine government to manage its own affairs.'[104] Yet, many struggled to separate Roxas' presidency from his time

[100] Grover, 'Collaborationist Issue Likely to Be Decisive in Philippine Election', p. B2. Wilkins, 'Roxas, Figure of Controversy, Takes Helm', p. 99. Statement by President-Elect Roxas, Press Conference, 11 May 1946, Box 11, PVMP.
[101] Quoted in United States High Commissioner in the Philippines (McNutt) to Richard R. Ely, 14 June 1946, FRUS.
[102] Message of President Roxas to the Filipino People urging approval of the Parity Amendment to the Constitution at the Plebiscite of March 11, 1947.
[103] Washington to Foreign Office, Supplementary to Weekly Political Summary, 22 May 1946.
[104] Robert P. Patterson to Truman, 4 March 1946, Box 162, PSF.

working with the Japanese. After his resignation as Secretary of the Interior, Ickes accused Roxas of being a 'collaborator of the highest degree' and was candidly open in his support for Osmeña.[105] Roxas' wartime record created an atmosphere of distrust that made it difficult for him to garner support. With McNutt's intervention, Roxas secured $70 million for budgetary assistance.[106] It was barely enough to keep the government going but the President was in no position to complain. He returned to Manila on 11 May, having assured Congressional leaders that their money would be put towards ensuring parity went through.[107]

Roxas got what he wanted. At the very least, he had the tacit support of the Truman administration and a bit of cash to show for it. Yet, neither Washington's patronage nor its capital could guarantee his plans would run smoothly at home. Roxas' Liberal Party failed to get enough seats to control the Philippine Congress. The Huk-sponsored Democratic Alliance won seven seats in the House.[108] After the election, their representatives stalled parity by denouncing Roxas as a collaborator and insisting that the constitution should not be changed. The Huks wanted to lessen the divide between the masses and the elite whilst helping to build a more self-sufficient postcolonial state. 'The Roxas Government [sic] chose to sacrifice Philippine independence for the sake of the advantages to be gained from American political and military support,' argued representative Ramon Diokno.[109] Parity was simply the vindication of America's neocolonial intentions. Although skirmishes with government forces were common, Huk leaders initially opted for parliamentary struggle over armed rebellion.[110] They saw Osmeña as the lesser of two evils and hoped to influence the government's direction from the inside. Perturbed by Manila's hostility and Washington's indifference, the Huks began the transition towards violent revolution during the

[105] Ickes to Henry Becker, 20 November 1946, Box 8, HIP. Ickes to Osmeña, 21 December 1946, ibid.
[106] Golay, *Face of Empire*, p. 483.
[107] President-Elect Roxas Visits the United States, Extension of Remarks by Hon. Carlos P. Romulo, House of Representatives, 27 May 1946.
[108] Saulo, *Communism in the Philippines*, pp. 35-38.
[109] Ramon Diokno, 'Roxas Violates the Constitution', in *Philippines Reader*, p. 94.
[110] Memorandum from Luis Taruc to Douglas MacArthur & Sergio Osmeña, 13 February 1945. Statement by Mateo del Castillo & Luis Taruc sent to the President of the Philippines, Manuel Roxas, on the stand of the Hukbalahap, 17 August 1946, pp. 1-3. Fuller, *Forcing the Pace*, pp. 259-265.

parity debates. As one newspaperman put it, 'they have the guns, the leaders and a purpose.'[111] All they needed was a reason. Soon, Roxas would ensure that they got it.

In order to get parity approved, Roxas resorted to a mixture of underhand tactics and public displays of power that projected the image of rehabilitation that he wanted the world to see. First, Roxas used trumped-up charges of voter fraud and electoral violence to oust the Democratic Alliance representatives. There were protests in Manila, but Roxas got the Congressional authority he needed to amend the constitution.[112] Next, Roxas turned his mind to the plebiscite. In the run up to the vote, Roxas undertook one of the most strenuous public information campaigns that the Philippines had ever seen. He toured the archipelago relentlessly, speaking to thousands of Filipinos about the importance of parity for the future domestic prosperity of the Philippines.[113] Roxas also used the government's measly public relations budget to distribute pamphlets. Documents such as the 'Truth about Parity' explained the practical reasoning behind the measure, arguing that the United States was 'the only great power that was not destroyed by war and… the only power that has generously offered to help us.'[114]

Roxas focused his message on agency. He portrayed parity as 'the extension, by our own volition, of certain special rights to American citizens' and insisted that the Philippines stood to 'gain immensely in technical knowledge and in monetary rewards such as wages, royalties, and taxes.' He answered Huk critics by insisting 'they appeal to your nationalistic aspirations and ask you to believe that the United States, which spent billions and billions for our liberation, which is spending hundreds of millions of dollars for our rehabilitation, which spent the lives of fifty thousand Americans on this very soil to bring us freedom and finally independence, is now going

[111] Robert Trumbull, 'Agrarian Unrest Stirs Philippines', *New York Times*, 12 November 1945, p. 10.
[112] Saulo, *Communism in the Philippines*, pp. 37-38. Shalom, 'Philippine Acceptance of the Bell Trade Act of 1946', pp. 507-509. Woods, *Freedom Incorporated*, p. 89.
[113] L.H. Foulds, British Legation Manila, to Ernest Bevin, 10 March 1947, IOR/L/E/8/4300. H. Ford Wilkins, 'Roxas Campaigns for Parity for US', *New York Times*, 15 December 1946, p. 40. Wilkins, 'Roxas Campaigns on US Parity Issue', ibid, 23 February 1947, p. 30. Wilkins, 'Grenade is Thrown at Roxas in Manila', ibid, 11 March 1947, p. 18.
[114] The Truth About Parity, pamphlet, undated, pp. 1-10, Box 2, MARP.

to exploit us.'[115] Roxas thought the Philippines were better off with the United States than without them. Survival was his main priority and if that meant sacrificing sovereignty for a better sense of security then so be it. This proved effective in the short-term but dangerous in the long-term as it distanced his government from other postcolonial Asian states and forced the Huks closer to armed revolution. His faith in American leadership reflected a tendency amongst the Filipino elite to buy into the exceptionalist rhetoric that surrounded the Philippines for political and economic gain. To what extent Roxas really believed in parity is hard to discern. What is clear is that he felt he needed it to pass if the Philippines were to remain under the safety net of American power.

The plebiscite was held on 11 March 1947. Roxas manipulated the vote by keeping poll booths away from areas where the Huks were strongest and only printing ballots in Spanish and English rather than local languages like Tagalog. The amendment passed, although only 40% of the electorate participated.[116] Congress was still satisfied. McNutt congratulated Roxas on finalising parity. He felt it was the 'severest test to date' of his leadership and that its approval demonstrated the Philippine's ongoing faith in the United States.[117] His efforts even attracted some positive attention abroad. Burma's U Saw paid homage to the American rehabilitation of the Philippines, suggesting it was a fulfilment of the 'Atlantic Charter undertaking' espoused during the war. He argued the United States had 'earned the gratitude of the world' by aiding its former colony, and heralded the American approach to decolonization as a 'noble example' for European powers.[118] Such assertions irked the British. As one diplomat lamented, 'public opinion in Burma is all too apt to take American propaganda about the Philippines at its face value.'[119] Most in Whitehall felt

[115] Ibid. Message of President Roxas to the Filipino People urging approval of the Parity Amendment to the Constitution at the Plebiscite of March 11, 1947.
[116] Shalom, 'Philippine Acceptance of the Bell Trade Act', p. 516.
[117] The Ambassador in the Philippines (McNutt) to the Secretary of State, 30 September 1946, FRUS, 1946, Volume III, The Far East, Document 711, https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1946v08/d711 (7 February 2019).
[118] Quoted in Memorandum from Burma Office to Foreign Office on Statement by U Saw on Philippine Independence, 5 July 1946, IOR/M/4/2459.
[119] Morley to Wilson-Young, 5 February 1946, IOR/M/4/2459.

the plebiscite was primarily to 'impress the Americans.'[120] Yet even they could see the upside. 'The United States can scarcely press Britain too hard for the complete elimination of trade preferences,' argued one editorial.[121] Now that parity was enshrined in law, European allies had a stronger leg to stand on when it came to negotiating their own colonial economic policies. As one British official put it, 'I do not think that our record in Burma need suffer by comparison with that of the Americans in the Philippines.'[122] They felt independence was 'largely for external show' and that the United States had damaged its bid for anticolonial legitimacy by insisting on the measure.[123]

These criticisms were the lightning rod that ran through Philippine independence, in turn helping to alter early intellectual and political constructions of the Third World. Allies and adversaries alike felt that rehabilitation reinforced rather than repudiated American imperial power in Asia. Soviet leaders argued nothing had changed; the islands were still 'dominated by American military and economic interests.'[124] Rehabilitation was just another part of Washington's postwar neocolonial expansion. Asian states like India looked at the Philippines with 'unenthusiastic cordiality, almost devoid of warmth and certainly lacking in intimacy.'[125] They saw Roxas as a perpetrator in Washington's economic supremacy and took his decisions as a rejection of anticolonial solidarity in favour of courting American power. These contrasting ideas about how to transition out of colonialism discredited the Philippines as a black sheep in Asia and helped cement the country's position as an American satellite. Indeed, whilst the Philippines were busy preparing for independence, a very different vision for decolonization was emerging, one that prioritised combatting Western influence over courting it.

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[120] L.H. Foulds, British Legation Manila, to Ernest Bevin, 10 March 1947.
[121] Denys Smith, 'How the Loan Works: A Part of US Foreign Policy', *Times of India*, 25 July 1946, p. 6.
[122] Morley to Hughes, 20 February 1946, p. 1, IOR/M/5/2459.
[123] Memorandum for Governor of Burma Regarding Status of the Philippines, undated, IOR/M/4/2459.
[124] H. Ford Wilkins, 'Charges in Pravda Disputed by Roxas', *New York Times*, 22 October 1946, p. 15.
[125] Ajit Singh Rye, 'A Survey of Philippine-India Relations in the Post-Independence Period', *International Conference on Asian History*, 5-10 August 1968, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

The wave of nationalism that swept across Asia after World War II remapped the globe and started a period of decolonization that accelerated the end of Western colonialism. Amidst the devastation, independent nations appeared in India, Pakistan, the Philippines, and Burma whilst revolutionary movements in Indochina, Indonesia, and Malaya intensified their struggles against colonial rule.[126] United in their belief that empire was ending, Asian leaders 'evoked the Wilsonian watchword of self-determination' and embarked on rapid nation-building projects to propel their states into modernity.[127] The 1947 Asian Relations Conference was the inaugural announcement of this new force in international affairs. Announced by the Indian Prime Minister in September 1946 during the same speech that outlined the central tenants of India's foreign policy – antiracism, anticolonialism, and Cold War non-alignment – the ARC was the culmination of Nehru's decades-long struggle to rectify the marginalisation of Asian voices on the world stage.[128] Nehru saw Indian leadership in Asia as geographically and historically predetermined because of its vast size, its location at the crossroads between East and West Asia, and its rich cultural influence across the continent. He viewed neocolonial intervention as the greatest obstacle to regional stability and wanted to foster a spirit of kinship and camaraderie that could shake off the shackles of Japanese Pan-Asianism and offset the return of Western influence.[129] The ARC was a chance to bring colonized perspectives to the fore and show that 'Asia, after a long period of acquiescence,' was 'important again in world affairs.'[130]

Nehru had less altruistic reasons for sponsoring the meeting. The new Prime Minister did not have it all his own way at home. His insistence on prioritising sovereignty over economic

[126] David Porter Chandler, Li Narangoa, Robert Cribb, eds., *End of Empire: 100 Days in 1945 that Changed Asia and the World* (Copenhagen, Denmark: NIAS Press, 2016). Bayly & Harper, *Forgotten Wars*, pp. 15-19.
[127] Jason C. Parker, 'Cold War II: The Eisenhower Administration, the Bandung Conference, and the Reperiodization of the Postwar Era', *Diplomatic History*, vol. 30, no. 5 (2006), p. 867. Manela, *The Wilsonian Moment*.
[128] Thakur, 'An Asian Drama', pp. 673-674. George E. Jones, 'Nehru Lists Aims in Foreign Policy', *New York Times*, 1 September 1946, p. 4.
[129] Singh, 'From Delhi to Bandung', pp. 54-59. Stolte, 'The Asiatic Hour', pp. 57-59. Ramachandra Guha, 'Jawaharlal Nehru: A Romantic in Politics', in Guha, ed., *Makers of Modern Asia* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2014), pp. 117-146.
[130] Anon, *Asian Relations*, p. 20.

expediency generated criticisms from the Indian Congress, prominent industrialists, and more conservative members of his cabinet. These interests lobbied against Nehru in the hope of building a foreign policy that tilted closer to the United States.[131] Nehru was also taking control of a country torn apart by sectarian conflict. The partition of British India along religious lines generated a wave of communal violence. Delhi itself was under curfew for much of the conference due to rioting between Muslim and Hindu communities.[132] Muhammad Ali Jinnah encouraged his All-India Muslim League to boycott the meeting. He sent no observers and denounced the conference as 'a thinly disguised attempt on the part of the Hindu Congress to boost itself politically as the prospective leader of Asiatic peoples.'[133] To be sure, Nehru did see the ARC as a way of reinforcing Indian leadership in Asia. By ensuring strong representation from across the continent, he could rein in domestic criticisms and isolate emerging rivals like Jinnah. Nehru presented the ARC as the threshold of a new international order, one that would launch India as the 'leaders of the freedom movement in Asia.'[134]

The Philippine delegation placed a serious emphasis on defending their independence at New Delhi. Nehru saw economic and political sovereignty as indivisible. Although open to US and Soviet aid, India opted for a "third way" between the capitalist integration of the First World and the centralised planning of the Communist Second World. This model, known as Import Substitution Industrialization, focused on quick industrialization and controlling foreign capital.[135] The Philippines did the opposite. Manila courted American assistance and operated an export economy that kept the United States as their main benefactor. Castro and his team portrayed this

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131 Iqbal Singh, 'Nehru and Sardar Patel: Comradeship and Contrast - 1947-48', *World Affairs: The Journal of International Issues*, vol. 2 (June 1991), pp. 89-92. Neerja Singh, *Patel, Prasad and Rajaji: Myth of the Indian Right* (London, UK: Sage, 2015).
132 Nisid Hajari, *Midnight's Furies: The Deadly Legacy of India's Partition* (Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2015). Thakur, 'An Asian Drama', p. 676.
133 Quoted in Virginia Thompson & Richard Adloff, 'Asian Unity: Force or Façade', *Far Eastern Survey*, vol. 16, no. 9 (May 7, 1947), p. 97.
134 Anon, 'Independent Sovereign Republic: India's Objective', *Times of India*, 23 January 1947, p. 3.
135 Frieden, *Global Capitalism*, pp. 301-316. Jivanta Schöttli, *Vision and Strategy in Indian Politics: Jawaharlal Nehru's Policy Choices and the Designing of Political Institutions* (London, UK: Routledge, 2012). Ambrish Daka, 'Nation-Building, Natural Resources and Regional Development in India: Revisiting the Nehruvian Vision', in Baljit Singh, ed., *Revisiting Nehru in Contemporary India* (London, UK: Routledge, 2015), pp. 176-188.

relationship as a necessity that protected their freedom from the instability of the postwar world. By framing American intervention as a vital part of independence, they captured the competing postcolonial futures displayed at the ARC. The delegation argued that Western economic power was an unavoidable reality and that restricting access to it in the name of nationalism was a mistake. They felt the Philippines could not afford to 'be too nationalistic in its economic policies as an independent nation' and needed to permit 'the maximum development of its resources with outside financial and technical assistance.' The Philippines provided a powerful counterpoint to the emerging intellectual foundations of the Third World. Their understandings of sovereignty and nationalism were tempered more by their relationship with American empire than their relationship with other anticolonial movements in Asia. This position was a dampener on the optimism and unity that Nehru hoped to project. It complicated ideas about self-determination and decolonization by demonstrating the practicalities of what it meant to be small, poor, and independent in the postwar world. As the Filipino economist and delegate Andres Castillo put it, 'World War II has demonstrated that political sovereignty is not indivisible.'[136] In this new interdependent global system, autonomy had to give way to security.

The ARC was technically an unofficial gathering, so no governments were formally invited. Instead, the Filipino delegation of academics and civil servants were picked from the Philippine branch of the Pacific Institute of Foreign Affairs. Their task was to present impressions of the islands' postcolonial moment whilst observing the nature of other independence movements in Asia.[137] Initially, Roxas and his advisers were concerned that the delegation's relationship with the Nacionalista Party would open his government up to unwanted criticism.[138] He should not have worried. Delegates such as Castro and Castillo were Nacionalistas, but like many Filipino elites

[136] Anon, *Asian Relations*, pp 107-236. Andres V. Castillo, Economic Transition in the Philippines, paper submitted for Group C discussion on Economic Development & Social Services, Asian Relations Conference, March-April 1947, p. 19, IOR/Q/26/3/18.
[137] Anon, *Asian Relations*, pp. 235-236.
[138] Memorandum to President Truman by Paul V. McNutt, first US Ambassador to the Philippines, entitled 'General Observations with regard to the Philippines', 6 May 1947, p. 7, Box 163, PSF.

they shared an enduring belief in liberal democracy. They both studied at Columbia and the University of Chicago before returning to the Philippines to work as civil servants and educators respectively. They professed an ongoing admiration for the United States and saw the Philippines' fate as inexorably tied to Washington.[139] Such vocal support undeniably made them outcasts amongst many attendees. As one Indian analyst put it, 'one wonders whether there is any alternative course for the Filipinos to follow.'[140] Yet, their pro-Americanism belied a sincere nationalism that bought into American leadership whilst still finding room to critique it. Castillo was direct in criticising what he saw as mistakes in the US approach to the Philippines. He was grateful for American aid but criticised the manner in which it was delivered. Although he agreed that parity would help rehabilitate the Philippines 'much faster than some other arrangement,' he knew that Washington's policy was not geared towards encouraging 'the development of the Philippine economy to a self-sustaining position.'[141]

Castillo wanted to present Philippine freedom for what it was: a compromise. His delegation did not shy away from criticising their former colonizers and were adamant that they needed to develop their relationships with regional neighbours if they were to flourish. As the Filipino delegate Manuel Enverga argued, 'the civilization of the West, and its pretended superiority, has proven itself incapable by its own old concepts alone to solve the great issues of mankind.'[142] Their position was an endorsement of American power and a warning about its limitations. The delegation criticised Washington's invasive economic restrictions at home and their reluctance to dismantle European colonialism abroad. This diplomacy worked both ways. Firstly, it served as a wake-up call for policymakers in Washington not to mistreat the Philippines if they wanted to project their independence as a mark of American leadership. Secondly, it allayed

[139] Yusuke Takagi, *Central Banking as State Building: Policymakers and Their Nationalism in the Philippines, 1933-1964* (Singapore: NUS Press, 2016), p. 48. Anon, *Asian Relations*, pp. 235-236.
[140] Research Staff of the Gokhale Institute of Politics & Economics, Poona, Freedom Movements in South East Asia, paper submitted for Group A discussion on National Movements, Asian Relations Conference, March-April 1947 IOR/Q/26/3/18.
[141] Castillo, Economic Transition in the Philippines, pp. 17-18.
[142] Enverga, Racial Problems in the Philippines, p.13.

suspicions amongst other attendees that the Philippines were just a mouthpiece for the United States. The Philippine delegation saw themselves as a conduit between East and West. They saw their freedom as an instructive lesson for other Asian nations and felt they had an important part to play in qualifying and questioning American power on the global stage.[143]

Most observers simply did not buy it. Indian commentators saw Philippine support for the United States as part of a colonial mentality indoctrinated during American occupation. There was a 'widespread belief that the United States had exploited them imperialistically' and many looked at the agrarian unrest in "Huklandia" as evidence of the contested nationalisms that existed in the islands.[144] The Philippine delegation were certainly not the most vocal at New Delhi, but their loudest support was always for the United States.[145] What noise the delegation did make about decolonization and development was invariably heard in the voice of their American backers. It was this faith in Washington that tarnished the nuances of the Philippine position and made their anti-imperialist declarations seem insincere. It perpetuated a distrust of Philippine nationalism and heightened suspicions that the United States was still pulling the strings.

The ARC was a peripheral concern at best to both Cold War powers. The Asian Soviet republics of Georgia, Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan all sent separate delegations, although policymakers in the Kremlin were suspicious that the meeting could serve as a basis for mediation with Western powers and inhibit their own propaganda.[146] The United States sent a handful of observers along with the United Kingdom and Australia. Ironically, they were more concerned that the conference would help create an 'Asian neutrality bloc' that could divide the continent from the rest of the world and inhibit the West's ability to influence developments in the region.[147] The conference's announcement amid mounting postcolonial problems helped

[143] Castillo, Economic Transition in the Philippines, pp. 1-19. Ibid.
[144] Thompson & Adloff, 'Asian Unity', p. 98. Anon, 'Current Topics', *Times of India*, 4 July 1947, p. 6.
[145] Ibid. Anon, *Asian Relations*, pp. 235-236.
[146] Anon, 'Asian Relations Conference: Soviet Criticism', p. 9.
[147] Thakur, 'An Asian Drama', p. 678. Anon, 'The Urge for Independence in Asia: Common Pledge to Fight Domination', *Manchester Guardian*, 2 April 1947, p. 8.

instil these fears. Aside from the stalled peace process in China and the restive nationalist movements in Indochina, Indonesia, and Malaya, the American occupation of Japan and the US-Soviet confrontation over Korea heightened American anxieties that Asia was on the threshold of revolution.[148] In the UN, US policymakers were forced to make difficult decisions about how to support self-determination whilst maintaining their alliances with European powers. This was particularly problematic in the case of Indonesia, where Dutch officials were vehemently resisting calls from Third World members like India to return home.[149] The State Department official Henry Villard recognised this danger and warned that 'American indifference or opposition to [the] Indonesian cause will strengthen the move toward [an] Asiatic federation which might be detached from or even antagonistic toward the western democracies.' He saw the ARC and India's aggressive anticolonial stance in the UN as a 'bid for political leadership in Asia' that could diminish American prestige and inhibit their ability to control the colonial transition.[150]

Policymakers like Villard were aware of the challenges that India and the ARC represented but were unwilling to influence the discussion for fear of inciting accusations of neocolonialism. This policy was indicative of the Truman administration's stop-start approach to decolonization in the postwar world, where the interplay between the Cold War and anticolonial internationalism was only just beginning to crystalise. In one respect, Truman's hands-off approach worked well as it kept US intervention to a minimum and meant Washington avoided being tarnished with further charges of interference. However, by failing to observe the conference more thoroughly, the United States missed the opportunity to better understand these early inter-Asian debates about decolonization and development. In defining themselves in opposition to colonialism, postcolonial leaders participated in a broader conversation over who and what held the surest path to

[148] Immerwahr, *How to Hide an Empire*, pp. 230-231. Westad, *The Cold War*, pp. 129-158.
[149] Roadnight, *United States Policy Towards Indonesia*, pp. 1-54.
[150] Memorandum by the Deputy Director of the Office of Near Eastern and African Affairs (Villard) to the Counselor (Bohlen), 29 July 1947, FRUS, 1947, Volume VI, The Far East, Document 795, https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1947v06/d795 (accessed 26 February 2020).

modernity. The American interpretation was reductive and failed to recognise the fault lines already apparent within the burgeoning Third World movement. This was partly because the concepts being discussed at New Delhi – decolonization, development, and the emergence of a non-European "Third World" – were all amorphous and open to interpretation during the early years of the Cold War. The announcement of the Truman Doctrine in March 1947 committed the United States to upholding "Free World" security wherever the communist challenge appeared. Although this initially meant Western Europe, it quickly became apparent that this policy needed to encompass non-white, non-European peoples whose main unifying factors were economic underdevelopment and Western oppression.[151] Washington knew that ignoring nationalist aspiration would do 'immeasurable damage to American prestige in the Near, Middle and Far East.'[152] Yet they failed to take more decisive steps to understand and nurture these developments. What attention they did receive often fell into simplistic analyses about the West vs. the rest. This meant the Truman administration lost the initiative when it came to managing anticolonial internationalism and ended up playing catch up later on. Their position was reactive rather than proactive. They neglected their own wartime rhetoric and failed to realise the importance of courting postcolonial partners in the Cold War battle for hearts and minds.

The Philippine delegation arrived in New Delhi one week after the conference began. They immediately jumped into the various committees, concentrating on the discussions about freedom movements in Asia, the transition from a colonial to a national economy, racial problems and migration, as well as development and agricultural reconstruction.[153] Prior to the meeting, the delegation submitted papers for circulation and discussion. This material stressed that the Philippines were at the forefront of Washington's decolonization strategy and they had an

[151] President Harry S. Truman's Address before a Joint Session of Congress, 12 March 1947, available online: https://avalon.law.yale.edu/20th_century/trudoc.asp (accessed 25 November 2021). Westad, *The Cold War*, pp. 92-93.
[152] Memorandum by the Deputy Director of the Office of Near Eastern and African Affairs (Villard) to the Counselor (Bohlen), 29 July 1947, FRUS.
[153] Anon, *Asian Relations*, pp. 123-237.

important role to play in creating a better understanding between East and West. As Enverga put it, 'the United States… understands the crucial role the Philippines is bound to play in the remaking of the postwar world.'[154] During the debates, Filipino delegates frankly discussed the Philippine position in relation to the future of decolonization in Asia. When conversations veered towards explicit denunciations of the United States, they defended their former colonizer and insisted that the 'Philippines has been given independence in a most cordial atmosphere.'[155] However, when talk turned towards more conceptual criticisms of imperialism, the delegation was quick to point to parity as a lesson on the drawbacks of accepting Western economic assistance.[156] They also criticised the United States' sluggish attempts to dismantle European colonialism, insisting that 'as things are developing in India, Indonesia, French Indo-China and elsewhere, today, it is beginning to look as if the impoverished European peoples who are hanging on with febrile clutches to their dissolving empires have become the coloured man's burden.' Filipino delegates felt the United States could still 'become the most insufferable of snobs' if it failed to follow through on its wartime promises about self-determination.[157] They sold Philippine freedom as a meaningful step on the road to greater Asian self-determination that the United States needed to capitalise on if it wanted to lead the colonized world.

Most attendees were unimpressed. Prior to the conference, the Indian press had lionised the Philippine delegation as more representative of nationalist sentiment in the country because of their relationship with the Nacionalista Party and their role as political opposition to Roxas. References to the Philippines in speeches and newspaper columns in India were frequent, where suspicions of 'imperialism and selfish interest' blighted Washington and Manila respectively.[158] They saw parity as a clear-cut example of American 'dollar imperialism' and felt the United States

[154] Enverga, Racial Problems in the Philippines, p.13.
[155] Quoted in Anon, *Asian Relations*, p. 235.
[156] Ibid, pp. 80-85. Castillo, Economic Transition in the Philippines, pp. 1-19.
[157] Enverga, Racial Problems in the Philippines, p. 8.
[158] Memorandum to President Truman by Paul V. McNutt, first US Ambassador to the Philippines, entitled 'General Observations with regard to the Philippines', 6 May 1947, pp. 3-5.

had 'surrounded the grant of independence with such restrictions and qualifications… that independence was considered meaningless by the Filipino people.' Castro's speeches put an end to such discussions. His forthright defence of the Philippine-American relationship was a surprise to many attendees, so much so that his speech at the closing ceremony was received only with 'perfunctory applause.'[159] It was clear that the Philippines would not join Nehru's call to oust Western dominance from Asia. Their performance at New Delhi was a sign that non-alignment could only go so far. Nehru failed to get the kind of support he wanted out of the meeting. The final declaration urged newly independent nations to 'guard against foreign control,' but included an acknowledgment that 'Asiatic countries must obtain substantial imports of foreign capital' in order to survive and thrive.[160] Whether Nehru liked it or not, American power cast a long shadow over Asia. The Philippine delegation were just the messengers.

Immediate impressions of the conference in the United States were less concerned with what was said and more interested in trying to understand what it meant. Virginia Thompson and Richard Adloff, two American observers from the Institute of Pacific Relations, wrote an intriguingly entitled analysis called 'Asian Unity: Force or Façade.' In it, they described the meeting as an unashamed attempt by the Indian government to secure its leadership role in postcolonial Asia. On this front, they were relatively pleased. Although a permanent organisation was created under Nehru's stewardship, most delegations were uneasy about anything more explicitly anticolonial. 'Aside from the Indians,' Thompson and Adloff observed, 'no group of delegates seemed vitally interested in establishing a permanent organization.'[161] Attendees gave little more than symbolic gestures of solidarity and refused to make any statement that would diminish their chances of Western aid.[162] What little attention the Philippines did receive helped bolster their positive Western position. Although the delegation arrived too late to have more of an impact,

[159] Ibid. Jones, 'Gandhi Says East Must Spread Love', p. 3.
[160] Anon, 'Asian Group Agrees to Use Alien Capital', p. 49.
[161] Thompson & Adloff, 'Asian Unity', p. 99.
[162] Anon, *Asian Relations*, pp. 140-213. Shone to Secretary of the Cabinet, 25 April 1947, Despatch No. 38.

they noted that in 'such public utterances as they made the Filipinos… pointed with pride to the peaceful way in which the Philippine Republic had achieved its nationhood.' They questioned Nehru's 'false façade of Asian unity' and wondered whether the meeting was much more than 'the materialization of the desire of a few Indians to enhance their country's international prestige.'[163]

The danger had been averted, for now. However, it was obvious to some in the Truman administration that the ARC was only the beginning of a new and more complicated regional order. As Villard put it, 'the Inter-Asian Conference at New Delhi in March 1947 clearly indicated [a] desire for greater integration of Asian countries to protect Asian interests against domination by western powers.'[164] Secretary Marshall felt these new nations were a 'momentous factor [for] world stability' that could destabilise the region and make it harder for the United States to manage decolonization in a way that was acceptable to themselves and other Western powers. As he put it in a memorandum to the US embassy in France, 'following [the] relaxation [of] European controls, internal racial, religious and national differences could plunge new nations into violent discord, or already apparent anti-Western Pan-Asiatic tendencies could become [the] dominant political force, or Communists could capture control.'[165] It was an inability to confront these fears that paralysed the Truman administration's postwar Asia policy. The United States wanted decolonization to happen, in theory. In reality, this meant protecting European partners and ensuring new countries committed to the liberal capitalist system in the face of communism's revolutionary appeal. The ARC was a portent for things to come. Washington would not have it all its own way in Asia.

In truth, Marshall and his colleagues did not realise what they were witnessing. The time between the end of World War II and the ARC was a moment filled with boundless possibility. The Cold War had yet to fully materialise. Colonized and formerly colonized peoples were imagining new and integrative ways to emancipate themselves and drive their nations towards

[163] Thompson & Adloff, 'Asian Unity', pp. 98-99.
[164] Memorandum by the Deputy Director of the Office of Near Eastern and African Affairs (Villard) to the Counselor (Bohlen), 29 July 1947, FRUS.
[165] The Secretary of State (Marshall) to the Embassy in France, 13 May 1947, FRUS.

prosperity. US officials recognised the importance of engaging with this demand for self-determination, but failed to fully appreciate how it would impact their attempts to manage the colonial transition and meet the communist challenge. They should be credited for realising that neither issue was mutually exclusive. Yet, they did not take the initiative and created problems for US foreign policy further down the line. State Department officials like Villard already knew that many Asians doubted the 'sincerity of American declarations in support of self-determination.'[166] This realisation still failed to bring about any real change in policy. Truman and his advisers saw decolonization as reliant on the West. They were unwilling to hand over the reins to Asians themselves for fear they would veer away from liberal democracy and wanted to foster a 'continued close association between newly-autonomous peoples and powers which have long been responsible for their welfare.'[167] As a result, they squandered the opportunity to capitalise on Roosevelt's wartime rhetoric and alienated nationalist movements in Asia by backing away from their commitment to self-determination. This dithering over decolonization frustrated postcolonial allies like the Philippines and strained relations with European partners. The ARC was a lesson about the limits of American power. It was one that Washington had yet to learn.

Philippine participation at the ARC helped contest intellectual constructions of the Third World by highlighting the restrictions of anticolonial internationalism in the early Cold War. Their work provided a potent contrast to prevailing ideas about decolonization, development, and self-determination by demonstrating how this neocolonial American ally saw things differently. The Philippines valued their relationship with Washington. This iconoclastic approach undoubtably made them pariahs amongst their peers and helped reinforce American imperial power in Asia. Yet, what was more striking was the way they sought to justify this relationship to the outside world. Castro and his delegation did not hesitate to call out the United States. They were critical

[166] Memorandum by the Deputy Director of the Office of Near Eastern and African Affairs (Villard) to the Counselor (Bohlen), 29 July 1947, FRUS.
[167] The Secretary of State (Marshall) to the Embassy in France, 13 May 1947, FRUS.

of European colonialism and Washington's unwillingness to dismantle these empires head-on. In debates over postcolonial economics, they emphasised the need to diversify and develop trade amongst Asian states, using parity as a cautionary tale of post-imperial economic assistance. Their image of independence was a contested one, looking far beyond the binary between East and West for inspiration and support. The Philippine delegation challenged the conference to find common ground between East and West to work together for the development of postwar Asia. Their words were lost in translation. Enverga was right to portray his country as a 'bridge or a chasm' for these conflicting spaces.[168] He was wrong to think the Philippines would be enough to fill the void. It was obvious that his delegation had helped to widen the gap rather than close it. However, it remained to be seen whether the government in Manila would heed the lessons of New Delhi. The United States would clearly not have the final say on what the regional order in Asia should look like. Would the Philippines look to their neighbours, or would they cling to American power?

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Events after New Delhi soon gave Enverga his answer. Little over a month after the conference concluded, President Roxas signed two military treaties with the United States that cemented the Philippines as an important new front in the rapidly expanding Cold War. The Military Assistance Agreement committed Washington to underwriting the Philippine military through technical and financial assistance. The Military Bases Agreement granted the United States control of two huge military installations, Clark Air Base and Subic Naval Base, keeping them under American jurisdiction.[169] Roxas situated the agreements as the final component of Manila's bid for postcolonial security. He positioned his country as the frontline of defence against the communist threat and insisted the treaties were no more an infringement of sovereignty than 'the United Nations council sitting in New York infringe[s] on the sovereignty of the United States.'[170]

[168] Enverga, Racial Problems in the Philippines, p.13.
[169] Anon, 'Military Assistance Agreement, March 21, 1947', pp. 100-103. Anon, 'Military Bases Agreement, March 14, 1947', pp. 96-100.
[170] Radio Interview between Roxas & Richard Harkness for NBC, 16 May 1946, Box 11, PVMP.

His announcement coincided with a heavy-handed crackdown on the Huks that provoked a considerable escalation of the insurgency in Central Luzon. These fumbled military incursions and blatant infringements on Philippine sovereignty perpetuated the notion that the Philippines were a 'horrible example of false independence.'[171] As the following chapter demonstrates, Filipino leaders quickly learnt their alliance with Washington had its shortcomings. The fault lines of the Cold War started to solidify just as the Philippines entered a critical and precarious stage of its existence. The Hukbalahap were gaining ground whilst communist advances in China and Korea pushed the region further into the throes of superpower conflict. Filipino elites recognised this danger and looked to like-minded Asian leaders to combat the communist threat. Unfortunately, the Truman administration was still not ready to share the responsibility for "Free World" security. They doubted the Filipino elite's ability to meet the challenges of independence and refused to be drawn into an alliance that would upset European allies and aggravate non-aligned nations like India. The failure of the "Pacific Pact" dealt Manila some harsh truths about their place in Washington's strategic priorities.

Historians rarely mention Philippine independence in the intellectual construction of the Third World. They should. It was an important moment that helped determine how the Philippines and other postcolonial Asian states understood decolonization, development, and the emergence of a postwar American imperium. Osmeña, Romulo, and Roxas all believed the United States would be responsible for regional stability after World War II. In contrast to Nehru, they saw Western influence as an inevitability that should be exploited. They worked to convince the United States that Philippine rehabilitation would prove useful in its bid for anticolonial leadership and justified it as an unavoidable issue brought about by World War II. Although not always successful, their manoeuvres were demonstrative of the competing ways postcolonial leaders interpreted decolonization and the different ways they used this newfound agency to their advantage. Filipino

[171] Memorandum to President Truman by Paul V. McNutt, first US Ambassador to the Philippines, entitled 'General Observations with regard to the Philippines', 6 May 1947, p. 5.

leaders sold their independence as a hallmark of American leadership. Washington got to hold up independence as an example of orderly democratic transition and Manila got to align itself with the most powerful nation on earth. Ironically, their diplomacy had the opposite effect. Philippine rehabilitation and participation at the ARC helped convince leaders like Nehru that superpower alliances did more harm than good. The terms of their independence inadvertently helped project American imperial power and damaged both countries in their bids for anticolonial legitimacy. Their postcolonial relationship fostered the Philippines' reputation as an exile in Asia and furthered the perception that the United States was still an imperial power to contend with.

With that in mind, how should historians adapt their understanding of the Third World to incorporate the perspectives of neocolonial Western allies like the Philippines? Were Filipino elites invested in the United States as a global leader, or did they want American patronage as a means of clinging onto power? Scholarly depictions of Roxas and other Filipino leaders tend to portray them as master manipulators capable of extracting what they needed out of the Americans and the Japanese.[172] Yet as much as they were pragmatists, their motivations for binding the Philippines so tightly to Washington stemmed from more than just expediency. Roxas, Osmeña, and Romulo all believed in the United States. They believed the world was on the precipice of a new international order and that the Philippines had little choice but to accept their lot or face disaster. Really, what they meant was disaster for themselves. Philippine independence is a tale of missed opportunities. The United States missed the opportunity to present independence as an example of self-determination and failed to capitalise on the positive anticolonial sentiment generated during World War II. The Philippines missed the opportunity to manufacture a cleaner break with their colonizer and failed to consider the implications of courting American empire at the expense of their neighbours. Together, their experiences highlighted the contested ways that American imperialism helped shape the Global South.

[172] Cullather, *Illusions of Influence*. Woods, *Freedom Incorporated*. Golay, *Face of Empire*.

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Chapter Two

'We Shall All Have to Take Sides': The Pacific Pact and the Search for Regional Order in Cold War Asia, 1948-1950

'The most urgent problem that confronts the Philippines and the other free countries of Asia is the problem of security.'[1]

Elpidio Quirino, President of the Philippines, 1948-1953

In May 1949, as Mao's Red Army advanced towards victory in China and the revolutionary struggles for colonial liberation intensified across Southeast Asia, Jawaharlal Nehru reiterated his devotion to a 'new integration and a new unity' of Asian states built around peaceful cooperation and Cold War non-alignment. Viewing conciliation with Communist China as a strategic requirement, the Indian Prime Minister rejected calls for an Asian coalition against communism, insisting that 'such a pact would, far from ensuring peace, be direct incentive to conflict.'[2] Nehru wanted to avoid escalating superpower tensions. He worried Western security alliances would aggravate indigenous communist movements and felt the Cold War was a distraction from the real enemy, colonialism. This powerful "third force" (as some commentators called it) positioned decolonizing countries as belligerent players in the battle to remake the postwar regional order.[3] It promised security in numbers, imagining a community of independent, cooperative, and peaceful states that would serve as an important counterpoint to the looming danger of the Cold War.

The "third force" that Nehru envisioned had many plaudits. Leaders from Egypt to Indonesia viewed it as the right way to navigate the ideological binaries that were dominating the international stage.[4] Others had little faith that this movement would translate into an effective

[1] Address of Elpidio Quirino before the United States Senate, 9 August 1949, p. 4, Box 6, JMP.
[2] Jawaharlal Nehru, 'The Task of the Asian Conference', 20 January 1949, *SWJN*, Second Series, vol. 9, December 1948 – February 1949, p. 168. Nehru, 'Letters to the Premiers of the Provinces', 14 August 1949, ibid, Second Series, vol. 12, June – August 1949, pp. 316-317.
[3] Anon, 'Role of Asia in World Affairs: Pandit Nehru's View', *Times of India*, 27 January 1949, p. 1. For scholarship on Nehru's vision of regional order, see Bhagavan, *India and the Quest for One World*. Bhagavan, ed., *India and the Cold War* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2019). Singh, *Power and Diplomacy*.
[4] Robert Trumbull, 'New Role for Asia Forecast', *New York Times*, 24 January 1949, p. 1.

safeguard against communism. Amongst the dissenting voices was Elpidio Quirino, President of the Philippines and a vocal advocate for the Pacific Pact. Quirino and his colleagues saw non-alignment as wholly unsuitable for the Philippines. 'As the struggle deepens for mastery of the world, the margin of safety offered by a neutral middle course becomes correspondingly narrower,' argued Carlos Romulo. 'We shall all have to take sides.'[5] Concerned for his government's security amidst communist advances at home and abroad, Quirino worked closely with like-minded allies such as South Korea's Syngman Rhee and the leader of Nationalist China, Chiang Kai-shek, in the hope of creating a military union similar to the American-sponsored North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) in Europe. This initiative was the antithesis of Nehru's ideas about non-alignment and peaceful coexistence. It presented communism *and* colonialism as combined threats to regional stability, in turn creating a different vision for regional order defined by American empire and the search for Cold War security.

The Pacific Pact is mentioned briefly in several studies of regional order in postwar Asia.[6] Scholars interested in South Korea and Taiwan have shown how the agreements served as a precursor to greater anticommunist collaboration through initiatives such as the Asian People's Anti-Communist League.[7] Some researchers have referenced the pact in relation to American understandings of regional order, exploring how the initiative's rise and fall helped exemplify the Truman administration's stop-start approach to Asian security after World War II.[8] However, there

[5] Romulo to Quirino, 22 July 1949, p. 1, Box 17, Salvador P. Lopez Papers [hereafter SLP], UPD.
[6] See Robert Yates, *Understanding ASEAN's Role in Asia-Pacific Order* (London, UK: Palgrave-Macmillan, 2018), p. 51. Alice D. Ba, *(Re)Negotiating East and Southeast Asia: Region, Regionalism, and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2009), p. 44.
[7] Park, 'Frustrated Alignment', pp. 217-237. Kiyoung Rho, 'The Development of Pacific Pact Policy and the Plan of Regional Security in the Syngman Rhee Regime', *The Journal of Korean History* (Chiyuk Kwa Yuksa), vol. 11 (2002), pp. 186-223. Youngho Choi, 'The Syngman Rhee Regime's Ideas of Pacific Alliance and the Asian People Anti-Communist League's Birth', *Korean Journal of International Relations*, vol. 39, no. 2 (1999), pp. 165-182. Jin-Hee Park, 'Syngman Rhee's Recognition toward Japan and Pacific Pact', *Historical Criticism*, vol. 76 (2006), pp. 90-118. Muhyung Cho, 'The Establishment and Decline of APACL – Conceptualizing ROK-US Conflict Based on Role Theory', *Journal of World Politics*, vol. 29, no. 2 (2008), pp. 187-246. Chongwon Lee, *US-Korean Relations and Japan in East Asia's Cold War* (Tokyo, Japan: Tokyo University Press, 1996).
[8] Haruka Matsuda, "Pacific Pact' and 'The Asian People Anti-Communist League': American Reactions to the Proposals of the Two Security Pacts by 'Outpost Countries' in East Asia', *Pacific and American Studies*, vol. 5 (2003), pp. 135-152. David W. Mabon, 'Elusive Agreements: The Pacific Pact Proposals of 1949-1951', *Pacific Historical Review*, vol. 57, no. 2 (1988), pp. 147-177. Ben C. Limb, 'The Pacific Pact: Looking Forward or Backward?', *Foreign Affairs*,

are few studies on the Philippine proposals. Most fail to fully account for the ways it interacted with the wider historical currents that governed its creation: decolonization, the Cold War, and the emergence of an anticolonial Third World.[9] A fuller picture would consider how the Pacific Pact helped shape the postwar debate over regional order by offering an alternative vision for inter-Asian cooperation with the Cold War at the centre.

There is a similar insulation in the histories of transnational networks in the Global South. After the collapse of the Soviet Union, scholars spent a lot of time scouring communist bloc archives. This research showed how ideas about security, empire, and decolonization coalesced to support a communist bloc.[10] A smaller but equally incisive literature has focused on the states that forged a "third way" during the Cold War. Research into the Colombo Powers and the Non-Aligned Movement has demonstrated how anticolonial solidarity informed the debate over regional order in Cold War Asia.[11] Yet, as Charles Kraus notes, what little research that has been done on South-South dialogue in anticommunist Asia remains tethered to histories of the Cold War and Western intervention.[12] By identifying why Philippine policymakers placed such value in the Pacific Pact, this chapter explores how right-leaning neocolonial allies used transnational connections in the Global South to confront the Cold War and court American assistance.

Joining a field that looks to better identify the links between decolonization and the global Cold War, this chapter frames the Pacific Pact as a normative vision for regional order defined by

vol. 29, no. 4 (1951), pp. 539-549. Galia Press-Barnathan, *Organizing the World: The United States and Regional Cooperation in Asia and Europe* (London, UK: Taylor & Francis, 2003), pp. 36-58. Victor D. Cha, *Powerplay: The Origins of the American Alliance System in Asia* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2016), pp. 164-184.

[9] One important exception is Ewing, "With a Minimum of Bitterness', pp. 7-12. However, Ewing's analysis is brief and focuses more on how the Pacific Pact interacted with the Arab-Asian group at the United Nations.

[10] For scholarship on Communist connections in the Global South, see Lorenz M. Lüthi, *The Sino-Soviet Split: Cold War in the Communist World* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2008). Jian Chen, *Mao's China and the Cold War* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2001). Shen Zhihua, *Mao, Stalin and the Korean War: Trilateral Communist Relations in the 1950s* (London, UK: Routledge, 2012). Benjamin R. Young, *Guns, Guerrillas, and the Great Leader: North Korea and the Third World, 1956-2018* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2021). Christina Hatzky, *Cubans in Angola: South-South Cooperation and Transfer of Knowledge, 1976-1991* (Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 2012).

[11] Ewing, 'The Colombo Powers', pp. 1-19. Dinkel, *The Non-Aligned Movement*.

[12] Charles Kraus, 'The Danger is Two-Fold: Decolonization and Cold War in Anti-Communist Asia, 1955-1957', *The International History Review*, vol. 39, no. 2 (2017), pp. 256-273.

the struggle for ideological dominance and the creation of a postwar American empire.[13] Philippine policymakers saw themselves as the front line of the Cold War. Built on shared experiences of empire and occupation, their attempts to foster greater security collaboration were catalysed by the proximity of the communist threat and the priority of obtaining American assistance. Although in many ways atypical of wider Asian internationalist sentiments after World War II, these elites sought to counter the unspoken American maxim of 'no assistance without resistance' by actively pursuing support amongst their peers.[14] In a time of mounting Cold War tension and anticolonial agitation, Philippine elites positioned their country within the emerging Cold War geography of a "Free World." They privileged security over autonomy and viewed American protection as the surest way to preserve their fragile state. Manila showed an indecisive Truman administration that 'steps toward Asiatic cooperation will be taken with or without our support or advice.'[15] The project shows how local actors helped influence the Cold War and demonstrates that the conflict was not always bound to the superpower priorities that galvanised its creation.

The states that pursued the Pacific Pact had much in common. They were all victims of Western and/or Japanese imperialism; they all confronted local conflicts exacerbated by Cold War tensions; and they all shared anxieties about their nascent states. Facing communist victory on the Chinese mainland, Chiang needed alliances to legitimise his failing government. Quirino was struggling to suppress the Hukbalahap in Central Luzon. Having failed to halt the American withdrawal from South Korea, Rhee wanted stronger military assurances to deter the Communist North.[16] Insecurity drove this clique of allies. Together, they tried to provoke an aggressive

[13] Goscha & Ostermann, eds., *Connecting Histories*. Byrne, *Mecca of Revolution*. Connelly, *A Diplomatic Revolution*. Edwards, *Contesting Indochina*. Benvenuti, *Cold War and Decolonization*. Kent, *America, the UN and Decolonization*. Leake, *The Defiant Border*. Nwaubani, *The United States and Decolonization in West Africa*. Elizabeth Schmidt, *Cold War and Decolonization in Guinea, 1946-1958* (Athens, OH: Ohio University Press, 2007).
[14] Memorandum from Salvador Lopez to Carlos Romulo on the Philippine diplomatic position as a result of the Chiang-Quirino Conference, 18 July 1949, p. 3, Box 17, SLP.
[15] Department of State memorandum on the chronology and developments of the Chiang-Quirino proposal for a Pacific Union, 15 July 1949, p. 8, Box 5, JMP.
[16] Hsiao-ting Lin, *Accidental State: Chiang Kai-shek, the United States, and the Making of Taiwan* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2016), pp. 100-118. Saulo, *Communism in the Philippines*, pp. 40-47. Uk Heo & Terence Roehrig, *The Evolution of the South Korea-US Alliance* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2018), pp. 54-62.

response to their domestic security problems couched in the language of communist containment. However, these leaders were often more attuned to the flashpoints of Cold War conflict than their American counterparts. Preoccupied with NATO and Soviet expansion in Europe, the Truman administration struggled to position Asia within its changing containment strategy. The set of principles eventually enshrined in National Security Council paper NSC-68 argued the United States had an obligation to protect the "Free World" from a globalised communist threat.[17] Yet, what this meant in practical terms remained open to interpretation. Already distancing themselves from Chiang and the Chinese Civil War, American policymakers saw Japan's exclusion as antithetical to their vision of regional order.[18] Secretary of State Dean Acheson agreed with Nehru when he said plans for a defence agreement were premature because of the colonial conflicts raging in Indochina, Indonesia, or Malaya.[19] Decolonization blurred the lines of containment. Stuck between expensive assistance and accusations of imperial interference, Washington adopted a "wait-and-see" attitude that failed to assuage either issue. This policy would cost the United States. As North Korean aggression dismantled American non-interference, Filipino leaders scoffed whilst Washington worked 'against time in a belated effort to achieve a similar organization among the few Asian nations that remained free.'[20]

Asian ambivalence and American inertia resigned the Pacific Pact to a quiet death. Yet, its implications still linger in what it can tell historians about how postcolonial leaders envisioned their position within a rapidly changing international system. Nehru saw the Cold War as the biggest obstacle to regional stability. He deplored the ideological divisions that dominated the world stage and worked hard to forge a distinctive voice in international affairs constructed around

[17] National Security Council Report, NSC 68, 'United States Objectives and Programs for National Security', 14 April 1950, History and Public Policy Program Digital Archive, US National Archives, available online: http://digitalarchive.wilsoncenter.org/document/116191 (accessed 19 July 2021).
[18] Paul J. Heer, *Mr. X and the Pacific: George F. Kennan and American Policy in East Asia* (London, UK: Cornell University Press, 2018). Sue Thompson, *The United States and Southeast Asian Regionalism: Collective Security and Economic Development, 1945-1975* (London, UK: Routledge, 2018).
[19] Dean Acheson, 'Pacific Pact corresponding to North Atlantic Treaty untimely', 18 May 1949, *State Department Bulletin*, vol. 20, no. 517 (29 May 1949), p. 696.
[20] Romulo, *Crusade in Asia*, p. 103.

anticolonialism, antiracism, and Cold War non-alignment. The Pacific Pact took a different approach. Philippine policymakers felt 'a third force interposed between the embattled East and West' was a 'philosophical subtlety that has no reality in the actual struggle for power in the world.'[21] Whilst Nehru divorced his vision from superpower rivalries, they presented anticommunism and anticolonialism as reciprocal objectives. By positioning Asia as the centre of Cold War containment, Manila urged Washington to protect their freedom from 'a renascent colonialism on the one hand' and 'an aggressive totalitarianism on the other.'[22] This project presented the search for security as an expression of sovereignty. It showed how a right-leaning neocolonial ally balanced their commitment to American empire against their desire for self-determination in order to find its own path towards decolonization during the global Cold War.

The chapter starts by exploring how Quirino, Chiang, and Rhee influenced American understandings of regional order during the creation of NATO and the deterioration of the Chinese Civil War. Focusing on the Chiang-Quirino summit in July 1949, it demonstrates how Quirino and his allies situated their local security concerns within a larger Cold War framework to show US policymakers that they could fit into their containment strategy. Part two investigates the fallout from the Chiang-Quirino meeting. The Pacific Pact was heavily influenced by Philippine domestic politics as well as external pressures from Washington and non-aligned India. Reacting to these issues, Romulo tried to move Quirino towards a softer alliance that repositioned the Philippines as a negotiator for East and West. Finally, part three examines the failure of the Pacific Pact at the 1950 Baguio Conference. It shows how the Philippine vision of regional order was stunted by American hesitance and Indian non-alignment, eventually provoking bitter reproaches from Philippine elites after the Korean War.

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[21] Memorandum from Salvador Lopez to Carlos Romulo, 18 July 1949, p. 3.
[22] Carlos P. Romulo, 'How Can the Free Peoples of the World…', *The Rotarian*, August 1949, p. 59.

Although he touted the Pacific Pact as his own, Quirino's idea was not a new one.[23] Australia proposed a Pacific defence pact in 1937 and again in 1943. When Quirino revived the concept in March 1949 during the creation of NATO, Canberra was interested if it meant securing the same American obligations afforded to allies in Europe.[24] It was no secret Australian policymakers wanted a security treaty with Washington. Although, as ANZUS would demonstrate, they preferred to keep it between Western powers. Meanwhile, Chiang had been quietly suggesting the United States should support an Asian defence agreement since 1948. Already preparing for the worst on the mainland, he wanted to provoke a change in America's noncommittal China policy and repair his image as a viable recipient for aid.[25] Quirino and Rhee felt just as insecure. Quirino needed help to rebuild the war-torn Philippines and restore order. Huk rebels threatened Central Luzon and the proximity of the Chinese Civil War stoked largely illusory fears that a fifth column was supporting their struggle. The American decision to drop reparations claims against Japan and pursue economic reconstruction also raised concerns about a resurgent East Asian power. With a presidential election looming in November, Quirino hoped to divert attention away from corruption and promote himself as a leader capable of extracting privileges from the United States.[26] Rhee saw the recent US military assistance programme to South Korea as inadequate given the communist threat. Internal conflict and guerrilla insurgency plagued the new republic. His government struggled to maintain the status quo with the more industrially developed North. By

[23] Elpidio Quirino, *The Memoirs of Elpidio Quirino* (Manila, Philippines: National Historical Institute, 1990).
[24] Mabon, 'Elusive Agreements', p. 148.
[25] Department of State memorandum on the chronology and developments of the Chiang-Quirino proposal for a Pacific Union, 15 July 1949, pp. 1-8. Lin, *Accidental State*, p. 101-102.
[26] Memorandum prepared by John Melby concerning conversation with General Mariano Castañeda, Chief of Staff of the Philippine Army, on the effect of China on the Philippines, 27 December 1948, pp. 1-3, Box 6, JMP. Preliminary statement by Ambassador Carlos P Romulo, Chief Delegate of the Philippines on the Far Eastern Commission, in reply to the United States statement on reparations and level of industry, 19 May 1949, Box L2 4 A: Folders 39 – 51, Carlos P. Romulo Papers [hereafter CRP], UPD. The Secretary of State to the Chargé in the Philippines (Lockett), 23 March 1949, FRUS, 1949, Volume VII, The Far East and Australasia, Part 2, Document 314, https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1949v07p2/d314 (accessed 11 December 2019).

supporting Quirino, Rhee aimed to exert indirect influence over Washington's East Asia policy and divert American attention away from Japanese rehabilitation.[27]

Quirino and his allies approached the Pacific Pact as a product of decolonization rather than the Cold War. The relationship between empire and security was glaringly apparent to them. Their security had already been neglected by the United States during World War II. Exasperation over the wartime "Europe First" policy, postwar rehabilitation, and the lack of military assistance persuaded them that 'the time has come when the people of Asia should begin taking steps in their own defense.'[28] Having experienced the full force of Japanese and American militarism, these leaders wanted to underwrite their stability inside a strong community capable of exerting influence on the West. They each faced domestic security problems that were insurmountable without outside assistance and they had all developed a client-patron relationship with the United States. The situation in China was a crisis and an opportunity. Already on the sharp end of communist advances, they wanted to provoke a more forceful American approach to regional security that could translate into better aid and assistance.

The Pacific Pact promoted a vision of regional order with American power at the centre. The issue was whether these allies could muster any interest from an administration already bristling at the cost of "Free World" leadership. Focused on the 'all-important arena of Western Europe,' the Truman administration floundered over how to apply containment to Asia.[29] Washington was conscious of nationalist sentiment and agreed that communism had to be halted. But Truman was reluctant to support the initiative for fear of alienating European allies and upsetting the status quo. This conclusion was shared by Secretary Acheson as well as key

[27] Gregg A. Brazinsky, *Nation Building in South Korea: Koreans, Americans, and the Making of a Democracy* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2009), pp. 13-40. Department of State intelligence report on the attitudes of interested powers toward a Pacific Pact, 15 July 1949, pp. 8-12, Box 5, JMP. Park, 'Frustrated Alignment', p. 221.
[28] Golay, *Face of Empire*, pp. 447-484. Lin, *Accidental State*, pp. 47-59. David P. Fields, *Foreign Friends: Syngman Rhee, American Exceptionalism, and the Division of Korea* (Lexington, KY: University Press of Kentucky, 2019), pp. 136-174. Telegram to Quirino from Romulo, 7 July 1949, p. 1, Box 5, JMP.
[29] The Ambassador in China (Stuart) to the Secretary of State, 2 August 1949, FRUS, 1949, Volume VII, The Far East and Australasia, Part 2, Document 359, https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1949v07p2/d359 (accessed 11 December 2019).

policymakers such as George F. Kennan (the godfather of containment) and members of the National Security Council. It was accepted in NSC/48, a sweeping paper approved in December 1949 that prioritised American interests in Asia. Having established that China was expendable, policymakers focused on creating a defensive perimeter that would decide where the Free World's flanks would be. NSC/48 limited commitments on the Asian mainland. It advocated bringing Japan back into the fold and formed a defensive "island chain" from the Japanese Ryukyus islands to the Philippines that would encircle Communist China and isolate it from the Soviet Union. Influenced by Kennan (then head of the Policy Planning Staff) and approved by Acheson, the document offered few concrete proposals for combatting communism other than a vague commitment to develop 'sufficient military power in selected non-Communist nations of Asia.'[30] Acheson and Kennan saw colonial conflict and Cold War non-alignment as irreconcilable factors in building an effective defence agreement. Japan's exclusion was also an issue given how important the country was to the US "strategic perimeter defence." As State Department analysis put it, 'without a sense of solidarity, an appreciation of danger, and a community of purpose among the free nations of Asia, the task of halting the spread of communism in the region is likely to be an exceedingly difficult one.'[31]

These conclusions reflected the Truman administration's hands-off approach to regional security prior to the Korean War, where the interplay between decolonization and the Cold War was only just beginning to become clear. In many ways, Washington had sympathy with Quirino and his allies. They knew Nationalist capitulation in China would be a propaganda boost for the communists. They wanted elites like Quirino to 'make a difference' in the Cold War and were conscious that their reluctance would give hawkish Republicans more excuses to browbeat the

[30] Memorandum by the Executive Secretary of the National Security Council (Souers) to the National Security Council, 30 December 1949, FRUS, 1949, Volume VII, The Far East and Australasia, Part 2, Document 387, https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1949v07p2/d387 (accessed 19 December 2019).
[31] Department of State memorandum on the chronology and developments of the Chiang-Quirino proposal for a Pacific Union since 14 July, 24 August 1949, pp. 25-26, Box 5, JMP.

administration over its timid China policy.[32] Yet when it came to Asia, American policymakers were paralysed by the uncertainty of decolonization. They viewed the Cold War as a European issue. Kennan and Acheson in particular tended to see Asia through the lens of Soviet expansion.[33] These policymakers were aware that nationalist sentiment was getting stronger and Nehru's calls for non-alignment were getting louder. However, they also knew taking a more active role would provoke accusations of Western interference and undermine European allies. To allay these problems, the Truman administration tried to tread a middle-ground that did not fully address either concern. They wanted to resolve the 'colonial-nationalist conflict in such a way as to satisfy the fundamental demands of the nationalist movement while at the same time minimizing the strain on the colonial powers who are our Western allies.'[34] Their mistake was believing these ambitions could be reconciled whilst fighting the Cold War. Although Kennan and his colleagues should be credited for realising that Asian nationalism was going to play an important part in the fight against communism, their attention did not go far enough. They thought quiet reassurances would be enough to assuage Quirino's anxieties and were reluctant to make braver decisions about regional security for fear of upsetting European allies and inciting accusations of imperialism. Unwilling to commit to an alliance whilst the parameters of the Cold War were not fully defined, the State Department saw Quirino's proposal as an attempt 'to force our hand.'[35]

The United States was not the only barrier in the way of Quirino's plan. Aside from Mao (who rightfully viewed the proposal as directed at Chinese communism), the greatest challenge came from non-aligned nations like India.[36] For Nehru, the Pacific Pact was a hindrance to regional

[32] Ibid, p. 28.
[33] Heer, *Mr. X and the Pacific*, pp. 1-7. Robert L. Beisner, *Dean Acheson: A Life in the Cold War* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2006), p. 512-513.
[34] Memorandum by the Executive Secretary of the National Security Council (Souers) to the National Security Council, 30 December 1949, FRUS.
[35] Department of State memorandum on the chronology and developments of the Chiang-Quirino proposal for a Pacific Union, 15 July 1949, p. 8.
[36] Department of State memorandum on the chronology and developments of the Chiang-Quirino proposal for a Pacific Union since 14 July, 24 August 1949, pp. 1-26. The Ambassador in China (Stuart) to the Secretary of State, 2 August 1949, FRUS.

stability that detracted from opposing colonialism. As the Prime Minister argued, 'what is more important than a defence pact is the development of a psychological background of cooperation.'[37] Indian-sponsored meetings such as the ARC and the 1949 New Delhi Conference on Indonesia concentrated on reducing Western influence rather than actively encouraging it.[38] Although concerned about the 're-imposition of colonialism' in Asia, Quirino and his administration felt that non-alignment would 'put the East against the West' and hamper their access to American assistance.[39] More practically, Nehru disagreed with Manila about the scale of the Chinese threat. The civil war had taken its toll on both sides and Nehru felt that Mao was in no position to expand his revolution abroad. Less concerned by Chinese communism than his neighbours, Nehru's attention was closer to home. New Delhi considered Pakistan to be its greatest security priority. Their rivals in Karachi were successfully courting British and American aid to offset India's preponderant economic and military power.[40] Unlike Quirino, Nehru was not interested in upsetting Mao for the sake of greater American assistance. He saw Chinese communism as an understandable response to centuries of imperial exploitation and insisted 'any outside interference or compulsion will necessarily lead to evil results.'[41]

These opinions spoke to the competing ways that Asian leaders viewed decolonization. It showed how the Cold War influenced debates about postcolonial internationalism and demonstrated the different lengths that these leaders were willing to go in order to ensure their security. Nehru saw the Pacific Pact as unnecessary. He thought creating a 'front against Russia or

[37] Jawaharlal Nehru, 'Promotion of Mutual Understanding: Address by Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru to the National Press Club, Washington, DC', 14 October 1949, *SWJN*, Second Series, vol. 13, August – November 1949, p. 307.
[38] Anon, *Asian Relations*, pp. 15-32. Anon, 'Delhi Conference: Formation of Asian Bloc Envisaged', *South China Morning Post*, 11 January 1949, p. 7.
[39] Statement by Ambassador Carlos P. Romulo, Chief of the Philippine Mission to the United Nations, before the Security Council, on the Indonesian Question, 10 March 1949, digitised copy made available to author, CRF. The Chargé in the Philippines (Lockett) to the Acting Secretary of State, 15 January 1949, FRUS, 1949, Volume VII, The Far East and Australasia, Part 2, Document 308, https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1949v07p2/d308 (accessed 11 December 2019).
[40] McGarr, *The Cold War in South Asia*, pp. 9-25. McMahon, *The Cold War on the Periphery*, pp. 59-79.
[41] Quoted in Robert Trumbull, 'India Is Opposed to Anti-Red Pact', *New York Times*, 21 August 1949, p. 20.

any other power' would solidify Cold War tensions and inhibit peaceful cooperation.[42] Quirino and his allies faced an uphill battle in convincing their peers that anticommunism was compatible with anticolonialism. As the 'most powerful and visible state in Asia,' they knew India would exert considerable influence over any regional alliance.[43] But unlike Nehru, they had to take sides. The Huk threat and the cost of postwar reconstruction forced Quirino to pander to American interests for clearer assurances about their security. His government had to take action to attract American aid and get across that they were in the fight against communism. The Philippines prioritised safety over solidarity. Quirino and his allies saw their future as indelibly tied to Washington and were reluctant to stray away from anticommunism because they thought it was the surest way to get America's attention. As a result, Philippine policymakers found it hard to reconcile their security demands with Nehru's call for non-alignment. This reflected the divergent routes that Asian nations took towards decolonization and emphasised the competing ways their leaders interpreted American imperial power in the Cold War.

Asian and American indifference pushed Manila towards more drastic measures. After announcing his idea in March, Quirino expended a flurry of diplomatic energy to bolster the proposal. This culminated in the Chiang-Quirino summit at Baguio in July. Following several days of discussions, the two leaders released a statement urging the creation of an Asian union to 'contain and counteract' the threat of communism.[44] Viewed as a thinly veiled attempt to attain American aid, the conference was dismissed as short-sighted given the general preoccupation with rehabilitation, decolonization, and economic development amongst Asian states.[45] For the Philippines, the meeting was an important way of motivating Washington to take a stronger stand

[42] Jawaharlal Nehru, 'Cable to V.K. Krishna Menon', 16 March 1949, *SWJN*, Second Series, vol. 10, February – April 1949, pp. 460-461.
[43] Ewing, "With a Minimum of Bitterness', p. 8.
[44] Joint Statement of Quirino and Chiang Kai-shek, 11 July 1949, available online: https://www.officialgazette.gov.ph/1949/07/11/joint-statement-of-president-quirino-and-generalissimo-chiang-kai-shek/ (accessed 10 May 2019).
[45] Department of State memorandum on the chronology and developments of the Chiang-Quirino proposal for a Pacific Union, 15 July 1949, pp. 1-8. Department of State intelligence report on the attitudes of interested powers toward a Pacific Pact, 15 July 1949, pp. 1-31.

on regional security. Quirino wanted to bring his local security problems into line with America's containment strategy. Acutely aware of non-alignment, he urged Truman to demonstrate the value of American association by demonstrating that his administration was committed to protecting decolonizing peoples from communism. As he put it, 'America must take the lead in the Far East and not concentrate her entire attention in Europe.'[46] Seen as the first step in creating a regional defence agreement, the summit was an opportunity to take the initiative on regional security and demonstrate Manila's value as a Cold War ally.

By pursuing the Pacific Pact, Manila wanted to show Washington that local support was essential for fighting the Cold War. Quirino and Chiang stressed their independence in organising the conference. Quirino maintained 'we did not bother the US because it is the intention of these two Far Eastern countries to organize with whatever resources they have to stop communism.'[47] However, both leaders were keen to gain Washington's attention in order to breathe life into the proposal and promote it as a viable programme for other Asian states. Quirino publicly played on American hesitance as an indication that the United States had to do more to support its allies. As he put it, 'if America is going to abandon us then vast potential strength to the United States will be lost.'[48] Privately, he pressed US policymakers to show strong 'moral and economic leadership,' insisting they were making a mistake in neglecting their 'friends in the Far East' while 'even the USSR is helping the nations associated with it.'[49] Chiang and Rhee agreed that Asia faced a 'greater danger from international communism today than any other part of the world.'[50] They suggested

[46] Quoted in Ralph Teatsorth, 'Orient Calls on US to Form Pacific Pact', *Waxahachie Daily Light*, 20 March 1949, p. 1.
[47] Quoted in Department of State memorandum on the chronology and developments of the Chiang-Quirino proposal for a Pacific Union, 15 July 1949, p. 4.
[48] Quoted in Anon, 'Pacific Pact', *South China Morning Post*, 19 March 1949, p. 1.
[49] The Chargé in the Philippines (Lockett) to the Secretary of State, 22 March 1949, FRUS, 1949, Volume VII, The Far East and Australasia, Part 2, Document 313, https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1949v07p2/d313 (accessed 19 October 2019). The Chargé in the Philippines (Lockett) to the Secretary of State, 14 July 1949, FRUS, 1949, Volume VII, The Far East and Australasia, Part 2, Document 335, https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1949v07p2/d335 (accessed 19 October 2019).
[50] Richard J.H. Johnston, 'Chiang, Rhee Urge Asian Pact Parley', *New York Times*, 8 August 1949, p. 1.

Truman should 'take definite action and help build up the democratic camp.'[51] This interchange situated their local conflicts within a global framework for communist containment. It intervened in American understandings of regional order by positioning Asia as a vital part of the "Free World." The meeting reminded Washington that without indigenous support, fighting the Cold War in Asia would be fruitless. 'The fire of communism is at our door,' argued Quirino.[52] Ignoring its advances was tantamount to accepting Soviet domination in Europe.

The greatest challenge for Quirino and his allies was aligning their security concerns with Washington's evolving approach to containment. This was a daunting but not impossible task to undertake against an administration already expanding its understanding of what this strategy should look like. Communist advances in China brought dramatic reassessments of the security landscape in Asia. As the US Chargé in the Philippines Thomas H. Lockett put it, 'since the situation in China has produced uneasiness in a number of Far Eastern countries, there has developed a strong desire to obtain assistance and security from some potent source against the inroads of Communism.'[53] Hawkish Republicans ordered Truman to correct the 'mistakes of our confused Far Eastern policy.'[54] Kennan acknowledged that a 'change of climate is needed in our policy' to 'improve the psychological atmosphere' at home and abroad.[55] For Kennan and his colleagues, debates about regional order were really about ensuring Asian participation in the liberal capitalist system. Yet, the American tendency to approach regional security through European powers played into the hands of communist propaganda as evidence of American

[51] The Ambassador in Korea (Muccio) to the Secretary of State, 20 May 1949, FRUS, 1949, Volume VII, The Far East and Australasia, Part 2, Document 325, https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1949v07p2/d325 (accessed 25 January 2019).
[52] Philippine Affairs Bulletin, Information Service of the Philippines Consulate General of New York, 19 July 1949, Box 5, JMP.
[53] The Chargé in the Philippines (Lockett) to the Secretary of State, 22 March 1949, FRUS.
[54] William S. White, 'Republicans prod Acheson on China', *New York Times*, 25 February 1949, p. 1. Anon, 'US and Red China: Republican Appeal for New Stand Against Communism', *South China Morning Post*, 4 June 1949, p. 12.
[55] Memorandum by the Director of the Policy Planning Staff (Kennan), 8 March 1949, FRUS, 1949, Volume VII, The Far East and Australasia, Part 2, Document 328, https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1949v07p2/d328 (accessed 19 October 2019).

imperialism.[56] This criticism was bolstered by the neocolonial economic and military privileges obtained in the Philippines and Japan. To many Asian people, MacArthur's control of Japan or American jurisdiction over military installations in the Philippines were infringements on sovereignty akin to the Soviet domination of Eastern Europe or Central Asia.[57] Frustrated by the perception that there was 'little difference between the fundamental objectives' of the two superpowers, the State Department felt they needed a more positive role for American leadership that could project the United States as the real anticolonial ally.[58]

These discussions typified the tension between anticommunism and anticolonialism in US foreign policy during the Cold War. Backing a local security initiative would support American interests. It would show Washington's seriousness in combatting communism and potentially align more Asian states with the "Free World." However, American policymakers were not blind to the proposal's limitations. They knew it lacked support. They saw that Quirino, Rhee, and Chiang were unpopular and realised that supporting the initiative would invoke strong criticisms from non-aligned leaders like Nehru. Truman did not see the point in enflaming nationalist tensions for the sake of satisfying Quirino's domestic insecurities. As one report put it, 'the question for us is not whether an Asian association would be to our advantage but how we may encourage its development in view of the serious obstacles that would have to be overcome.'[59] Although these policymakers were frustrated, their inattention actually worked quite well. By doing nothing, Washington avoided drawing itself into an unpopular initiative that was already splitting opinions

[56] Department of State intelligence report on the attitudes of interested powers toward a Pacific Pact, 15 July 1949, pp. 31-33. Department of State memorandum on the chronology and developments of the Chiang-Quirino proposal for a Pacific Union since 14 July, 24 August 1949, pp. 13-29.
[57] Memorandum to President Truman by Paul V. McNutt, first US Ambassador to the Philippines, entitled 'General Observations with regard to the Philippines', 6 May 1947, pp. 1-9. Harold B. Hinton, 'Policy in Japan Defended by US', *New York Times*, 14 July 1949, p. 12. Shalom, 'Philippine Acceptance of the Bell Trade Act of 1946', pp. 499-517. Shunya Yoshimi & David Buist, "America' as Desire and Violence: Americanization in Postwar Japan and Asia During the Cold War', *Inter-Asia Cultural Studies*, vol. 4, no. 3 (2003), pp. 433-450.
[58] Memorandum by the Director of the Office of Near Eastern Affairs (Satterthwaite) to the Acting Secretary of State, 6 June 1949, FRUS, 1949, Volume VII, The Far East and Australasia, Part 2, Document 327, https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1949v07p2/d327 (accessed 22 February 2020).
[59] Department of State memorandum on the chronology and developments of the Chiang-Quirino proposal for a Pacific Union since 14 July, 24 August 1949, p. 26.

amongst postcolonial elites. They helped prevent the Chinese Civil War from boiling over and kept Cold War tensions at bay by refusing to engage with the proposal. Was this a concerted strategy or a happy accident? It is hard to discern. What is clear is that US policymakers were realising that local elites would have a bigger say in the Cold War than they anticipated.

Quirino, Chiang, and Rhee accused the United States of capitulating to communism in order to sell the Pacific Pact. Quirino chastised Truman for neglecting Asia at the expense of Europe, using his disinterest as an example of the broader American failure to comprehend communism's appeal to colonized peoples. He portrayed the Chinese Civil War as an omen for further unrest and argued the pact could help demonstrate his administration's commitment to challenging communist aggression. As Quirino argued in the Senate, 'it is obvious to everyone that the task of securing our free world is only half done. Asia cannot and ought not to be lost to communism by default. And yet this is bound to happen unless something of the courage and vision that went into the forging of the democratic defences in Europe is applied to forging a similar system of defense in Asia.'[60] Rhee and Chiang also used their public platforms to position Asia as an important Cold War front. As Rhee argued, 'everyone must join the fight or get burnt in this world-threatening conflagration.'[61] Privately, they criticised 'State Department inaction' and portrayed themselves as 'Far East orphans… still in [the] US camp' but 'hoping for better treatment.'[62] This manoeuvre baited Washington into taking the lead when many Asian leaders were still undecided over which Cold War camp to court. If the Truman administration was willing to work cooperatively then the challenge of communism could be muted and the continent could be transformed into an important contributor to the "Free World."

[60] Address of Elpidio Quirino before the United States Senate, 9 August 1949, p. 4.
[61] Quoted in the Ambassador in Korea (Muccio) to the Secretary of State, 12 July 1949, FRUS, 1949, Volume VII, The Far East and Australasia, Part 2, Document 330, https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1949v07p2/d330 (accessed 14 July 2019).
[62] The Consul at Taipei (Edgar) to the Secretary of State, 18 July 1949, FRUS, 1949, Volume VII, The Far East and Australasia, Part 2, Document 341, https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1949v07p2/d341 (accessed 24 October 2019).

In some ways, the Chiang-Quirino meeting did what it set out to do: focus American attention on the military dimensions of the Cold War in Asia. While unsupportive of the proposal's belligerent anticommunism, Indian editorials conceded 'they have grasped the initiative in a matter where the Big Powers were reluctant to commit themselves.'[63] American commentators scolded Truman for ignoring a region where communism was so attractive. As the *New York Times* contended, although the pact 'does not have great military significance' it 'does have moral importance.'[64] The proposal enjoyed cross-party support in Congress, where representatives insisted a 'pacific defense pact against Soviet aggression is just as important as the Atlantic Pact.'[65] These discussions prompted serious reflection in the Truman administration. Bewildered by Quirino's bravado in hosting Chiang, policymakers acknowledged the campaign reflected an 'anxious search' for 'some measure of definite security.'[66] Conscious of Nehru's influence, they worried further inattention could push decolonizing countries towards non-alignment. As one official put it, 'if a "Pacific Union" becomes an "Asiatic Association" either because we shirk our position of power and leadership or because they become convinced we have abandoned Asia through timidity or neglect, we… shall have lost a great opportunity and a step will be taken in separating Orient from Occident.'[67]

It was not enough. Manila's emphasis on indigenous participation in the Cold War showed American policymakers that Asian leaders would have some say in regional security discussions whether they liked it or not. For the State Department, the notion that the United States was on the back foot in the Cold War showed they needed a more proactive policy that could better utilise

[63] Anon, 'Pacific Pact?', *Times of India*, 13 July 1949, p. 6.
[64] Anon, 'Toward a Pacific Pact', *New York Times*, 17 July 1949, p. E10.
[65] Quoted in Department of State memorandum on the chronology and developments of the Chiang-Quirino proposal for a Pacific Union since 14 July, 24 August 1949, p. 14.
[66] Department of State memorandum on the chronology and developments of the Chiang-Quirino proposal for a Pacific Union, 15 July 1949, p. 7. The Chargé in the Philippines (Lockett) to the Secretary of State, 21 March 1949, FRUS, 1949, Volume VII, The Far East and Australasia, Part 2, Document 312, https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1949v07p2/d312 (accessed 24 October 2019).
[67] Memorandum by Mr. Max W. Bishop, of the Office of the Deputy Under Secretary of State to the Deputy Under Secretary of State (Rusk), 24 August 1949, FRUS, 1949, Volume VII, The Far East and Australasia, Part 2, Document 376, https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1949v07p2/d376 (accessed 14 November 2019).

postcolonial allies to offset accusations of imperialism. American policymakers saw nationalism as a force that needed controlling. They wanted the Philippines 'to take the initiative publicly in many projects which they, as Asians, can advance more effectively than we.'[68] Yet, Washington's unwillingness to meet Cold War concerns on local terms hampered progress towards a collective security agreement. Truman and his advisers were right in thinking these countries had an important part to play in fighting communism. They were wrong to assume they could dictate what this would look like. US officials were still concentrating on Europe. They had not decided how far to extend the Cold War flanks and could not fully place Asia within their containment strategy. Whether they liked it or not, the Cold War had already arrived in Asia. Really, the question was what could the United States do about it? For Filipino officials, the answer was not a lot.

Washington's apathy proved fatal for the Pacific Pact. Combined with nationalist resistance at home and abroad, Quirino found it difficult to make his security problems an American priority. This was one of the disadvantages of joining the postwar American empire. The price of participation was not always worth the investment. Quirino's failure was to assume that communist advances in Asia would be enough to make American policymakers turn their attention away from Europe. He thought the United States would always prioritise anticommunism and believed the administration would make pluckier moves to discredit non-alignment and advance the benefits of allying with the West. As a result, his government illustrated their dependence on Washington without getting anything in return. Truman and his staff did not see the Philippines as part of the "Free World" and were not willing to involve them in regional security discussions because they thought they had nothing to add. The Pacific Pact was a glaring reminder of their inferior place in Washington's Cold War agenda.

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[68] Policy Planning Staff Paper on United States Policy Toward Southeast Asia, 29 March 1949, FRUS, 1949, Volume VII, The Far East and Australasia, Part 2, Document 317, https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1949v07p2/d317 (accessed 14 November 2019).

The diplomatic fallout from the Chiang-Quirino meeting was swift. Analysis in the Philippine Department of Foreign Affairs congratulated Quirino for snubbing Nehru and promoting a realistic picture of communist advances. According to the diplomat Salvador Lopez, the summit put 'the State Department in an awkward position' by criticising the 'standstill American policy' in Asia and stressing Manila's ability to confront US strategy. The presumption being that the weight of 'public, press, and Congressional opinion' would cajole Washington into a 'more definite declaration' on 'the problem of containing communism in Asia.' These conclusions reflected Manila's anxious search for security guarantees in the early Cold War. It showed how Filipino elites were willing to modify their foreign policy to fit into the US strategic framework and demonstrated the competing understandings of security and self-determination that dictated Manila's relationship with non-aligned nations like India. Lopez felt the situation in China had produced a 'heightened American interest in the Far East.' He criticised non-alignment for having 'little or no relevance to the communist advance in Asia' and argued postcolonial countries had 'neither the time nor the opportunity to insist upon such architectural refinements in erecting the bulwarks of their defence.' Asia needed the United States. Combatting communism was tantamount to combatting colonialism and non-alignment would not give these countries the protection they needed. As Lopez put it to Romulo, 'Nehru may find it increasingly inconvenient to sit on the fence… their determination to fight communism at home must compel them to recognize the necessity of fighting communism abroad.'[69] The Pacific Pact was a different way of looking at regional order that prioritised survival more than anything else.

Lopez's analysis put a positive spin on one of Quirino's biggest blunders. The Pacific Pact was a dangerous intensification of Cold War tensions that pitted decolonizing countries against each other. It damaged relations between Manila and Washington, where expectations of American leadership were markedly different. Most dangerously, it perpetuated a neocolonial reliance on the

[69] Memorandum from Salvador Lopez to Carlos Romulo, 18 July 1949, p. 4.

United States that undermined Manila's prestige and exacerbated nationalist divisions in the Philippines. Soviet and Chinese propagandists agreed with Huk leaders when they derided the proposal as an American 'scheme to perpetuate the enslavement of peoples throughout the Far East.'[70] European allies gleefully pointed out that the combination 'of [a] discredited former Chinese president, [a] Philippine politician with not too good reputation, and [the] head of [an] insecure Korean state as [the] nucleus of [the] Pacific union is to reduce [the] whole thing to absurdity.'[71] India and Indonesia refused to 'join any bloc' that could destabilise 'the troubled atmosphere' in Asia.[72] Other Filipino leaders were embarrassed by Quirino's deference to Washington. As Senator Claro Recto argued in a letter to Romulo, 'it appears that we are all expected to run the errands and save the necks of Chiang Kai-shek and Syngman Rhee.'[73] Quirino wanted the Pacific Pact to serve as an alternative to non-alignment that generated greater assistance from the United States. Instead, he reinforced the Philippines' neocolonial status and embarrassed American officials by demonstrating their inaction on communism.

This error was not entirely his own. The President was right, to an extent. American power was the Pacific Pact's biggest strength. It was also its downfall. The Truman administration's steadfast refusal to entertain the proposal meant it was dead in the water from the beginning. What kept Washington at arm's length? Was it Chiang? That is certainly how some officials framed it. They felt his inclusion saddled the embryonic union 'with an almost hopeless cause.' The State Department deduced that the trio's ambitions were 'based more on a desire to secure US military commitments' than 'a need for unity amongst the Asiatic states.'[74] But was there more to this

[70] Quoted in Anon, 'Pacific Pact', *South China Morning Post*, 24 July 1949, p. 12.
[71] The Ambassador in the United Kingdom (Douglas) to the Secretary of State, 26 July 1949, FRUS, 1949, Volume VII, The Far East and Australasia, Part 2, Document 353, https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1949v07p2/d353 (accessed 22 June 2019).
[72] Report to Elpidio Quirino from Carlos P. Romulo on the progress of the work for the organization of a Southeast Asia Union, 10 April 1950, p. 112, Box L2 4 A: Folders 52 – 64, CRP. Dr C. Tambu, Indonesian Consul General, to Romulo, 8 September 1949, ibid, pp. 87-88.
[73] Laurel to Romulo, 12 August 1949, Box 20, Elpidio Quirino Papers [hereafter EQP], Filipinas Heritage Library, Manila, Philippines. Recto to Romulo, 11 August 1949, ibid.
[74] Department of State memorandum on the chronology and developments of the Chiang-Quirino proposal for a Pacific Union, 15 July 1949, pp. 7-8. Department of State intelligence report on the attitudes of interested powers toward a Pacific Pact, 15 July 1949, p. 23.

reasoning? Truman's reluctance reflected a broader administrative inability to confront Asian internationalism in the postwar world. His advisers failed to appreciate how important decolonizing countries would become to America's Cold War objectives. On the one hand, they recognised the value of postcolonial allies like the Philippines. They thought it would 'hardly be in our best interest… to have a solely Asiatic association develop' and were glad to have Filipino officials on their side to offset criticisms of American policy by non-aligned and communist commentators. On the other, they knew that committing themselves to the Pacific Pact would split 'Asian countries into non-communist and anti-communist segments' and provoke further accusations of imperial intervention.[75] These conflicting opinions help outline the delicate interplay between decolonization and the Cold War. It shows how Philippine elites complicated American Cold War objectives by pursuing their own ideas and ambitions on the international stage. Truman was keen to confront the pessimism that overshadowed his administration's approach to Asia. Ironically, it was Quirino's anticommunism that posed the biggest problem given Washington's sensitivity to charges of imperial interference.

Diplomatic deadlock backed Quirino into a corner. Frustrated by American and Asian indifference, he asked Romulo to return to Manila to help reshape the proposal. Romulo, then serving as the Philippine representative to the UN, begrudgingly agreed.[76] An advocate of decolonization, racial equality, and individual freedom, Romulo had long championed the idea of an Asian association. His vision of regional order looked to reconcile Asian nationalism with American leadership and position the Philippines as a 'liaison between the Occident and the Orient.'[77] Romulo had a durable relationship with policymakers in Washington. His time as Resident Commissioner and his role at the UN made him a familiar face. As Ramon Espiritu has

[75] Memorandum by the Policy Information Officer of the Office of Far Eastern Affairs (Fisher) to the Director of the Office (Butterworth), 15 July 1949, FRUS, 1949, Volume VII, The Far East & Australasia, Part 2, Document 338, https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1949v07p2/d338 (accessed 15 July 2019).
[76] Romulo, *Crusade in Asia*, pp. 100-103.
[77] Address of Carlos P. Romulo delivered at the commencement exercises of the University of the Philippines, 26 April 1949, Box CPR0012 – SD, CPRP.

observed, he was not 'above deploying the familiar trope of the orientalist expert in order to convey his message to Western audiences.'[78] Already considered a spokesman for the Philippines, his reputation as a voice for Asian freedom was enhanced by his participation at the New Delhi Conference on Indonesia.[79] Romulo shared Quirino's anxieties about communist expansion. But his spirited anticommunism was tempered by an adroit anticolonialism that wanted decolonizing countries to have a bigger say in matters that affected them. For Romulo, Quirino's focus on communism was a misstep that failed to account for the popularity of anti-imperialism. He knew Quirino's meeting with Chiang irritated Washington and antagonised India. As he put it to Quirino, 'the present American administration will give no support to those resisting communism in China until the Chinese show some aptitude for that task.' He felt 'no such Asian group could get very far without the full support of the government of India' and encouraged Quirino to drop the anticommunist aspect of the proposal to appeal to Indian non-alignment and American military non-interference.[80] These disparities in Manila's thinking underscored how non-alignment influenced Philippine understandings of regional order. Whilst he agreed there was 'no question of abandoning the ultimate objective of securing American assistance,' Romulo's influence showed that Manila was occasionally willing to sacrifice security in order to protect its sovereignty.[81]

Under Romulo's guidance, the Pacific Pact took on a new direction. Having consulted with Romulo after his return to Manila in July, Quirino publicly instructed him to organise a conference in Baguio to discuss the 'maintenance of the security of freedom of Asia.' Released on 3 August, the note made no mention of Chiang or Rhee, nor did it use the term "Pacific Pact." Instead, the Philippines moved away from an aggressive agreement in favour of a more cooperative approach that appealed to American military non-interference and Indian non-alignment. In concert with

[78] Espiritu, "'To Carry Water on Both Shoulders'", pp. 173-190.
[79] Anon, 'General Romulo Says Colonialism Must End in Asia', *Washington Post*, 23 February 1949, p. 10. Anon, 'UN Criticised: Indonesian Issue, Failure to Take Strong Action', *South China Morning Post*, 9 January 1949, p. 7. A.M. Rosenthal, '17 Eastern Nations Will Meet on Java: General Romulo Calls Parley of UN Members for Diplomatic Move Against Dutch', *New York Times*, 4 March 1949, p. 8.
[80] Telegram to Quirino from Romulo, 7 July 1949, p. 1.
[81] Romulo to Quirino, 22 July 1949, p. 1.

Romulo, Quirino stressed that the union would be non-communist rather than anticommunist, that its primary motivations would be economic and cultural rather than military, and that it would be explicitly directed against communism and imperialism. Distancing himself from Chiang, Quirino emphasised Southeast Asia as the nucleus for this new project, encouraging Western participation to avoid the perception of an "anti-white" bloc.[82]

This proposal spoke to the delicate balance between security and sovereignty that underlined Philippine foreign policy in the Cold War. It exhibited Romulo's emphasis on anticolonialism and demonstrated non-alignment's growing influence on regional order. Romulo agreed with Nehru on lots of matters. Like the Prime Minister, he believed independence was the right of every colonized person and felt new nations needed a louder voice on the international stage. As he put it, 'Asia is emerging as a potentially powerful Third Force in world politics. As long as parts of Asia are held in bondage, there will be nationalist risings that imperil the peace of the world.'[83] However, as much as Romulo wanted these things, he was unwilling to sacrifice his country's privileged place in American policy to achieve them. His government was faltering. The Philippines needed American aid to put down the Huks and help rebuild the country's broken infrastructure. This new proposal was indicative of how American imperialism shaped Philippine nationalism. It demonstrated the constant tension between engaging the United States and engaging their decolonizing neighbours that embodied Manila's foreign policy after independence. To Romulo, the Philippines were the bridge that connected American ambitions with nationalist aspirations in Asia. His mission was to put the Pacific Pact back on that course.

Romulo's initiative had two corresponding objectives. First, Romulo addressed the American preference for military non-interference by focusing attention on economic cooperation and emphasising mutual cooperation. His alterations negated the aggressive anticommunism of

[82] Report to Elpidio Quirino from Carlos P. Romulo on the progress of the work for the organization of a Southeast Asia Union, 10 April 1950, p. 4. Letter of instructions of his Excellency Elpidio Quirino to Hon. Carlos P. Romulo and other documents of the proposed Pacific Union, 3 – 6 August 1949, Box 5, JMP.
[83] Romulo, 'How Can the Free Peoples of the World…', p. 58.

the previous proposal by portraying it as an independent initiative designed to create a stable regional community in consultation with the West. As Romulo put it, 'Asia demands, and deserves, equal partnership with the West in building a free world [sic].'[84] Romulo remoulded Philippine diplomacy to better reflect Washington's sensitivity to accusations of imperialism. In conversation with US officials, he claimed the union would 'destroy the notion that communism is in any sense the 'wave of the future' and 'show that objections to Chinese communism will by no means be an exclusive American worry or a stratagem of the European colonial powers.'[85] Privately, Romulo felt the Truman administration was 'overawed by the magnitude of the communist problem in Asia.' As he complained to Quirino, 'they have heretofore followed a policy of waiting for developments… now they will have to make up their minds.' By retooling the Pacific Pact into an indigenous initiative, Romulo hoped to portray a more united picture of postcolonial Asia that could leave 'the door ajar for a more aggressive policy.'[86]

Romulo's second objective was intimately connected to the first. In order to court greater American assistance, he needed to show that the union was a viable option for other Asian states. In this regard, Romulo could only do so much. The Chiang-Quirino summit damaged Philippine prestige. Far from bolstering his reputation as Quirino had hoped, the meeting furthered the perception that the United States was still in charge. According to one Chinese editorial, the union was little more than 'an alliance of three scarecrows who would have collapsed long ago but for the armed support of American imperialists.'[87] Most observers felt Quirino was only involved to help Chiang and Rhee pull 'their chestnuts from the fire.'[88] Irked at not being consulted, Romulo worked to 're-establish mutual confidence' amongst other regional powers by appealing to anticolonial sentiments and insisting the conference would be 'completely free to determine the

[84] Speech by Carlos P. Romulo before the Manila Rotary Club, 27 January 1949, Box 14, SLP.
[85] Telegram to Quirino from Romulo, 7 July 1949, p. 1.
[86] Romulo to Quirino, 22 July 1949, p. 1.
[87] Quoted in Department of State memorandum on the chronology and developments of the Chiang-Quirino proposal for a Pacific Union since 14 July, 24 August 1949, p. 18.
[88] Department of State intelligence report on the attitudes of interested powers toward a Pacific Pact, 15 July 1949, p. 23.

objectives.' Romulo wanted to avoid 'giving the impression that they will come to Manila merely to adhere to an agreement already concluded by the Philippines, China, and South Korea.'[89] His statements and conversations with foreign diplomats aligned the proposal with the "third force" championed at New Delhi in January.[90] Paradoxically, Romulo thought that if he could muster greater Asian interest by emphasising the union's anticolonialism then the power of non-alignment could be subdued and the US would be more compelled to offer support.

Romulo's predicament was simple: how could Manila get the security guarantees it needed whilst still keeping faith with anticolonial sentiment? The answer was more elusive. The Pacific Pact was representative of a larger failure in postwar Philippine thinking that relied too heavily on anticommunism to achieve foreign policy objectives. The country's place within the postwar American empire often put them at odds with other decolonizing countries. As Romulo himself admitted, 'America's policy has had the direct effect of isolating our country from the common sentiment of our neighbours.'[91] This conflict between anticolonialism and anticommunism meant Quirino and his administration were constantly having to juggle their desire for protection against their desire for self-determination. Filipino leaders were caught between two stalls. Neither popular in Washington nor popular with their postcolonial peers, they found it increasingly difficult to justify their commitment to the United States and the Cold War. Romulo's intervention came too late. The Pacific Pact was a glaring reminder that American power had its shortcomings.

Romulo's work did have some benefits. Washington's reaction was cautiously optimistic. The State Department collaborated with Romulo to ensure his proposal received significant exposure. Acheson felt the rebranded initiative provided a better basis for regional cooperation.[92]

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[89] Romulo to Quirino, 22 July 1949, p. 1.
[90] Address by Carlos P. Romulo before the University of the Philippines on the Principles Underlying the Proposed Southeast Asia Union, 25 August 1949, Box 17, SLP. Romulo to Burmese Ambassador to United States U Se Byun, 26 July 1949, Box L2 4 A: Folders 52 – 64, CRP. Romulo to the Indonesian Representative to the United Nations Lambertus Nicodemus Palar, 13 September 1949, ibid.
[91] Report to Elpidio Quirino from Carlos P. Romulo on the progress of the work for the organization of a Southeast Asia Union, 10 April 1950, p. 2.
[92] The Secretary of State to the Embassy in the Philippines, 4 August 1949, FRUS, 1949, Volume VII, The Far East and Australasia, Part 2, Document 363, https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1949v07p2/d363

US officials were pleased by Quirino's evasion of Chiang, hoping Romulo's influence would steer his 'thinking along sound lines.'[93] This newfound receptiveness reflected a growing acceptance that regional cooperation needed encouraging if it was going to work to Washington's advantage. Despite Quirino's blunder, US policymakers saw a proactive Philippine role in regional affairs as an important counter to non-alignment. As State Department official Max W. Bishop put it, the 'great political danger to be avoided is the sort of association which is best described by such terms as "Asia for the Asiatics."'[94] This fear of anti-Westernism underscored Washington's tendency to view Philippine elites as proxies that needed American guidance to manage their foreign policy goals. State Department officials saw Romulo as measured and reliable. Mainly because he was more sensitive to the embarrassing implications of associating with Chiang. Quirino, in contrast, was viewed as ignorant to the problems that confronted the United States. His 'sentimental belief' in Chiang had damaged American prestige by aggravating the divisions between Washington and its Asian allies.[95] In this sense, Acheson's support for Romulo was more about exerting indirect control over Quirino than any concerted belief in an Asian union.

Romulo had tacit American approval. But he knew it would be difficult to get support from other Asian leaders. Irritated at being side-lined, Chiang and Rhee continued to promote military collaboration as the pact's ultimate goal. Meeting in the Korean city of Jinhae in early August, the two leaders publicly called on Quirino to maintain the anticommunist element.[96] These differing perspectives inhibited Romulo's efforts. As State Department analysis argued, although

(accessed 16 May 2019). Media itinerary for promoting Quirino's "Letter of Instructions", undated, Box L2 4 A: Folders 52 – 64, CRP. The Secretary of State to the Embassy in the Philippines, 19 August 1949, FRUS, 1949, Volume VII, The Far East and Australasia, Part 2, Document 373, https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1949v07p2/d373 (accessed 16 May 2019).

[93] The Ambassador in the Philippines (Cowen) to the Secretary of State, 24 August 1949, FRUS, 1949, Volume VII, The Far East and Australasia, Part 2, Document 375, https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1949v07p2/d375 (accessed 16 May 2019).

[94] Memorandum by Mr. Max W. Bishop, of the Office of the Deputy Under Secretary of State to the Deputy Under Secretary of State (Rusk), 24 August 1949, FRUS.

[95] The Chargé in the Philippines (Lockett) to the Secretary of State, 1 August 1949, FRUS, 1949, Volume VII, The Far East and Australasia, Part 2, Document 358, https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1949v07p2/d358 (accessed 4 October 2019).

[96] Johnston, 'Chiang, Rhee Urge Asian Pact Parley', p. 1.

the Quirino-Chiang-Rhee proposal 'has been outmoded by the Quirino-Romulo Southeast Asia union, it has unfortunately not been supplanted by it.'[97] Romulo knew Quirino's meeting with Chiang had strained relations with Washington. US officials accused Quirino of 'rattling [an] old skeleton in the cupboard' at a time when the administration was fastidiously avoiding any mention of Chiang. He acknowledged the 'justifiable suspicion' that the United States 'had instigated the Philippines into making this move' and felt that Philippine prestige was tied to his ability to earn Asian support.[98] These criticisms posed a serious problem. To many onlookers, the Pacific Pact was little more than a crude attempt at securing American aid that bolstered Western colonialism and proved the Philippines' subservience to the United States. As Nehru argued, Manila's motivations 'may look innocuous' but the 'conference itself is sure to be regarded by many as a move against communism.'[99] This dispute over the direction of Asian internationalism threatened to invalidate Romulo's meeting before he even had a chance to organise it.

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From its inception, the Baguio Conference suffered from a lack of consensus amongst its participants that magnified existing postcolonial divisions in Asia. Between the summer of 1949 and the conclusion of the summit on 30 May 1950, Romulo worked tirelessly to drum up sympathy, encountering constant resistance along the way. When delegations from Australia, Ceylon, India, Indonesia, Pakistan, and Thailand finally arrived, the meeting was already redundant due to the competing priorities that underlined the proceedings. The Indian delegation insisted on strict Cold War non-alignment, blocking Chiang's inclusion and arguing for recognition of Communist China.[100] American policymakers took a back seat, preferring to liaise with Australia

[97] Department of State memorandum on the chronology and developments of the Chiang-Quirino proposal for a Pacific Union since 14 July, 24 August 1949, p. 21.
[98] Memorandum from Romulo to Quirino, 14 July 1949, Box L2 4 A: Folders 52 – 64, CRP.
[99] Jawaharlal Nehru, 'Cable to Vijayalakshmi Pandit', 12 August 1949, *SWJN*, Second Series, vol. 12, June – August 1949, p. 391.
[100] Final Act and Proceedings of the Baguio Conference of 1950, pp. 1-71, Box 17, SLP.

to ensure the 'pro-western orientations of any resulting associations.'[101] As a result, the conference produced no regional organisation, nor any declaration against communism. Indeed, for most observers then and since, the meeting was little more than a series of inconclusive debates that signalled the difficulties in achieving greater inter-Asian cooperation.[102] Yet, its failure illuminates a longer and more complicated history of postcolonial internationalism, one that transcends the historiographical binaries between American empire and the formation of the Third World.

Investigating the Baguio Conference holds crucial implications for understanding how postcolonial Asian leaders envisioned their place in the Cold War. As Cindy Ewing points out, scholars have tended to see the 1950s as a 'golden age in the history of the Third World,' often pinpointing Bandung as the starting point for a broader Afro-Asian movement characterised by anticolonialism and Cold War non-alignment.[103] However, a longer intellectual history of the Global South shows that postcolonial elites consistently disagreed over these objectives, producing alternative internationalisms that organised the Third World in competing ways. These 'other Bandungs' (as Su Lin Lewis and Carolien Stolte call them) paint a more nuanced picture of South-South cooperation.[104] They push against interpretations of the Third World as a movement defined by anticolonial solidarity and opposition to Western intervention.[105] Baguio illustrated the limitations of postcolonial internationalism. It demonstrated the tension between security and self-

[101] Memorandum of Conversation, by the Officer in Charge of Philippine Affairs (Melby), 15 June 1950, FRUS, 1950, Volume VI, East Asia and the Pacific, Document 48, https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1950v06/d48 (accessed 19 October 2019). The Secretary of State to the Embassy in Australia, 25 February 1950, FRUS, 1950, Volume VI, East Asia and the Pacific, Document 12, https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1950v06/d12 (accessed 19 October 2019).
[102] See Mabon, 'Elusive Agreements', p. 156. Park, 'Frustrated Alignment', pp. 224-225. Other studies that touch on the meeting, albeit briefly, include Alan Fewster, *Three Duties and Talleyrand's Dictum: Keith Waller: Portrait of a Working Diplomat* (Melbourne, Australia: Australian Scholarly Publishing, 2018). See chapter 6 on the "Gamboa Incident", Australian-Philippine relations, and the Pacific Pact. Rahul Mukherji, 'Appraising the Legacy of Bandung: A View from India', in *Bandung Revisited*, pp. 160-179.
[103] Ewing, "With a Minimum of Bitterness', p. 12.
[104] Su Lin Lewis & Carolien Stolte, 'Other Bandungs: Afro-Asian Internationalisms in the Early Cold War', *Journal of World History*, vol. 30, nos. 1-2 (June 2019), pp. 1-19.
[105] For depictions of the Third World as a unified movement against Western aggression, see Lee, ed., *Making a World After Empire*. Thomas, *The Theory and Practice of Third World Solidarity*. Prashad, *The Darker Nations*. Prashad, *The Poorer Nations*.

determination that underlined Asian debates about regional order and revealed the enduring ways that American imperialism shaped the Global South.

Baguio helps historians understand the fractured genealogy of the Third World project. But its importance does not end there. The meeting also highlighted the American inability to confront this new political force, often leading to bitter recriminations from neocolonial allies like the Philippines. Truman's apathy to the rise of postwar Asian internationalism created larger foreign policy problems for later administrations. Three weeks after the conference, North Korean troops poured over the 38th parallel, igniting the Korean War and shattering the shaky status quo in Asia. For Philippine policymakers, it came as little surprise. As Romulo recalled in 1955, 'I went from door to door in Washington in the attempt to find help in the movement to unite Asia; I was cold-shouldered.'[106] Manila saw this as a setback for American leadership that reneged on wartime promises to protect Asian freedom. Baguio's problems illustrated the larger American failure to successfully court postcolonial hearts and minds. It showed how decolonization and Asian internationalism disrupted American objectives in the Third World and highlighted Washington's inability to confront these intertwined phenomena during the Cold War.

The Baguio Conference was an organisational nightmare from the beginning. Conceived as a forum to develop regional cooperation in the wake of communist advances, the meeting was hampered by the ambiguous parameters Romulo was forced to adopt in order to appease India and the United States. Romulo's ambition was to show that the Philippines could still 'forward the function of Asia as a mediator between embattled ideologies.'[107] He wanted to help Manila save face after the Chiang-Quirino meeting and force the United States to take notice of regional security problems in the hope of provoking better aid. It was a pretty impossible task. Australia

[106] Romulo, *Crusade in Asia*, p. 103.
[107] Full text of General Romulo's Address to UP Graduates, 27 April 1949, Box CPR0012 – SD, CPRP.

attended as a 'friendly gesture' to Washington.[108] Canberra viewed the conference as a ploy to detract from the Colombo Plan for economic development announced by Britain and Commonwealth leaders in January 1950.[109] The Asian delegations were also wary of Philippine motivations, admittedly for different reasons. India and Indonesia did everything they could to avoid attending. Already committed to the Colombo Plan, Nehru confessed he 'laid down all kinds of conditions.' His government insisted the meeting must have 'nothing anti-communist about it,' refusing to participate if Chiang or Bao Dai (the French-appointed leader of Vietnam) were invited.[110] Soviet recognition of Indonesia meant Jakarta was reluctant to make any move that might complicate non-alignment.[111] Thailand, Ceylon, and Pakistan were more responsive. Chinese communism worried Bangkok. The long and porous border with Indochina threatened Thailand's security.[112] Although members of the Commonwealth and signatories to the Colombo Plan, Ceylon and Pakistan were keen to court American assistance. Both were fearful of India and both faced significant challenges in uniting their nascent states against internal ethnic, religious, and ideological tensions.[113] Despite their sympathy, however, none were willing to commit without explicit support from the United States.[114]

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[108] The Ambassador in Australia (Jarman) to the Secretary of State, 21 April 1950, FRUS, 1950, Volume VI, East Asia and the Pacific, Document 36, https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1950v06/d36 (accessed 26 June 2019).

[109] Note by the Indian Embassy to Romulo concurring with Australian opposition to the Baguio Conference and promoting the Colombo Plan, 10 March 1950, Box L2 4 A: Folders 52 – 64, CRP. Daniel Oakman, *Facing Asia: A History of the Colombo Plan* (Canberra, Australia: ANU Press, 2010).

[110] Jawaharlal Nehru, 'To B.V. Keskar', 4 June 1950, *SWJN*, Second Series, vol. 14, April – July 1950, p. 440.

[111] Anon, 'Soviet Recognition', *South China Morning Post*, 27 January 1950, p. 9. Report to Elpidio Quirino from Carlos P. Romulo on the progress of the work for the organization of a Southeast Asia Union, 10 April 1950, pp. 87-88.

[112] Anon, 'Premier Concerned Over Communist Threat: Asks What Help Western Powers Will Give', *Liberty*, 1 September 1949, Box L2 4 A: Folders 52 – 64, CRP. Anon, 'Phibun Plans Own SE Asian Block [sic]', *Bangkok Post*, 27 August 1949, ibid. Daniel Fineman, *A Special Relationship: The United States and Military Government in Thailand, 1947-1958* (Honolulu, HI: University of Hawai'i Press, 1997), pp. 65-126. Wasana Wongsurawat, 'From Yaowaraj to Plabplachai: The Thai State and Ethnic Chinese in Thailand during the Cold War', in Tuong Vu & Wasana Wongsurawat, eds., *Dynamics of the Cold War in Asia: Ideology, Identity, and Culture* (London, UK: Palgrave-Macmillan, 2009), pp. 165-186.

[113] McGarr, *The Cold War in South Asia*, pp. 16-25. McMahon, *The Cold War on the Periphery*, pp. 64-79. Nira Wickramasinghe, *Sri Lanka in the Modern Age: A History* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2014), pp. 117-312. A. Jeyaratnam Wilson, *Sri Lankan Tamil Nationalism: Its Origins and Development in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries* (London, UK: C. Hurst and Co., 2000), pp. 82-112. Mark Juergensmeyer, *The New Cold War?: Religious Nationalism Confronts the Secular State* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1993), pp. 69-103.

[114] Report to Elpidio Quirino from Carlos P. Romulo on the progress of the work for the organization of a Southeast Asia Union, 10 April 1950, p. 44-101.

The cold reception to Baguio was representative of the disagreements that defined early inter-Asian conversations about decolonization, development, and postwar regional order. It demonstrated the different internationalisms circulated by neocolonial allies like the Philippines and highlighted the complicated history of the Third World project as a contested vision for how to achieve modernity. In public, Asian elites maintained an open commitment to cooperation. In practice, they disagreed over what their objectives should be. Nehru wanted Asia to stand apart from the Cold War. He thought combatting colonialism should be the number one priority and warned other leaders about relying too much on the West. Romulo, in contrast, saw no indignity in relying on his colonizer for help. He thought fighting communism was as important as fighting colonialism and felt the United States was obligated to protect the Philippines in light of their commitment to independence. As he argued, 'we have a better right to such aid than the countries of Western Europe that yet do not hang their heads in shame because they have received billions of dollars under the Marshall Plan.' Creating a defensive union was a logical attempt to guarantee this freedom would be protected. Nehru preferred playing 'the lonely role of mediator,' but Filipinos realised 'we cannot have it both ways.' He thought non-alignment was impractical for the Philippines and saw no value in the 'dubious comfort and safety of sitting on the fence.'[115] The legacy of American empire and the destruction during World War II meant his government had nowhere else to turn. Baguio was testament to the divergent nationalisms practiced by postcolonial elites. It showed how postcolonial leaders interpreted the Cold War differently and outlines the diverse understandings of decolonization that developed in Asia.

Washington's reluctance to endorse the conference worsened Manila's legitimacy problem. Acheson was unwilling to take 'any step indicative of participation or which cld [sic] be misinterpreted as US maneuver [sic] behind scenes.' Already pursuing a development plan through the Point Four programme, US policymakers worried American participation would imply an

[115] Commencement address before the 1951 Graduating Classes of the University of the East, Manila, Philippines, 28 April 1951, p. 4, Box CPR0012 – SD, CPRP.

economic or military commitment 'beyond any now contemplated.' Sensitivity about allegations of imperial intervention guided their hesitant approach. They felt that 'however well intentioned,' a more proactive American role would have a 'misleading effect' that could push Asian elites closer to non-alignment.[116] Policymakers were just as concerned about upsetting their European allies. Fearful that Baguio could hinder the Colombo Plan, policymakers in London made it clear they would pursue regional cooperation within their own sphere of influence.[117] The US ambassador to the Soviet Union Alan Kirk argued 'nothing would make [the] Kremlin happier as it proceeds with its long-range program of recreating Asia in its own image than to find its non-Communist Asian opposition divided into American and British blocs.'[118]

These conclusions demonstrated Washington's vacillating approach to regional cooperation. Despite admitting the meeting was undoubtably 'in our interest,' US officials were hindered by their inability to make Cold War objectives match the growing power of Asian nationalism.[119] They did not trust Filipino elites to represent the United States and recognised that Manila lacked the anticolonial prestige that made India's voice so powerful. What they did not realise was this was mainly a problem of their own making. Military installations and restrictive economic legislation entrenched a colonial dependence on the United States that undermined Manila's validity as an independent government. Ravaged by war, the Filipino elite wanted to restore their monopoly on power and framed their independence within the same exceptionalist narrative of ordered decolonization management that guided Washington's justifications. This engendered a public perception of the Philippines as an American proxy. Still reliant on

[116] The Secretary of State to the Embassy in the Philippines, 19 August 1949, FRUS.
[117] Record of the Conversation Between the Ambassador at Large (Jessup) and Representatives of the British Foreign Office, 11 March 1950, FRUS, 1950, Volume VI, East Asia and the Pacific, Document 22, https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1950v06/d22 (accessed 19 October 2019).
[118] The Ambassador in the Soviet Union (Kirk) to the Secretary of State, 22 July 1949, FRUS, 1949, Volume VII, The Far East and Australasia, Part 2, Document 347, https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1949v07p2/d347 (accessed 19 October 2019).
[119] The Ambassador in Thailand (Stanton) to the Secretary of State, 18 February 1950, FRUS, 1950, Volume VI, East Asia and the Pacific, Document 7, https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1950v06/d7 (accessed 21 October 2019).

Washington, Filipino leaders looked for new ways to get the most out of this asymmetrical alliance. The Pacific Pact was a natural expression of their neocolonial relationship.

Asian and American reluctance put Manila in an awkward position. Already preoccupied with his presidency of the UN General Assembly, Romulo moved slowly in the hope that communist advances would force Washington's hand.[120] His patience had the opposite effect. Quirino won re-election in November 1949 during a vote characterised by widespread intimidation and fraud.[121] His prestige was at an all-time low before the conference. After the ballot, Huk leaders abandoned parliamentary struggle and declared an armed uprising. The rebellion made headlines across the world and raised safety concerns amongst Baguio's attendees.[122] Developments abroad did not help either. Chiang's forces were routed from the mainland at the end of 1949, splitting participants on the issue of recognition. Chiang continued to hassle Quirino into taking a more aggressive anticommunist stance and implored him to invite the isolated Nationalist regime.[123] Manila faced a similar problem with Bao Dai. His government wanted to attend. Aside from Thailand, no Asian delegation at Baguio recognised Bao Dai. Manila was trapped between alienating Washington or its postcolonial peers. Romulo worried this divide would incapacitate the conference before it began. Exasperated by Washington's disinterest, he conceded that the first question asked by the 'representatives of the interested countries' was always 'what is the attitude of the United States?'[124] Baguio outlined the disharmony that characterised early postcolonial internationalist projects. It showed how American imperialism guided discussions about inter-Asian cooperation and highlighted the burgeoning power of non-alignment. Romulo wanted the

[120] Romulo to Quirino, 13 October 1949, p. 1, Box 17, SLP.
[121] H. Ford Wilkins, 'Quirino is Leading in Philippine Vote; 24 Killed in Most Violent of National Elections - Frauds Reported in Many Provinces', *New York Times*, 9 November 1949, p. 19.
[122] Anon, 'Uprising in Philippines', *South China Morning Post*, 17 April 1950, p. 7. Anon, 'Guerrilla Activity in Philippines', *Times of India*, 24 May 1950, p. 7. Anon, 'Military Rule Set in Luzon in Huk Terror', *Washington Post*, 2 April 1950, p. 4. Report to Elpidio Quirino from Carlos P. Romulo on the progress of the work for the organization of a Southeast Asia Union, 10 April 1950, pp. 35-44.
[123] Chiang Kai-shek to Quirino, 21 April 1950, Box 20, EQP.
[124] Report to Elpidio Quirino from Carlos P. Romulo on the progress of the work for the organization of a Southeast Asia Union, 10 April 1950, p. 132. Romulo to Quirino, 13 October 1949, p. 1.

conference to show that East and West could work together towards common goals. His ambition was muted because not everyone believed in American leadership as much as he did.

The Baguio Conference began on 26 May 1950, and it was clear that the Philippine delegation would be unable to reconcile the contrasting priorities on display. Other than the Philippines, no governments sent high-ranking officials. New Zealand and Burma declined to attend. Romulo opted not to invite Chiang, Rhee, or Bao Dai for fear of upsetting either India or the United States.[125] Those that came participated cautiously. The itinerary was kept apolitical at the behest of the Indian delegation. Chiang's observers were barred from attending the closed sessions.[126] Quirino and Romulo took a conciliatory tone. They cast the meeting in the same spirit of anticolonial solidarity displayed at New Delhi and insisted the conference 'would be master of its own agenda.' They emphasised that no Western colonial power had been invited, although the US ambassador to the Philippines attended the plenary session along with several European diplomats. Despite their careful language, both made subtle reference to the 'terrible menace that hangs over our world' and insisted that Asia needed a permanent organization to assist the 'maintenance of international security.' Adamant that the conference was 'not intended to form a bloc or alliance,' their willingness to 'accept assistance from friendly sources' was immediately interpreted as an endorsement of the United States and a plea for greater intervention.[127]

The biggest hurdle to overcome at Baguio was the Cold War. Only Australia and Thailand were interested in a permanent organisation. Although neither viewed the conference as the best way to create one given the 'absence of a lead from [the] US.'[128] In his opening statement, the

[125] Final Act and Proceedings of the Baguio Conference of 1950, pp. 69-71. Report to Elpidio Quirino from Carlos P. Romulo on the progress of the work for the organization of a Southeast Asia Union, Part II, 5 May 1950, Box L2 4 A: Folders 52 – 64, CRP.
[126] Jawaharlal Nehru, 'To S. Radhakrishnan', 6 June 1950, *SWJN*, Second Series, vol. 14, April 1950 – July 1950, pp. 441-442. Anon, 'Essence of Conference at Baguio: Said to Be Not Anti-Red', *Times of India*, 22 May 1950, p. 14.
[127] Final Act and Proceedings of the Baguio Conference of 1950, pp. 10-11. Anon, 'Asia Needs Permanent Defence Body: General Romulo's Call at Baguio Conference', *Times of India*, 27 May 1950, p. 1.
[128] The Ambassador in Thailand (Stanton) to the Secretary of State, 18 February 1950, FRUS. The Ambassador in Australia (Jarman) to the Secretary of State, 24 March 1950, FRUS, 1950, Volume VI, East Asia and the Pacific, Document 30, https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1950v06/d30 (accessed 19 October 2019).

Indian delegate Sir Arcot Ramasamy Mudaliar portrayed communism as an internal issue. He snubbed Manila's proposal by suggesting Quirino seemed 'to think that if we could only have come to consider a political and military alliance against all aggression, then everything will be smooth and happy.' The Indonesian delegate Dr Ali Soebardjo followed a similar line by insisting his government 'will keep clear of all entangling alliances.'[129] In the closed sessions, Soebardjo and Mudaliar maintained Communist China was a reality that Asia had to contend with. They encouraged participants to recognise the new regime. Romulo strongly objected, arguing it was impossible for the Philippines 'now or in the predictable future to recognize Communist China because of its behaviour and aggressive intentions.'[130] Given the division between the delegations, the issue was dropped. There was no formal declaration against communism.

Conflicts over race, empire, and decolonization also stunted the meeting. As the only "white" government in attendance, Australia maintained an uncertain approach that reflected the broader Western unwillingness to engage with an Asian-led organisation. The head delegate John W. Burton struck a familiar tone of Western superiority echoed by leaders in Washington. Canberra worried the conference would address their racist White Australia immigration policy. In cooperation with the State Department, Burton strove to provide 'useful guidance to the Conferees' in order to avoid displays of racial solidarity.[131] Although eager to encourage the sense of anticolonialism achieved at New Delhi, Romulo was anxious not to set the conference 'upon a racial basis.' He knew Australia would be an 'impediment to the articulation of Asian sentiments and aspirations in respect of their newly won freedom.'[132] He also worried their input would reflect an indirect attempt to project British imperial influence because of Canberra's role in the Colombo

[129] Final Act and Proceedings of the Baguio Conference of 1950, pp. 29-44.
[130] Tillman Durdin, 'Results Limited at Baguio Parley', *New York Times*, 1 June 1950, p. 10. Memorandum of Conversation, by the Officer in Charge of Philippine Affairs (Melby), 15 June 1950, FRUS.
[131] Final Act and Proceedings of the Baguio Conference of 1950, p. 20. Memorandum of Conversation by the Director of the Office of Philippine and Southeast Asian Affairs (Lacy), 21 February 1950, FRUS, 1950, Volume VI, East Asia and the Pacific, Document 8, https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1950v06/d8 (accessed 13 February 2020).
[132] Romulo to Quirino, 20 March 1950, Box L2 4 A: Folders 52 – 64, CRP.

Plan. As Romulo suggested to Quirino, 'since when did the Commonwealth nations think they had the right to decide for the peoples who are outside the British orbit?'[133] This inability to tackle the tensions between East and West hampered Philippine objectives. Romulo was forced to tread a fine line between courting regional cooperation and avoiding an "Asiatic bloc." Fears of anti-Westernism came to nothing.[134]

The potential to exacerbate East/West tensions was also apparent in discussions on Indochina. Delegates were split over recognition for Bao Dai.[135] After the conference, Romulo told US officials 'that not a single delegate, not even Thailand or Australia who had recognized Bao Dai had a good word to say for him.'[136] An unnamed delegate suggested a commission should be sent to investigate the situation in Vietnam. However, Washington had already recognised Bao Dai in retaliation to Moscow's recognition of the Vietnamese Communist leader Ho Chi Minh.[137] Like many Asian elites, Romulo had little time for Bao Dai. Without any appreciation of irony, he pointed out to Acheson that 'it would be difficult to prove that Bao Dai is even pseudo-independent when the whole world knows he is powerless without the French.' He saw no excuse 'for the American error of judging the Viet Nam [sic] problem by Western instead of by Asian standards,' suggesting the 'United States, in fighting communism, may have unwittingly espoused even the demonstrated iniquity of imperialism.'[138] Despite his distaste for Bao Dai, Romulo knew 'the American stakes in Indochina' were high.[139] Acheson made it clear that the administration

133 Romulo to Quirino, 28 April 1950, Box L2 4 A: Folders 52 – 64, CRP.
134 Final Act and Proceedings of the Baguio Conference of 1950, pp. 1-71.
135 For scholarship on the "Bao Dai Solution" and its implications for regional order in early Cold War Asia, see Mark A. Lawrence, 'Recasting Vietnam: The Bảo Đại Solution and the Outbreak of the Cold War in Southeast Asia', in *Connecting Histories*, pp. 15-38. Lawrence, *Assuming the Burden: Europe and the American Commitment to War in Vietnam* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2007). Anthony Short, *The Origins of the Vietnam War* (London, UK: Routledge, 2014), pp. 78-79. Short, 'France and Vietnam: The Inevitable War', in Phil Melling & John Roper, eds., *America, France, and Vietnam: Cultural History and Ideas of Conflict* (Aldershot, UK: Avebury, 1991), pp. 32-55. Statler, *Replacing France*.
136 Memorandum of Conversation, by the Officer in Charge of Philippine Affairs (Melby), 15 June 1950, FRUS.
137 Final Act and Proceedings of the Baguio Conference of 1950, p. 34. Anon, 'US Recognizes Viet Nam', *New York Times*, 8 February 1950, p. 1.
138 Romulo to Acheson, 2 March 1950, Box L2 4 A: Folders 52 – 64, CRP.
139 Romulo to Quirino, 14 March 1950, ibid. Romulo to Quirino, 16 March 1950, ibid.

would continue to support him in the absence of any real alternative.[140] More interested in courting American assistance than campaigning for Vietnamese independence, Romulo side-tracked the issue.[141] No agreement could be reached and no commission was sent.

Together, these conflicts doomed Baguio from the start. Despite Manila's efforts, the conference ended with no tangible outcome other than an ambiguous declaration that the 'interests of the peoples of the region are to be the primary consideration in any attempt to solve their problems.'[142] After the summit, Romulo portrayed it as an anti-imperialist statement that showed Asia would be the master of its own destiny.[143] But as the *New York Times* concluded, the conference undoubtably failed to lay 'the groundwork for a solid East Asiatic integration or federation.'[144] The meeting received scant media exposure. What little attention it did garner focused on the lack of consensus amongst its participants and Washington's noncommittal attitude.[145] The Truman administration saw it as evidence that a regional security pact was not 'a very important subject.' This conclusion was demonstrative of Washington's ongoing inability to recognise that decolonization mattered more than the Cold War to these elites. Rather than viewing Baguio as an attempt to amplify postcolonial voices, US policymakers saw it as an inability to pick a side. As one policymaker phrased it, 'Asians are inclined by their psychology to wait and see who is winning. The bandwagon attitude will be more important than questions of ideology in determining their decisions.'[146] These conclusions reflected the Truman administration's reluctance to incorporate Asia into its global containment strategy. These policymakers wanted to take the

[140] Memorandum of Conversation, by the Officer in Charge of Philippine Affairs (Melby), 15 June 1950, FRUS.
[141] Final Act and Proceedings of the Baguio Conference of 1950, pp. 32-34.
[142] Ibid, p. 65.
[143] Address by Carlos P. Romulo, Secretary of Foreign Affairs, before the Pan Xenia Fraternity, 3 June 1950, Box 17, SLP.
[144] Anon, 'The Problem at Baguio', *New York Times*, 4 June 1950, p. 10.
[145] Ibid. Anon, 'Baguio Meeting', *Times of India*, 1 June 1950, p. 6. Durdin, 'Results Limited at Baguio Parley', p. 10.
[146] Memorandum of Conversation, by Mr. Charlton Ogburn, Policy Information Officer, Bureau of Far Eastern Affairs, 3 April 1950, FRUS, 1950, Volume VI, East Asia and the Pacific, Document 32, https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1950v06/d32 (accessed 15 October 2019).

fight to the communists. However, their unwillingness to support the Pacific Pact reflected a belief that Asians themselves were unable to shoulder the responsibility for securing a "Free World."

This evasive approach would come back to bite Washington. When North Korean aggression shattered American military non-intervention, the Truman administration began a dramatic reassessment that underlined the importance of inter-Asian security cooperation. The following year, Washington completed the ANZUS treaty with Australia and New Zealand. It organised a multilateral peace settlement to end the US occupation of Japan and signed mutual defence agreements with Tokyo and the Philippines.[147] Although eventually seeing Baguio as the 'first sign' that an 'organization in the area could perform a useful function,' American leaders continued to concentrate on their Western partners. Impeded by the strength of non-alignment, they knew 'this reluctance to become involved in the cold war [sic]' was largely responsible for Baguio's failure.[148] Instead, Washington opted for small scale multilateral engagement over a comprehensive system for defence. It would take several years, several Cold War crises, and a new Republican administration in the White House before the United States really entertained the idea of a collective defence agreement in Asia. For Philippine policymakers, the 'virtual reversal of American policy' after Korea was too little too late. As Romulo put it in 1951, 'our government foresaw and knew the measure of the danger that was coming and suggested an appropriate remedy to meet it.' Though it was 'too soon for American opinion to accept it, it was not too soon for the communist aggressors to act on it in their own interest.'[149]

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[147] Final Report of the Joint MDAP Survey Mission to Southeast Asia, 6 December 1950, FRUS, 1950, Volume VI, East Asia and the Pacific, Document 89, https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1950v06/d89 (accessed 11 October 2019). Andrew Kelly, *ANZUS and the Early Cold War: Strategy and Diplomacy Between Australia, New Zealand and the United States, 1945-1956* (Cambridge, UK: Open Book Publishers, 2018). John Swenson-Wright, *Unequal Allies?: United States Security and Alliance Policy Toward Japan, 1945-1960* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2005). Ricardo T. Jose, 'The Philippines during the Cold War: Searching for Security Guarantees and Appropriate Foreign Policies, 1946-1986', in Malcolm H. Murfett, ed., *Cold War Southeast Asia* (London, UK: Marshall Cavendish, 2012), pp. 50-80.
[148] Memorandum by the Assistant Secretary of State for European Affairs (Perkins) to the Secretary of State, 27 July 1950, FRUS, 1950, Volume VI, East Asia and the Pacific, Document 60, https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1950v06/d60 (accessed 11 October 2019).
[149] Speech on the Treaty of Mutual Defense by General Carlos P. Romulo, Secretary of Foreign Affairs, 17 October 1951, p. 4, Box CPR0012 – SD, CPRP.

The Baguio Conference taught Manila a valuable lesson about the downsides of American empire. It showed Filipino leaders that the United States would not use its power evenly across the globe and that anticommunism was not always enough to ensure American patronage. Romulo and Quirino's objective was to make Baguio a meeting place for East and West. They thought Asian leaders would 'cast the deciding vote between Freedom and Communism' and wanted them to embrace American leadership in the Cold War in order to survive.[150] More pragmatically, Manila wanted the conference to attract greater interest in regional security and lay the groundwork for a collective security agreement bolstered by American aid. Motivated by their need for strong security guarantees, Baguio was a reminder that the Truman administration had to do more to protect the Philippines. These ambitions were easy to articulate but hard to achieve. Manila was always swimming against the tide of nationalist sentiment. India's voice was louder and non-alignment made it very difficult to get Manila's message across. Washington's subdued response was the final nail in the coffin. The Truman administration was unwilling to aggravate Cold War tensions in order to satisfy Quirino's anxieties. Quite rightly, they saw the Pacific Pact as an unsound investment and knew Filipino elites had little choice but to accept their lot or risk losing American aid. Filipino leaders had already sold their sovereignty for greater security guarantees from the United States. In return, they lost the anticolonial legitimacy they needed to dictate their foreign policy on their own terms. Baguio was a symbol of that trade-off.

Baguio captures Asia in the midst of momentous transition. Moving between the disintegrating colonial order and the emerging Cold War system, Asian leaders imagined several postcolonial futures at Baguio that polarised around understandings of self-determination and security. The tension between anticommunism and anticolonialism played out in the proceedings, communicating a transitory moment in the Third World project caught between decolonization and the Cold War. Philippine leaders felt estranged from their neighbours. The Quirino

[150] Romulo, *Crusade in Asia*, p. 299.

administration looked at the Pacific Pact as a failure of the United States to embrace its role as leader of the "Free World." They criticised US inaction for giving 'encouragement to the policies of neutralism,' arguing the lack of assistance contributed to their inability to build support.[151] This frustration highlighted the relationship between empire and security that guided Philippine motivations. Like Chiang and Rhee, Philippine leaders pursued American assistance as a result of their insecurity and neocolonial relationship with Washington. United by shared histories of empire and occupation, their alliance was dictated and destroyed by their dependence on the United States. This project had important ramifications for regional order in postwar Asia. The Pacific Pact showed that neocolonial allies like the Philippines were ahead of the game when it came to globalising the Cold War. More importantly, it articulated the tension between security and self-determination that underlined the formation of the Third World. The Pakistani delegate Dr Nazir Ahmed spoke for all the Asian governments at Baguio when he identified a 'spirit of friendship and cooperation' that promised to play an important role in international affairs.[152] The question as to which direction this force would take remained unresolved.

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The Pacific Pact went out with a puff rather than a bang. South Korea and Nationalist China maintained a close relationship and continued to promote an anticommunist alliance. Whilst a pact never materialised, Rhee and Chiang worked hard to underwrite their security with American support. They followed in the Philippines' footsteps by signing mutual defence agreements with Washington in 1953 and 1954 respectively.[153] Quirino did his best to repair the damage. The Philippines were a forceful advocate for intervention in Korea, eventually becoming the first Asian country to send combat forces in the UN-mandated "police-action."[154] Meanwhile, Manila's refusal

[151] Speech on the Treaty of Mutual Defense by General Carlos P. Romulo, 17 October 1951, p. 4.
[152] Final Act and Proceedings of the Baguio Conference of 1950, p. 29.
[153] Park, 'Frustrated Alignment', pp. 234-236.
[154] Ben Cal, 'SoKor Thanks Anew PH [sic] Military Assistance in Korean War', *Philippine News Agency*, 18 October 2019, available online: https://www.pna.gov.ph/articles/1083430 (accessed 20 October 2020). Paul M. Edwards,

to recognise Communist China lent Chiang a modicum of legitimacy. Along with South Korea, the Philippines moved its diplomatic offices to Taipei after Chiang's evacuation. Philippine diplomats repeatedly opposed proposals to grant Beijing a seat in the UN at the expense of the Nationalist government.[155] These concessions reflected Manila's enduring commitment to anticommunism. Although stunted by Indian non-alignment and American indifference, Philippine leaders never really stopped pursuing the vision of regional order outlined by Quirino. As the next chapter demonstrates, Filipino leaders frequently reminded American officials about the cost of their inaction during the darkest days of the Korean War. Baguio helped lay the groundwork for later successes such as the 1951 Mutual Defense Agreement and the creation of the Southeast Asia Treaty Organization.[156]

The Pacific Pact's relegation to the annals of Cold War history belies a longer and more complicated genealogy of collective security. The proposal undoubtedly failed to unite Asia into a system for common defence. Yet whilst its justification was framed in the context of the Cold War, its motivations were based on older insecurities that resonated far beyond the Asian leaders that pursued the proposal. As part of the wider history of postcolonial internationalism, the pact catalysed a larger debate over what security meant for decolonizing states during the Cold War. Its significance stems from its failure, revealing the burgeoning strength of non-alignment and the complicated state of the Cold War in Asia prior to Korea. This iconoclastic attempt to reorder the region sat on the precipice between decolonization and the emergence of a global Cold War. It showed how neocolonial allies like the Philippines utilised containment to pursue their foreign policy objectives and better position themselves within the postwar American empire.

United Nations Participants in the Korean War: The Contributions of 45 Member Countries (Jefferson, NC: McFarland & Company, 2013), pp. 101-104.

[155] Memorandum by Delfin R. Garcia, Second Secretary and Consul at Taipei, to Secretary of Foreign Affairs Carlos P. Romulo on the subject of present Philippine-Chinese relations, 21 September 1950, Box L2 4 A: Folders 52 – 64, CRP.

[156] The Ambassador in the Philippines (Cowen) to the Secretary of State, 17 July 1951, FRUS, 1951, Volume VI, Asia and the Pacific, Part 1, Document 85, https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1951v06p1/d85 (accessed 9 January 2020).

How should historians judge the Pacific Pact? Was it entirely a failure? What can it tell scholars about the complicated nature of decolonization and the contested history of the Third World? In his pathfinding work on US-Philippine relations, Nick Cullather briefly derides the proposal as an 'inept and self-glorifying' attempt to generate more aid.[157] Cindy Ewing's more nuanced treatment argues the initiative 'revealed the Philippines' abiding and competing ambition to mediate between the East and the West.'[158] There is truth in both statements. Quirino and his administration engaged with the Pacific Pact as a way of getting more American support. Their efforts were unsuccessful. But they were able to focus the relationship between decolonization and security within Washington's developing understanding of containment. Communist advances persuaded Filipino leaders that collective security was essential to their survival. Criticising a lacklustre American policy that hesitated over cooperating with Asian elites, the Pacific Pact indicated how neocolonial allies informed and interrupted the formation of the Third World. Often forgotten, its promotion portrayed a different vision of regional order that combined the older battle against colonialism with the modern battle against communism.

[157] Cullather, *Illusions of Influence*, p. 79.
[158] Ewing, "With a Minimum of Bitterness', p. 8.

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Chapter Three

Putting the "Free" into "Free World": Redrawing the Cold War Cartography after Korea, 1950-1953

'The Asian peoples will not fight for the vague concept of a "free world"; they will fight for the free world only if they have a stake in freedom, being themselves free.'[1]

Carlos P. Romulo

'It would impair faith in the United Nations if we were even to appear to authorize the unification of Korea by the use of force.'[2] This charge of the Indian Representative to the UN Sir Benegal Rau echoed across the General Assembly in New York as countries gathered to debate the Korean War. By October 1950, General MacArthur had driven the North Korean army back beyond the 38th parallel. The question was what to do next. The United States wanted to push further.[3] India urged restraint. Although they accepted the Security Council resolution to intervene, Rau and his government balked at Washington's willingness to unify the peninsula by force. They knew UN advances would push Communist China to interfere and saw further fighting as a dangerous intensification of the Cold War that ran counter to their objectives of demilitarization, unification, and rehabilitation that involved both sides. New Delhi's powerful voice at the UN and Nehru's prestige as a 'moral authority' in Asia made India a persistent nuisance during Washington's bid for international legitimacy in Korea. Nehru echoed other Third World leaders when he insisted that to 'think of the military issue only is to misunderstand the problem."[4] Korea was a warning about the dangers of Cold War militarism and the escalation of ideological tension.

[1] Speech by Carlos Romulo entitled 'Understanding Asia', 24 September 1952, p. 52.
[2] Quoted in A.M. Rosenthal, 'Voices Case in UN', *New York Times*, 4 October 1950, p. 1.
[3] Bruce Cumings, *The Korean War: A History* (New York, NY: Modern Library, 2010). William Stueck, ed., *The Korean War in World History* (Lexington, KY: University Press of Kentucky, 2004).
[4] Robert Barnes, 'Between the Blocs: India, the United Nations, and Ending the Korean War', *Journal of Korean Studies*, vol. 18, no. 2 (fall 2013), pp. 263-286. Nehru, 'Cable to V.K. Krishna Menon', 28 September 1950, *SWJN*, Second Series, vol. 15, October 1950 – February 1951, Part 2, pp. 403-404. Thomas J. Hamilton, 'India Proclaims Her Role as Spokesman for Asians', *New York Times*, 4 October 1953, p. 5. Quoted in Robert Trumbull, 'Nehru Disapproves UN Police Force', *New York Times*, 17 October 1950, p.1.

India's pleas went unheard. UN forces crossed the border on 8 October and routed the North Korean army until Communist China intervened. The subsequent stalemate and protracted peace talks are remembered as a catastrophic escalation of the Cold War that doomed the peninsula to an unstable détente.[5] But that is not how everyone saw it. Non-aligned leaders lauded Nehru's approach to Korea as a vital attempt to keep the Cold War out of the "Third World." Yet for neocolonial American allies like the Philippines, this was precisely the problem. As the Philippine Representative to the UN Carlos Romulo put it, 'India, a vast country which both sides in the Cold War are trying to court, has the means and the potential to enable it to stand apart from the conflict.'[6] The Philippines did not. Facing economic stagnation and a communist rebellion by the Hukbalahap, the Quirino administration looked at Korea as a 'sound investment in our own national security.'[7] This meant capitalising on Korea as a way of consolidating their neocolonial alliance with Washington and bringing the Philippines further into the Cold War cartography of a "Free World." By intervening, they aimed to combine their security priorities with Washington's containment strategy and demonstrate the importance of postcolonial allies in the fight for liberal capitalist democracy in Asia. Treaties like the 1951 Mutual Defense Treaty (MDT) were bargaining chips in this process and were used to position the Philippines under the umbrella of American imperial power. In the words of the US ambassador to the Soviet Union Alan Kirk, 'the free world, united as it never has been before on any important issue, is achieving a moral and physical cohesion' because of Korea.[8] This was the Philippines chance to be part of it.

Since William Stueck's *The Korean War: An International History*, scholarship on the conflict has often emphasised how right-leaning Asian allies used it to develop and maintain a client-patron relationship with the United States. Historians have pointed to Japan's postwar reintegration,

[5] Westad, *The Cold War*, pp. 159-182. Heonik Kwon, *After the Korean War: An Intimate History* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2020).
[6] Barnes, 'Between the Blocs', pp. 263-286. Commencement address by Romulo before the graduating classes of the University of the Far East, 28 April 1951, p. 4.
[7] Romulo, speech entitled 'Korea and Our Foreign Policy', 20 October 1951, Box CPR0012 – SD, CPRP.
[8] The Ambassador in the Soviet Union (Kirk) to the Secretary of State, 29 July 1950, FRUS, 1950, Volume VII, Korea, Document 372, https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1950v07/d372 (accessed 14 January 2022).

Rhee's rehabilitation of Korea, or Chiang Kai-shek's control of Taiwan as examples where Asian allies exerted their influence by using the war to demonstrate the cost of American inaction.[9] Yet, there are few studies on the Philippines' role in Korea. Those that do address the islands offer little explanation as to why this peripheral ally played such a proactive role other than it 'benefited their domestic priorities.'[10] Whilst this is true of the Philippines as it is of other American allies, it does not capture the nuances of their position. Filipino elites saw much of their struggle in Korea. Both countries suffered under Japanese imperialism, both were occupied and allied with the United States, and both faced communist challenges that were insurmountable without American assistance. Like Korean leaders, the Quirino administration felt the war was 'a struggle between Koreans' confronting the legacies of colonialism and foreign intervention. Yet as Romulo put it, 'beyond the battle for Korea lies the far more crucial battle for the faith of the Asian peoples.'[11] They realised that other Asian nations were watching the United States to see how they would deal with questions of self-determination and wanted to ensure that Washington would prioritise more than just combatting communism. What is missing from this historiography is an exploration of why Asian allies like the Philippines looked at Korea as a postcolonial moment they wanted to be a part of. A robust analysis would move beyond the traditional East/West nexus to explore how the war helped shift the relationship between the "free" North and the decolonizing South.

A country-specific focus is significant as it sheds light on an overlooked actor. However, it is also useful for understanding how Philippine intervention helped contribute to a wider strategic reorganisation in Washington; one that recognised postcolonial allies as valuable members

[9] Stueck, *The Korean War: An International History*. Jennifer M. Miller, *Cold War Democracy: The United States and Japan* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2019). Aaron Forsberg, *America and the Japanese Miracle: The Cold War Context of Japan's Postwar Economic Revival, 1950-1960* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2003). Brazinsky, *Nation Building in South Korea*. Hsiao-ting Lin, *Taiwan, the United States, and the Hidden History of the Cold War in Asia: Divided Allies* (London, UK: Routledge, 2022). Lin, *Accidental State*.

[10] Lilly Ann Polo, *A Cold War Alliance: Philippine-South Korean Relations, 1948-1971* (Quezon City, Philippines, University of the Philippines – Diliman Asian Center, 1985). Neville Manaois, 'Philippine Participation in the Korean War', *Revisiting the Philippines in the Korean War 70th Anniversary*, 10 December 2020, online. Stueck, *The Korean War: An International History*, pp. 72-73. Stueck, *The Korean War in World History*, pp. 166-167.

[11] Carlos P. Romulo, 'Statements by Ambassador Romulo', 25 September 1950, in anon, ed., *Philippine Department of Foreign Affairs Review*, vol. 1, no. 8 (February 1951), p. 147.

of the "Free World." Since the "international" turn in US foreign relations, scholars have pushed beyond binary understandings of East vs. West to explore how American interventions into conflicts like Korea helped solidify the Global South into a political bloc.[12] Whilst this scholarship should be applauded for illuminating how the Cold War was a global contest, it does have flaws. In their focus on Western actors and archives, studies of American interventions in the Third World have adopted a perception of one-way streets, as if local populations did not have their own motivations for staying within, between, or outside the "Free World" orbit. Neocolonial allies like the Philippines created their own understandings of the "Free World" that organised the cartography of the Cold War in competing ways. Interrogating this narrative reveals the interrelationship between the Cold War, decolonization, and the formation of a postwar American empire. It shows how the "Free World" was remoulded from the periphery by postcolonial partners like the Philippines and demonstrates how local concerns about decolonization and self-determination helped shape American imperial power in postwar Asia.

This chapter frames the Korean War as a transformative moment in American perceptions of the "Free World" that the Philippines looked to exploit. In doing so, it makes interventions in the international history of the Korean War as well as the history of American empire and the political history of the Third World. American policymakers faced Asia with renewed determination after Korea. Following the invasion, they increased aid to the Philippines, Taiwan, and Indochina in an effort to prop up friendly anticommunist allies. They accelerated work on a Japanese peace treaty and expanded their security commitments through the MDT and ANZUS Treaty with Australia and New Zealand.[13] Aside from the military spending initiated by NSC-68,

[12] Robert J. McMahon, 'Toward a Pluralist Vision: The Study of American Foreign Relations as International History and National History', in Michael J. Hogan & Thomas G. Paterson, eds., *Explaining the History of American Foreign Relations*, 2nd edition (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2007). Westad, *The Global Cold War*. Westad, *The Cold War*. Parker, *Hearts, Minds, Voices*. McMahon, ed., *The Cold War in the Third World*. Hahn & Heiss, eds., *Empire and Revolution*. Zachary Karabell, *Architects of Intervention: The United States, the Third World, and the Cold War, 1946-1962* (Baton Rouge, LA: Louisiana State University Press, 1999).
[13] Anon, 'US Arms Aid Shipments Almost Doubled in Six Months Despite Demands for Korea', *New York Times*, 30 December 1950, p. 5. Miller, *Cold War Democracy*, pp. 71-154. Kelly, *ANZUS and the Early Cold War*.

the administration made more effort to capture the hearts and minds of postcolonial peoples. Facing McCarthyite hysteria at home and accusations of imperial interference abroad, Truman launched a "Campaign of Truth" that strove to show America's side of the story. This propaganda portrayed communism as a 'cloak for imperialism' that threatened Asian peoples in their search for self-determination.[14] Yet, the same problems persisted when trying to convince local populations that American motives were any less imperialistic. Washington's exclusion of regional partners from ANZUS reinforced the idea of a Western security club in the Pacific. This lack of sincerity in support for self-determination helped drive Asian criticisms of American policy in Korea.[15] NSC-68 demanded 'a rapid and sustained build-up of the political, economic, and military strength of the free world.'[16] But just exactly where was included remained open to interpretation. In the eyes of India, the "Free World" that Washington was defending referred to a Eurocentric space for those outside the shackles of colonialism. 'We can't think of Korea as a colony of the future,' argued Nehru.[17] For him, Korea was another piece on the superpower chessboard.

Constricted by their desire to contain communism and court anticolonial legitimacy, US policymakers looked at Asian participation in Korea as a necessary prerequisite that could legitimise American intervention and guard against accusations of imperialism. A UN-mandated coalition reiterated Washington's commitment to local participation and afforded Truman the authority he needed to pursue the war. His advisers were aware that 'the average Asian regards us as defenders of the status quo' and knew they needed to 'give the same kind of priority to American interests in local problems and aspirations as we do anticommunism.'[18] US policymakers looked at

[14] Parker, *Hearts, Minds, Voices*, pp. 42-64. Hart*, Empire of Ideas*, pp. 151-197. Quoted in Edward T. Folliard, 'Truman Asks Truth Campaign to Fight Soviet Propaganda', *Washington Post*, 21 April 1950, p. 1.
[15] Anon, 'UN Action in Korea: Criticism in Far East', *Times of India*, 23 September 1950, p. 1. C.L. Sulzberger, 'Criticism of US Grows in Europe: Survey Shows Prestige Lost by America After Reverses in Korea', *Los Angeles Times*, 10 December 1950, p. 9. Anon, 'Egypt's Neutrality', *Times of India*, 5 August 1950, p. 6.
[16] National Security Council Report, NSC 68, 'United States Objectives and Programs for National Security', 14 April 1950.
[17] Quoted in Robert Trumbull, 'Nehru Talks of the East and the West', *New York Times*, 20 August 1950, p. 141.
[18] Leo D. Hochstetter to Thomas D. Durrance, 9 July 1952, p. 1, Box 9, Psychological Strategy Board Files [hereafter PSBF], HTL.

postcolonial allies like the Philippines as a valuable asset that needed to be nurtured if they were going to serve the "Free World." They saw the country as an 'American show window on Asia' and felt that Philippine participation in Korea could help incorporate receptive local partners and offset charges of Western domination. Put in blunt and racist terms by one policymaker, 'much of the stigma of colonialism can be removed if, where necessary, yellow men will be killed by yellow men rather than white men alone.'[19]

Could Washington's plans meet Manila's demands? Philippine understandings of the Korean War were driven more by their relationship with American empire than the Cold War. They knew their security was tied to Washington and were conscious that Korea was a double-edged sword that needed to be managed if it was to work in their favour. Romulo admitted that the MDT 'would not have been possible without the emergency goad of the Korean conflict.'[20] Yet, it also redirected attention away from the islands and enflamed the administration's overbearing focus on communism. Lost in the battle with the Soviet Union, Filipino elites worried Truman would miss the bigger picture. They knew that Asia was a 'poor runner up' to Europe for the 'concern of Americans' and felt that US policy in Korea was not necessarily designed in the 'interests of its own peoples.'[21] Caught between support for self-determination and a desire for American protection, the Philippines tried to get the best of both. The MDT integrated the country further into the American orbit and provided Manila with the security it needed to play a proactive regional role. Meanwhile, criticisms of inadequate economic aid, lacklustre military assistance, and the marginalisation of Asian voices in regional security discussions implored the United States to treat Asian allies as equal partners in the battle to defend the "Free World." This diplomacy presented Korea as an important test of America's leadership credentials. It positioned Asia as the

[19] Final Report of the Joint MDAP Survey Mission to Southeast Asia, 6 December 1950, FRUS.
[20] Romulo to Quirino, 4 September 1952, Box L2 3 C: Folders 72 – 86, CRP.
[21] Address before the National Peace Conference, New York, 19 February 1951, p. 10, Box 9, SLP.

missing link in the "Free World" and showed how this outlying neocolonial ally helped force the United States to address the issue of local participation in the Cold War.

The chapter begins by exploring how Philippine policymakers used Korea as a way of globalising their security priorities and expanding American understandings of the "Free World" to better include Asian partners. Part two explores the fissures in US-Philippine relations that damaged Manila's participation in Korea and hindered their search for security guarantees from the United States. In particular, it focuses on debates over ANZUS as well as the deterioration of Philippine stability in the face of economic mismanagement and the growing strength of the Huks. Part three examines the debate over the Japanese peace treaty and its implications for American policy in Asia. It argues that as a watershed moment in the Truman administration's response to Korea, the treaty ushered in a new era for US intervention in Asia that cemented American imperial power on the continent at the cost of their relations with neocolonial allies like the Philippines.

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If China was the flash, then Korea was the bang that ignited the Cold War in Asia. With the blessing of Soviet Premier Joseph Stalin, the North Korean leader Kim Il-sung launched a surprise attack along the 38th parallel on 25 June 1950. The American response was swift. It had to be. The South Korean state was an American creation. It was occupied by the United States during World War II. After the division of the peninsula into Soviet and American spheres, Washington ensured its survival by supervising elections and administering economic and military aid.[22] Truman denounced the invasion as an act of communist aggression. Korea was a test of American resolve. It had to be met given the domestic pressure he was under for "losing" China. He introduced a resolution at the UN that demanded an immediate withdrawal. The Soviet Union had been boycotting the Security Council since January 1950 because the United States refused to give China's seat to Mao's government. As a result, it passed unopposed. Emboldened by the

[22] Chang, 'Independence without Liberation', pp. 77-106.

international outcry, Truman introduced another motion to create an American-led military command in Korea. This UN-mandated "police action" would work with the South Korean Army and other willing nations to repel Northern aggression.[23] This time, there was hesitation amongst some members. Nehru likened it to 'converting the UN into a larger edition of the Atlantic Pact.'[24] Still, fifty-three of the fifty-nine member-states voiced their support. Sixteen sent troops to fight, although Thailand, Turkey, and the Philippines were the only Asian nations to do so.[25]

Nevertheless, the resolutions were a massive win for the Truman administration. They showed that the United States still had authority in the UN and provided the administration with the legitimacy it needed to expand the Cold War. 'In our view,' argued Ambassador Kirk, 'this firm stand [is] exactly what is necessary to serve notice to [the] Soviets that [the] Communists have gone too far.'[26] They also highlighted a bigger problem for US decision-making, one that cut to the core of Truman's ad hoc approach to regional security. Asia was a blind spot and Korea encapsulated it. The peninsula was barely mentioned in documents such as NSC/48. Most considered it strategically unimportant. In American thinking, war in Asia was not worth it. Many policymakers still saw the Cold War as a European problem. As the Pacific Pact showed, they saw no value in unifying a region with nothing in common other than underdevelopment and Western imperialism. The Truman administration wanted to 'support non-Communist forces in taking the initiative in Asia' but they were unwilling to foot the bill.[27] Their mistake was thinking that fortitude alone would be enough for Rhee and other allies to manage the competing challenges of decolonization and communist aggression. This meant policymakers were underprepared for what was waiting

[23] Westad, *The Cold War*, pp. 159-182.
[24] Quoted in Anon, 'Unrealistic Approach Towards Asia: Pandit Nehru's Criticism of Foreign Policy of Powers', *Times of India*, 17 October 1950, p. 1.
[25] Edwards, *United Nations Participants in the Korean War*.
[26] The Ambassador in the Soviet Union (Kirk) to the Secretary of State, 28 June 1950, FRUS, 1950, Volume VII, Korea, Document 131, https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1950v07/d131 (accessed 19 June 2021).
[27] Memorandum by the Executive Secretary of the National Security Council (Souers) to the National Security Council, 30 December 1949, FRUS.

for them in Korea. As Truman lazed around his Missouri home on 24 June, he had no idea that a crisis was brewing that would escalate the Cold War to even more frightening heights.[28]

To Filipino observers, war in Korea came as no surprise. Romulo predicted the conflict in 1947 whilst serving on the UN commission to reunite the peninsula. As he watched Cold War tensions increase, UN efforts faulter, and American troops withdraw, Romulo reasoned that Truman was making a mistake that would come back to bite him. 'It is an open invitation to aggression,' he insisted.[29] When war did break out, the mood in Manila was smug vindication. It was less than a month since the Pacific Pact had come crashing down at Baguio. Washington signed its death warrant by refusing to cooperate. Now, the administration was scrambling to make amends and muster up some regional support. NSC/48 was redundant within six months. John F. Melby, then chairman of the State-Defense Mutual Defense Assistance Program survey to Southeast Asia, undertook a report on the region's military capabilities at Truman's request. He acknowledged that most countries would not be able to defend themselves and urged the administration to take drastic steps to bolster their alliances. 'With the present state of the China debacle; with the events in Korea, Japan, and Formosa; with the unsettled attitude of India; and with the growing closeness of Southeast Asian countries,' argued Melby, 'I believe that some form of regional American organization in the area could perform a useful function.'[30] For Filipino leaders, it was too little too late. The United States dallied over defending the continent. Stalin sensed weakness and began probing to see where Washington would draw its flanks. 'During that tragic period of general retreat,' argued the Philippine diplomat Salvador Lopez, 'there was one little voice, the voice of my own country, which was raised in polite but vigorous disagreement.' The failure of the Pacific Pact rubbed salt in the wound. Washington's 'complete indifference'

[28] Edwards, *United Nations Participants in the Korean War*, p. 9.
[29] Carlos P. Romulo, *Forty Years: A Third World Soldier at the UN* (New York, NY: Greenwood Press, 1986), p. 103.
[30] Final Report of the Joint MDAP Survey Mission to Southeast Asia, 6 December 1950, FRUS.

meant there was no incentive amongst other Asian states to work together on mutual security.[31] Isolated from their neighbours with little to show for it, the Philippines saw Korea for what it was: an American problem.

Behind these barbed pronouncements lay a heartfelt disappointment in American leadership amongst Filipino elites. In their mind, Washington's failure to provide for Asian security gave the communists a head start. After World War II, Filipino leaders were optimistic that the United States would take the lead on regional security because of the creation of the UN, the occupation of Japan, and their commitment to Asian self-determination in the Four Freedoms and the Atlantic Charter. The hardening of Cold War tensions put paid to this vision. Unnerved by their unwillingness to act on decolonization, Philippine leaders felt the Truman administration missed the opportunity 'to provide effectively and adequately for the enduring security of mankind.' Their frosty reception to regional alliances meant Manila had to start its 'search for security all over again under conditions much less favourable than at first.'[32] The immediate postwar years were an opportunity to build bridges with decolonizing peoples and create a safety net for their independence. Washington wasted it. If the Philippines were going to help in Korea, it had to be worth their while.

Regardless of their frustrations, Quirino and his advisers recognised that Korea had implications for their security. By the summer of 1950, the Philippine economy was on its last legs. Inflation was up, growth was flatlining, and American aid was ineffective. As one American policymaker put it, the Philippines were facing 'nothing less than a financial collapse.'[33] Graft and governmental inefficiency exacerbated the problem. Quirino's election in 1949 was undemocratic and marred with violence. The 'corruption and ineptitude' in his government was well

[31] Speech by Salvador P. Lopez on the place of regional pacts in within the United Nations collective security system, 10 October 1951, p. 3, Box 9, SLP.
[32] Ibid.
[33] Memorandum for the President on critical financial problems in the Philippines, 31 August 1950, Box 163, PSF.

documented.[34] Still reeling from the wartime devastation of the economy and lacking the resources to assert his authority, Quirino relied on the patronage of wealthy landowners to keep him in power.[35] Manila's failure to improve the feudal farming practices in Central Luzon lent credence to Huk calls for revolution.[36] Huk leaders such as Luis Taruc played on Quirino's reliance on the United States as a way of bolstering their cause. He felt the government had sold the 'right of American imperialism to exploit my people' and argued that Quirino 'had not lived up to his commitments' to ameliorate the plight of the peasants.[37] The Huks were at their strongest when the Korean War broke out. They had already launched a series of raids and were planning an offensive on Manila.[38] After Korea, there was a very real chance that the Philippines could be next.

For these reasons, the Quirino administration looked at the Korean War as a blessing in disguise. The conflict confirmed to US policymakers what Manila had been saying since the Pacific Pact: the Cold War was not just a bipolar contest concentrated on Europe. It was a multipolar confrontation that required the United States to create a 'more intimate relationship' with non-white, non-European peoples whose primary concerns were decolonization and self-determination.[39] Quirino wanted to create a security relationship that was reliant on Washington and resilient to neocolonial criticism. The correlation between empire and the Cold War was obvious to him. Manila had protested Washington's earlier indifference to regional security pacts. Now, they worried Korea would embolden the Huks whilst the United States was 'looking the other way.'[40] The ongoing marginalisation of Asian partners in regional security discussions made

[34] MDAP survey mission memorandum, 29 September 1950, p. 1, Box 2, Pacific Rim, Student Research Files [hereafter SRF], HTL.
[35] Dante C. Simbulan, *The Modern Principalia: The Historical Evolution of the Philippine Ruling Oligarchy* (Quezon City, Philippines: University of the Philippines Press, 2005), pp. 160-163.
[36] Fuller, *Forcing the Pace*, pp. 259-291.
[37] Quoted in Anon, 'Huk Leader Backs Reds', *New York Times*, 7 September 1948, p. 20. Quoted in Anon, 'Taruc Defies Manila', *New York Times*, 30 August 1948, p. 8.
[38] Saulo, *Communism in the Philippines*, pp. 40-43. Anon, 'Romulo Ties Korea to Huk Raid Surge', *New York Times*, 13 September 1950, p. 18.
[39] Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern, South Asian, and African Affairs (McGhee) to the Deputy Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs (Matthews), 30 August 1950, FRUS, 1950, Volume VI, East Asia and the Pacific, Document 68, https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1950v06/d68 (accessed 4 June 2021).
[40] Salvador P. Lopez, points for Romulo to emphasize in Asia talk, 19 September 1952, pp. 2-3, Box 17, SLP.

matters worse. To Filipino leaders, the fact that Washington's first thought was to speak with Western powers like Australia was indicative of the low regard they held for Asian allies. ANZUS was 'an alliance formed on the old colonial pattern.'[41] Their commitment to the Cold War convinced them that the United States had to do more to protect their most loyal postcolonial ally. By framing Asia as a vital bulwark against communism, the Quirino administration looked to globalise their domestic security concerns and position the Philippines as a new line of defence for the "Free World." They portrayed Korea as a consequence of American indecision, aiming to ensure that Washington would not make the same mistake by failing to include its local allies. 'Asia must be made a full partner with the West, not a recipient of charity, not the backward pupil,' argued Romulo.[42] Only then could it join the fight against communism. Only then could the United States win the Cold War.

Manila's belief that Asians themselves were the only ones that could save the continent from communism led Quirino's administration to push for more equitable security guarantees from Washington. Signed in August 1951, the MDT was a mutual defence treaty that enshrined the American military obligation to protect the Philippines into law. Framed as an attempt to 'strengthen the fabric of peace in the Pacific Area,' the treaty was effectively a follow up to the Military Bases and Assistance Agreements signed by Roxas in 1947 with terms more favourable to Philippine interests.[43] These treaties provided the Philippines with military aid and assistance in return for US jurisdiction over installations such as Clark Air Base and Subic Naval Base. They did not constitute a formal defence treaty and did not require the United States to protect the Philippines.[44] The MDT was more explicit and promised to aid the islands in the event of invasion. Still in place today, the MDT is remembered as the bedrock of the US-Philippine Cold War

[41] Romulo to Acheson, 16 August 1952, p. 3, Folder 83, Box L2 3 C: Folders 72 – 86, CRP.
[42] Lopez, points for Romulo to emphasize in Asia talk, 19 September 1952, pp. 2-3.
[43] Mutual Defense Treaty Between the United States and the Republic of the Philippines, 30 August 1951.
[44] Anon, 'Military Assistance Agreement, March 21, 1947', pp. 100-103. Anon, 'Military Bases Agreement, March 14, 1947', pp. 96-100.

alliance.[45] For the Quirino administration, it was just the beginning. Filipino leaders wanted to ride along on Washington's concern for Korea and encourage an understanding of containment that prioritised reliable postcolonial allies. They knew the Philippines were helpless without American support but worried that Washington was only focused on 'maintaining a holding action in Asia while building up the defense of Western Europe.'[46] Sensing 'the political stake of the United States in the outcome of the Korean conflict,' they contended that neglecting the Philippines would damage American posture and signal to other nations that the United States did not have the courage to defend its allies. 'The old rules no longer apply, and new ways of dealing with Asia and its peoples must be fashioned before it is too late,' argued Lopez.[47] Hesitation in the Philippines could damage American policy in Korea and weaken the defensive structure of the "Free World."

By pushing for better security guarantees, Philippine policymakers wanted to demonstrate they had an important part to play in keeping the "Free World" free from communism. After concluding his presidency of the UN General Assembly in September 1950, Romulo returned to Washington as Foreign Secretary to help work out the details of the MDT. Given his reputation as the 'chief spokesman for the Philippines,' Romulo was well suited to the task. Romulo spent the majority of his time in the United States. He had served as the Philippine delegate to the UN since independence and was elected President of the General Assembly in 1949. During this period, Romulo developed a reputation as an 'important world leader' on Asian affairs.[48] Like Quirino, Romulo had a steadfast confidence in American leadership. During confrontations between the Soviet Union and the United States, Romulo sided with the latter. He was vehement

[45] Felix K. Chang, 'The US-Philippines Mutual Defense Treaty and Philippine External Defense Forces', *Analysis: Foreign Policy Research Institute*, 3 August 2021, available online: https://www.fpri.org/article/2021/08/the-u-s-philippines-mutual-defense-treaty-and-philippine-external-defense-forces/ (4 January 2022). Renato Cruz De Castro, 'Exploring the Factors Behind the Persistence of the Philippine-US Alliance: A Focus on the Changing Gist of the 1951 Philippine-US Mutual Defence Treaty (MDT)', *Australian Journal of International Affairs*, DOI: 10.1080/10357718.2022.2107171 (accessed 9 August 2022), pp. 1-18.
[46] Philippine Mission to the United Nations, Report on the MacArthur Hearings, Implications regarding Philippine Security, United States policy in Asia, and United States relations with the United Nations, 27 June 1951, Box CPR00024 – FA, CPRP.
[47] Address before the National Peace Conference, New York, 19 February 1951, p. 10.
[48] Quoted in Spencer, *Romulo: Voice of Freedom*, pp. 233-234.

in his support for action in Korea and never wavered from his belief that communism was a 'threat to Asian freedom as great as the threat of colonialism.'[49] Yet behind this anticommunism lay an enduring belief in self-determination that coloured his understanding of the Cold War. Romulo's tenure at the UN frustrated him. In discussions about Indonesia, the Middle East, or Korea, he watched time and again as "smaller nations" were side-lined in debates that would affect their future.[50] He resented the American inability to confront European colonialism and warned that 'apathy or neglect on behalf of the Western powers to legitimate aspirations toward freedom' would only give the communists ammunition.[51] This experience helped steer his understanding of Korea. He knew that anticommunism was not going to capture the hearts and minds of Asian peoples. The United States could either embrace them as equal partners or 'doom to failure any scheme of East-West cooperation.' In his mind, America had a 'great stake in Asia, and the Philippines can contribute much to its winning. We have an equally great stake in the free world of which America now stands as the leader, and you can help assure our participation in the common victory.'[52] The MDT was a chance to make a start on this initiative and show that it paid to be part of the Western orbit.

Starting in early 1951, Romulo worked with policymakers in the State and Defense departments to create a new security system for the Pacific that would better reflect the Philippine commitment to the Cold War. His argument was straightforward: winning in Korea was not enough. The United States needed to bolster its defences in Asia and integrate local partners into the "Free World." The hardest job was getting his message across. Books such as *Crusade in Asia* and *The United* used Korea as the backdrop for a globalised war against communism that required winning in Asia as much as it did in Europe.[53] He also stepped up his speaking schedule, talking

[49] Speech by Carlos P. Romulo before the commencement class of the University of the Philippines, 14 February 1950, p. 2, Box CPR0012 – SD, CPRP.
[50] Romulo, *Forty Years*, pp. 103-132.
[51] Speech by Carlos P. Romulo before the commencement class of the University of the Philippines, 14 February 1950, p. 1.
[52] Speech by Romulo on America's Stake in Asia, Associated Industries of New York State, 26 September 1952, p. 8.
[53] Romulo, *Crusade in Asia*. Carlos P. Romulo, *The United* (New York, NY: Crown Publishing, 1951).

to thousands of Americans about the need to 'see Asia through Asian eyes.'[54] Romulo reminded American officials about the cost of Philippine loyalty. It was not the first time Filipinos had answered their call to arms. 'Though our lads are serving in a harsh climate and in a strange land, the job of fighting for freedom is not a new mission for them. In Korea, as on Bataan and Leyte, they have shown their gallantry and their resolution to protect the free life.'[55] Romulo petitioned Congress to back Asian allies. He painted hostilities in Korea as 'part of a developing pattern of communist imperialism' and implored legislators not to lose Asia 'to the Free World by default.'[56] This work tried to convince the United States that the Philippines had a bigger part to play in the Cold War. He acted on American exceptionalism by suggesting the islands were a 'bridge between two worlds' that had to be protected to preserve American prestige.[57] By accentuating the propaganda value of Philippine participation in Korea, Romulo showed how a greater commitment to security at home could turn into a greater commitment to the Cold War abroad.

Washington's desire for stronger security apparatus and their need for local participation in Korea meant that American support for the MDT was practically predetermined. It was less clear what this support would cost the Philippines. American policymakers wanted to use Korea as a springboard for greater regional integration. They knew there was a 'new pressure on the United States to mend its fences in Asia' and felt that a security treaty would demonstrate their support for struggling regional allies.[58] The MDT reflected a shift in Washington's thinking that reluctantly acknowledged the importance of local partners in the Cold War. NSC-68 made it clear that the United States needed a show of offensive strength that would demonstrate the unity of the "Free World."[59] By supporting the MDT, the United States could illustrate their commitment

[54] Romulo, 'Asia Must Be Seen Through Asian Eyes', *New York Times*, 3 September 1950, p. 89.
[55] Romulo, 'The Philippines – On the Way Up', *The Rotarian*, January 1952, p. 4.
[56] Neri to Romulo, 26 March 1951, Box CPR0003 – CO, CPRP. Speech by Romulo on America's Stake in Asia, 26 September 1952, p. 2.
[57] Speech of Honorable Carlos P. Romulo, Secretary of Foreign Affairs, Before the Harvard University Alumni Association, New York, 22 June 1950, p. 14.
[58] Report by Melby on the Philippines: Liberty and Licence, 12 December 1950, p. 2, Box 7, JMP.
[59] National Security Council Report, NSC 68, 'United States Objectives and Programs for National Security', 14 April 1950.

to regional allies and guarantee Philippine participation in Korea. 'The Russians have learned the trick of using others to fight their battles. It is time that we learned the trick of at least having Asians fight Asian battles,' argued Melby.[60] The MDT was a modest price to pay for keeping the Philippines dedicated to the Cold War.

The issue was that US officials could never really decide how much dedication they wanted. Fundamentally, they did not trust their Asian partners. Chiang's capitulation in China, Rhee's autocracy in Korea, and Quirino's corruption in the Philippines convinced them there was a lack of leadership amongst their Asian friends. 'If there is one lesson to be learned from the China debacle it is that if we are confronted with an inadequate vehicle it should be discarded or immobilized in favor [sic] of a more propitious one,' argued Acheson.[61] Eurocentrism and racism compounded this distrust. The MDT stipulated that the United States would aid the Philippines in an attack, but it fell short of the promises of "instant retaliation" afforded to NATO. Policymakers felt decolonizing countries like the Philippines were 'only one generation out of the treetops.'[62] This racist attitude cast doubts over what kind of contribution they could actually make. On 10 January 1951, Truman instructed John Foster Dulles (then a consultant for the Secretary of State) to create a Japanese peace treaty and enquire about a 'mutual assistance arrangement among the Pacific island nations.' Dulles and Dean Rusk (then Assistant Secretary of State for Far Eastern Affairs) dismissed working with Asian allies 'until there arises a clearer manifestation than exists now of desire on the part of Asian or Pacific states.' Instead, they concentrated on bringing Australia and New Zealand into the equation.[63] The reintegration of Japan and the creation of ANZUS started a media storm in Asia. Nehru questioned Washington's motives, claiming 'Japan,

[60] Final Report of the Joint MDAP Survey Mission to Southeast Asia, 6 December 1950, FRUS.
[61] Draft Memorandum by the Secretary of State to the President, 20 April 1950, FRUS, 1950, Volume VI, East Asia and the Pacific, Document 816, https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1950v06/d816 (accessed 16 January 2022).
[62] Jessup to Melby, 25 August 1949, Box 6, JMP.
[63] Memorandum by the Assistant Secretary of State for Far Eastern Affairs (Rusk) to the Deputy Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs (Matthews), 9 October 1950, FRUS, 1950, Volume VI, East Asia and the Pacific, Document 75, https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1950v06/d75 (accessed 4 January 2021). Editorial Note, FRUS, 1951, Volume VI, Asia and the Pacific, Part 1, p. 137.

for all practical purposes, is being used as an American base.' He thought alliances like ANZUS and the MDT were 'unnecessary,' insisting that India was 'not interested in these pacts.'[64] This put the United States in a tough position. Without local alliances, Washington could not ensure its military predominance and operate an effective counterpoise against communism. Too many, and it risked being drawn into obligations with unpopular elites and opening itself up to charges of neocolonialism by non-aligned nations like India.

These conclusions were representative of the Truman administration's haphazard regional security policy and their inability to connect the dots between decolonization and the Cold War. The tendency to confront communism over colonialism meant Washington underestimated the damaging effect that decisions like ANZUS would have on American prestige. Truman needed Asians themselves to take the lead on regional security. His administration knew 'the tendency in the area to identify the United States with European colonial powers' presented a 'psychological obstacle' that was only getting worse.[65] Yet when it came to Asia, US policymakers were impeded by their anticommunism. Philippine participation in Korea definitely aided US posture, but it was more of a courtesy than a coalition. The creation of ANZUS showed how reluctant they were to engage with local partners. This made things difficult for Truman. Stuck between damaging accusations of Western interference and unpalatable partnerships with unreliable elites, US policymakers struggled to reconcile their Cold War objectives with the reality that faced their allies. Their failure was assuming that they could count on leaders like Quirino to toe the anticommunist line without getting anything in return. This meant the United States wasted more energy trying to protect the continent without the help of Asians themselves. Security guarantees meant nothing to the Philippines if they were not allowed to join the conversation.

[64] Nehru, 'To Thakin Nu', 19 April 1951, *SWJN*, Second Series, vol. 16, March – June 1951, Part 1, p. 457. Nehru, 'Remarks at a Press Conference', 3 November 1951, *SWJN*, Second Series, vol. 17, November 1951 – March 1952, p. 545.
[65] Progress report on the national psychological effort, 30 September 1952, Box 1, Psychological Warfare, SRF.

Filipino leaders resented the American position but recognised that it could work to their advantage. Conscious of the administration's anxieties about favouring Western partners, they argued that the Philippines needed equal treatment if Washington wanted to show it really cared about working with Asia. As Romulo argued, 'there have been no assurances or guarantees given to Asia, no Marshall Plan, no North Atlantic Pact.'[66] Romulo made his point by drawing attention to the Huks. By conflating Korea with the situation in Central Luzon, he showed that America needed to be proactive in combatting communism rather than waiting for the next crisis to arise. 'The deterrent power to forestall new Koreas must come principally from the United States, whose overall strength has become the chief shield of the free world against further violent Communist expansion.'[67] Romulo was adamant the MDT would help facilitate greater regional collaboration. Rather than the final product, the treaty was a steppingstone towards a more comprehensive security system underwritten by a reciprocal commitment to the Cold War, American leadership, and Asian self-determination. Together, the Philippines and United States could help create a new North-South partnership 'based on mutual respect and a common devotion to freedom.'[68]

Although the Philippines were successful in getting the treaty over the line, they did not get everything they wanted. Romulo's publicity attracted a fair amount of media attention. As the *San Francisco Chronicle* put it, 'almost obscured by the glare of international war in Korea, a "little" war against internal Communist aggression in the Philippines has attracted far less notice in this country than it deserves.'[69] Policymakers insisted that 'if we fall on our faces in the Philippines we might just as well turn in our suits throughout the rest of Asia.'[70] Acheson was unconvinced. His eyes were always on Europe. His advisers did not trust their Asian allies and were reluctant to draw themselves into commitments that could stretch resources away from more important theatres.

[66] Romulo to Quirino, 19 April 1951, p. 1, Box L2 4 A: Folders 52 – 64, CRP.
[67] Speech by Romulo on America's Stake in Asia, 26 September 1952, p. 5.
[68] Anon, 'Filipino Red Aims Need Study', *San Francisco Chronicle*, 25 September 1950, p. 18.
[69] Quoted in ibid.
[70] Bell to Jim, 26 April 1950, Box 7, JMP.

State Department officials saw Manila's demands for parity as 'unnecessary and graceless,' whilst military planners in the Joint Chiefs of Staff were determined not to grant the Philippines 'an inappropriate status as an equal with others in a general defense arrangement.'[71] Manila's place in the pecking order frustrated Romulo, who complained about 'the tedious intergovernmental merry-go-round that one must go through to get anything done about the Philippines.'[72] Quirino was just as unimpressed. Washington was spending millions to rehabilitate old enemies like Japan and reassure new allies like Australia. Meanwhile, their oldest Asian friend was 'left alone to face the world-wide threat of communism.'[73] To them, the shortcomings of the MDT were demonstrative of the Philippines' inferior position in American thinking.

Truman was not that thrilled either. The State Department resented the negotiations that accompanied Manila's commitment to the Cold War. As Acheson put it, 'if we now make specific in additional agreement mutual security pledges, what assurance do we have that Phil Govt will adopt responsible attitude toward Jap peace treaty?'[74] Acheson's mistake was obvious, even if he did not grasp it. In their attempts to provide for Asian security, US policymakers weakened their position by supporting the Philippines. The MDT had no propaganda value because of the islands' reputation as an American neocolony. ANZUS and the Japanese peace treaty alienated Filipino elites and made the United States more vulnerable to criticisms of imperialism. This frustrated US officials, who complained their interventions seemed to 'produce the opposite results from those we intend.'[75] They put this down to bad leadership by Quirino. In reality, the biggest leadership

[71] The Secretary of State to the Secretary of Defense (Marshall), 2 August 1951, FRUS, 1951, Volume VI, Asia and the Pacific, Part 1, Document 95, https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1951v06p1/d95 (accessed 14 January 2020). Memorandum on the Substance of Discussions at a Department of State-Joint Chiefs of Staff Meeting, 11 April 1951, FRUS, Volume VI, Asia and the Pacific, Part 1, Document 66, https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1951v06p1/d66 (accessed 24 November 2021).
[72] Romulo to Roque, 7 May 1952, Box CPR0004 – CO, CPRP.
[73] Quoted in Anon, 'Quirino Appeals to US', *New York Times*, 24 March 1951, p. 5.
[74] The Secretary of State to the Embassy in the Philippines, 27 July 1951, FRUS, 1951, Volume VI, Asia and the Pacific, Part 1, Document 93, https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1951v06p1/d93 (accessed 26 April 2021).
[75] Memorandum by Mr. Charlton Ogburn to the Assistant Secretary of State for Far Eastern Affairs (Rusk), 15 January 1951, FRUS, 1951, Volume VI, Asia and the Pacific, Part 1, Document 3, https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1951v06p1/d3 (accessed 14 January 2022).

failure was their own. Manila only wanted a seat at the table, but Washington was not interested. Truman and Acheson failed to see that collective security was a two-way street and were reluctant to give the Philippines equal treatment because they saw them as proxies rather than partners of the "Free World." As a result, Washington missed the chance to make inroads towards a collective security agreement after Korea and hindered its ability to conduct the Cold War in Asia.

These discussions reflected the friction between anticommunism and anticolonialism that persevered throughout every American Cold War intervention in the Third World. The United States wanted collective security in Asia. Yet the dominant Eurocentric and racist mindset meant Washington would never grant the same kind of security privileges it gave to Western powers. For Acheson and other policymakers, Asia was a Cold War theatre rather than a participant. They recognised that they would have to defend the continent but refused to give any authority to postcolonial elites because they did not believe they were capable of contributing to the "Free World." As one adviser put it to Rusk, 'those we have lined up with us in Asia have none of the sense of being the advance guard of a great and noble cause.'[76] Truman focused on the Cold War at the expense of courting postcolonial allies, often failing to appreciate how one could affect the other. The Campaign of Truth portrayed American intervention in Korea as an attempt to protect Asia's hard-won freedoms from the 'new and insidious threat of communist imperialism.'[77] The MDT did not really address either. Truman and his administration failed to see their Cold War objectives were reliant on stronger multilateral alliances with postcolonial partners and were unwilling to lessen their reliance on Western powers for the sake of anticolonial legitimacy.

The MDT provided some solace to the Philippines, but it did nothing more than confirm what everyone already knew: the islands were an American ally that would be protected. Yet what did this protection look like in practice, and what benefits could the Philippines really derive?

[76] Ibid.
[77] Quoted in Anon, 'Counter Russian Propaganda by Campaign of Truth', *Times of India*, 21 April 1950, p. 1.

Quirino traded more sovereignty for more security and still fell short of getting what he wanted. Preoccupied with Korea and the Soviet Union, US policymakers saw the MDT as subordinate to ANZUS and Japanese reintegration.[78] Conscious that complaining could affect future aid, Quirino relented that he was not going to get the same guarantees afforded to Europe. This admission showed how much his administration relied on anticommunism to achieve their goals. By the time Washington finalised the MDT in August 1951, Quirino's defence secretary Ramon Magsaysay had succeeded in spearheading a military, economic, and social offensive against the Huks. This programme was dependent on American assistance and Quirino was reluctant to ruffle Washington's feathers when it felt like his government was making progress.[79] Manila reasoned sitting on the bench was better than not being involved and felt that 'by participating in the Korean action, the Philippines has more than earned the right' to join in regional security discussions.[80]

Unfortunately for Quirino, most observers placed no premium on the Philippines' contribution to Korea. Non-aligned leaders agreed with Nehru when he suggested pacts 'would not lead to peace.'[81] Even European powers like Britain felt the 'special relationship of the Philippines to the United States' would harm rather than help attract other Asian states. [82] This lack of legitimacy was a longstanding issue for the Philippines that continued to present challenges for Manila's prestige. As the Korean War dragged into a stalemate, disagreements over ANZUS, Japan, and the viability of Quirino's leadership continued to get in the way of Manila's search for stronger security assurances from the United States. These fissures had dramatic repercussions for American posture in Asia, contributing to a rapid decline in US-Philippine relations that threatened to fracture America's Cold War alliances and leave the Philippines diplomatically adrift.

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[78] Memorandum on the Substance of Discussions at a Department of State-Joint Chiefs of Staff Meeting, 25 July 1951, FRUS, 1951, Volume VI, Asia and the Pacific, Part 1, Document 91, https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1951v06p1/d91 (accessed 16 January 2021).
[79] Saulo, *Communism in the Philippines*, pp. 44-48. Cullather, *Illusions of Influence*, pp. 96-122.
[80] Questions for General Romulo, undated, Box CPR0027 – IN, CPRP.
[81] Anon, 'US Proposal Will Lead to Intensification of Conflict', *Times of India*, 25 January 1951, p. 7.
[82] Memorandum of Conversation, by the Deputy to the Consultant (Allison), 5 April 1951, FRUS, 1951, Volume VI, Asia and the Pacific, Part 1, Document 62, https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1951v06p1/d62 (accessed 13 June 2021).

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On 30 August 1951, Quirino, Romulo, and a host of other dignitaries gathered at the Departmental Auditorium in Washington to announce the completion of the MDT. The meeting was the first stop in a whirlwind week of diplomatic activity that culminated in the signing of the ANZUS agreement and the completion of the Japanese peace treaty in San Francisco. 'We have witnessed today,' remarked Quirino, 'an act that may be described as the end of the beginning.' Quirino framed the MDT as the 'first milestone' in a new security system that promised to protect Asian independence against communism. The MDT gave the Philippines the security guarantees it needed to take its rightful place as a fully-fledged member of the "Free World." According to Romulo, the Philippines had 'proved not only their right to freedom but also their willingness and capacity to defend it.' The MDT was the 'bold beginning' of a more mutually beneficial relationship between the "Free" North and the decolonizing South.[83]

The conclusion of the MDT signaled a new phase in US Cold War strategy that recognised how valuable regional alliances could be in containing communism. The Truman administration felt it could no longer bear the weight of "Free World" security. His advisers knew American intervention suffered from a lack of local support that widened their divide with decolonizing nations and undermined Cold War propaganda about championing self-determination. As one policymaker put it, 'we are inclined to overplay our hand on the rivalry between Washington and the Kremlin, which places the so-called neutrals in an unwarranted bargaining position.'[84] Korea forced an indecisive Truman administration to take the lead on regional security. Conscious of Asian nationalism and the growing strength of non-alignment, they knew allies like Quirino were the only leaders they could count on to carry the anticommunist message. Their acceptance reflected the limited options that Washington had at its disposal. Ostracized from prevailing ideas

[83] Statements on the signing of the US-Philippine Mutual Defense Treaty, 30 August 1951, Box 2, Pacific Rim, SRF.
[84] Leo D. Hochstetter to Thomas D. Durrance, 9 July 1952, p. 1.

about nationalism and non-alignment in Asia, the United States relied on the Philippines as a conduit for American policy. As one policymaker put it, 'Asia watches American activities in the Philippines as an index of what can be expected of our activities elsewhere.'[85] They knew failing to keep the islands afloat would signal to other Asian nations that the United States could not even defend its closest allies. This put Truman in an impossible position. If they did work with Quirino, they risked getting into bed with an unpopular autocrat that embarrassed them on the international stage. If they did not, they jeopardised Philippine security and created a political vacuum that could undermine American leadership.

US policymakers did not come to these conclusions lightly. The timeline between Korea and the San Francisco Treaty confirmed that the United States was on the back foot in Asia. The power of non-alignment and communist gains in China, Indochina, and Korea painted American efforts in a bad light. 'By making the anti-Communist cause in the Far East our cause,' argued one policymaker, 'by demonstrating so plainly that our policies in the Far East are based upon a containment of Communism, we have encouraged the Asians in their present maddening misconceptions as to the nature of the Cold War.' This idea that Asians were responsible for misunderstanding US objectives was an oversight in American thinking that failed to recognise the limits of anticommunism's appeal to postcolonial elites. US policymakers knew that nationalism meant more than the Cold War but did nothing to remedy the situation. To them, 'the cause of the free world in Asia has become not an Asian cause… but an American cause in which we are pleading for adherents and turning ourselves inside out to keep afloat those we have.'[86] Yet it was their reluctance to make concessions that kept these partners at arm's length. The Truman administration tried to use Korea as a catalyst for cooperation amongst Pacific powers. It ended up alienating allies like the Philippines and advertising the divisions within the "Free World" orbit.

[85] MDAP survey mission memorandum, 29 September 1950, p. 1.
[86] Memorandum by Mr. Charlton Ogburn to the Assistant Secretary of State for Far Eastern Affairs (Rusk), 15 January 1951, FRUS.

Washington's concerns started in Manila. Riddled with corruption, challenged by the Huks, and facing chronic underdevelopment thanks to a reliance on American markets, the security that Quirino had created relied entirely on the patronage of the United States. Commentators in India looked at the Philippine-American alliance as 'a dangerously one-sided partnership.' Communist movements agreed with Huk comrades when they suggested 'the government of the Philippines has sold our sovereignty so that they can sleep safer at night.'[87] These criticisms piled pressure on Quirino. His main Nacionalista rival Claro M. Recto accused the administration of pursuing a 'mendicant foreign policy' that 'has led one half of the world not to recognize the reality of Philippine independence.' He felt Manila's reliance on Washington was akin to 'a banana republic' and questioned why the administration continued 'parroting the slogans and mimicking the gestures of American policy' with nothing to show in return.[88]

Like his predecessor, Quirino relied on American aid and wealthy landowners to stay in power. These interests did not always correlate. The United States wanted economic reform in the Philippines that made token concessions to peasants in Central Luzon. The 1950 Quirino-Foster agreement forced Manila to adopt minimum wage legislation. It also created a commission that would oversee American aid. This was a headache for Quirino because his power relied on keeping landowners happy. His unwillingness to implement the terms created tensions with American policymakers, who frequently complained that he was 'near impossible to work with.'[89] They saw Quirino as hopelessly incompetent and felt 'too many key Filipino officials do not understand what is happening in their country.'[90] Quirino's unpopularity presented challenges for the Philippines. Alienated from his Third World neighbours and unable to appease his political base, Quirino lashed out over issues like ANZUS at a time when his administration was struggling to get Truman's attention. Caught between appeasing his biggest sponsor and upsetting his domestic

[87] Quoted in Romulo speech on Philippine place in Pacific security, undated, p. 4.
[88] Quoted in Romulo to Quirino, 19 April 1951, p. 1.
[89] Schaetzel to Philipps, 11 September 1951, Box 21, PSBF.
[90] Report by Melby on the Philippines: Liberty and Licence, 12 December 1950, p. 12.

interests, Quirino was backed into a corner after Korea. His popularity was at an all-time low and he was in danger of turning the Philippines into a "Free World" pariah.

In fairness to Quirino, some of these problems were out of his control. Korea provided the impetus, but it was no secret that Australia and New Zealand had been pushing for closer relations with Washington since World War II.[91] Signed the day after the MDT, ANZUS was a mutual defence treaty between the United States, Australia, and New Zealand that coordinated 'their efforts for collective defense' and stipulated that an attack on one was an attack on all.[92] Almost identical to the MDT, ANZUS was a bugbear for the Quirino administration that demonstrated the tension between self-determination and Cold War confrontation that dominated US-Philippine relations. Washington wanted ANZUS because it provided another link in the Pacific "island chain" and engaged Antipodean allies that were considered easier to deal with than Asian elites.[93] Australia and New Zealand were interested because their traditional ally, the United Kingdom, was no longer the predominant power in the Pacific. They needed guarantees that the United States would defend them in the event of another war.[94] Alongside the MDT and the Japanese peace treaty, Truman hoped ANZUS could operate as more than the sum of its parts and provide stern notice that communist agitation would not be tolerated.

The Quirino administration placed a remarkable emphasis on opposing ANZUS. Like the Japanese peace treaty, Manila saw it as an attempt to marginalise Asian allies in the name of Cold War expediency. Conscious that it could draw attention away from their domestic concerns, Quirino complained that ANZUS 'was a Western solution to an Asian problem.'[95] By presenting ANZUS as a legacy of Western imperialism, Quirino pushed against Washington's Cold War mindset and focused the relationship between empire and security in American thinking. Quirino

[91] Kelly, *ANZUS and the Early Cold War*, pp. 13-27.
[92] Security Treaty between Australia, New Zealand and the United States of America [ANZUS], 1 September 1951.
[93] Kelly, *ANZUS and the Early Cold War*, pp. 51-57.
[94] Thomas K. Robb & David James Gill, 'The ANZUS Treaty during the Cold War', *Journal of Cold War Studies*, vol. 17, no. 4 (fall 2015), pp. 109-157.
[95] Speech on the problems of Pacific security, undated, Box CPR0012 – SD, CPRP.

dwelled on ANZUS' propaganda problems rather than its strategic benefits. He saw it as an 'old, unrealistic policy' that played into the hands of communist and non-aligned critics.[96] 'America must avoid the mistake of the colonial powers that, for centuries, regarded Asia merely as an appendage to subserve their selfish imperialist ambitions,' argued Romulo.[97] Failing to include Asian partners would reinforce the belief that Washington was never really interested in working with decolonizing peoples.

Quirino's opposition to ANZUS was not just philosophical. Aware that his administration was out of favour in Washington, Quirino focused primarily on keeping American attention on his domestic situation. His criticisms were more to create political credibility than provide an anticolonial stand. He thought about ANZUS in terms of how it would affect his relationship with Washington and would have almost certainly backed down had Truman included the Philippines. As Quirino put it to Romulo, 'it is imperative that we stay ahead in Washington lest we be forgotten.'[98] The Quirino administration prioritised foreign policy objectives based on how they could help at home rather than how they could improve the Philippines' stature abroad. Ironically, their interventions in ANZUS contributed to Manila's asymmetrical relationship with the United States and perpetuated the islands' reputation as an American neocolony.

The first thing Quirino did was kick up a fuss to try and get the Philippines included. He knew this would be difficult because of his unpopularity and the unwillingness of the participants to include his government. Both Australia and New Zealand were unsure about Philippine participation. Neither were receptive to Quirino's Pacific Pact and both agreed that 'a tri-partite arrangement of the United States, Australia and New Zealand seemed best.' In conversation with Dulles, the Australian Minister for Foreign Affairs Percy Spender insisted that 'talk about a white

[96] Regala to Romulo, draft of first speech, undated, Box CPR0003 – CO, CPRP.
[97] Address before the National Peace Conference, New York, 19 February 1951, p. 12.
[98] Quirino to Romulo, 14 July 1951, Box CPR0012 – SD, CPRP.

man's treaty' was 'damned nonsense.'[99] He felt there was nothing to gain from including the Philippines and worried that Manila's poor reputation would limit coordination with Washington. London agreed. Whitehall was 'unhappy to see the Philippines included' because it would give the islands an exclusive position in regional security discussions and create the impression that the United States was singling out its old colony at the expense of others.[100] These issues made Manila's crusade an uphill struggle. Quirino hoped the MDT would make the Philippines an integral player in regional security. ANZUS showed they were still on the outside looking in.

The Quirino administration focused on the colonial connotations to get round these issues. Once the news broke, Quirino summoned the US ambassador Myron Cowen to express his disapproval.[101] In correspondence with Acheson, Romulo insisted that a defence agreement 'conceived on strictly racial lines' would not achieve anything other than provoking nationalist sentiment and inciting communist criticisms. 'It is not the defense of particular countries that should be the aim of a Western Pacific collective security arrangement,' Romulo scolded, 'but rather the building of mutual confidence and common faith among all the peoples of the region.'[102] They rallied against Washington's excuses by pointing out that the Philippines had more to offer than military might. 'Military power alone cannot win victories for democracy in Asia.' The United States needed Asian nations on its side if it really wanted to win the Cold War. Unfavourable publicity about corruption was treated as a slanderous justification for keeping the Philippines in the cold. 'One begins to suspect that Americans become most vocal in denouncing the corruption of friendly governments when they are getting ready to give up such governments for lost and to wash their hands of all responsibility,' argued Romulo.[103]

[99] Memorandum by Mr. Robert A. Fearey of the Office of Northeast Asian Affairs, 16 February 1951, FRUS, 1951, Volume VI, Asia and the Pacific, Part 1, Document 51, https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1951v06p1/d51 (accessed 4 January 2022).
[100] Memorandum of Conversation, by the Deputy to the Consultant (Allison), 14 April 1951, FRUS, 1951, Volume VI, Asia and the Pacific, Part 1, Document 69, https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1951v06p1/d69 (accessed 14 June 2022).
[101] The Ambassador in the Philippines (Cowen) to the Secretary of State, 17 July 1951, FRUS.
[102] Romulo to Acheson, 16 August 1952, p. 4.
[103] Address before the National Peace Conference, New York, 19 February 1951, p. 8.

Manila's disapproval did not just stay private. In speeches, debates, and articles, Romulo and Quirino took every opportunity they could to castigate American officials for 'their old-fashioned mindset.' They contended that ANZUS was indicative of the 'recent attitude of regarding Asia as a poor relation at the banqueting table of the West' and asked 'what has the administration done, if anything at all, to counteract the revival of colonial influence in military affairs in the Far East?'[104] Romulo jumped the gun on the State Department by announcing that discussions had already begun to include the Philippines.[105] These manoeuvres tried to discredit ANZUS and show that Washington had to consider the nationalist angle in Asia as much as the Cold War. Arrangements like ANZUS would never be enough to protect the "Free World" until Asian peoples were a part of the discussion. The United States could either bring the Philippines in or risk losing one of the few postcolonial allies they could count on.

Quirino was unable to sway Washington into including the Philippines. This was down to Quirino's poor reputation and the belief amongst Western powers that Philippine participation would do more harm than good. American policymakers were sensitive to excluding Manila. They understood that ignoring Quirino would jeopardise their commitment to Asian participation in regional security conversations. Dulles himself contended that America's association with the Philippines still 'stood as a valuable symbol' of productive postcolonial relations.[106] Nervous about the proposition of a 'white man's pact,' they tried to convince their Commonwealth colleagues that including Quirino would provide a modicum of Asian participation.[107] 'We do not want the tri-partite pact, if concluded, to appear to be the final word for the security of the Pacific area,'

[104] Speech by Carlos Romulo entitled 'Understanding Asia', 24 September 1952, p. 52. Speech by Carlos Romulo speech entitled 'How We are Losing US Aid', undated, Box CPR0012 – SD, CPRP.
[105] Memorandum of Conversation, by the Deputy Director of the Office of Philippine and Southeast Asian Affairs (Melby), 2 August 1951, FRUS, 1951, Volume VI, Asia and the Pacific, Part 1, Document 94, https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1951v06p1/d94 (accessed 27 September 2021).
[106] Memorandum by Mr. Robert A. Fearey of the Office of Northeast Asian Affairs, 17 February 1951, FRUS, 1951, Volume VI, Asia and the Pacific, Part 1, Document 52, https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1951v06p1/d52 (accessed 19 September 2020).
[107] The British Embassy to the Department of State, 14 February 1951, FRUS, 1951, Volume VI, Asia and the Pacific, Part 1, Document 49, https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1951v06p1/d49 (accessed 10 February 2020).

insisted Dulles.[108] Overlooking the Philippines could give the impression that Washington would not even work with its closest Asian allies.

Dulles still chose to go ahead without the Philippines. The United States needed Australia and New Zealand on its side. Dulles and his colleagues knew neither country would be receptive to the Japanese peace treaty without stronger defensive assurances. In their thinking, Japanese rehabilitation was more important than placating Philippine pride. As one policymaker admitted, 'if there were simultaneous attacks on Japan and the Philippines, we might be unable to come to the assistance of the Philippines.[109] Racist assumptions about Asian incapacity dogged the discussions. American policymakers reminded Dulles that the 'Philippines' neurotic anxiety re [sic] security is rooted so deeply that assurances and pacts can mitigate but not eliminate it.'[110] Despite their similar military capabilities, Dulles was happy to 'make a distinction in combined planning' for Australia and New Zealand. The military establishments in each country 'objected to having to exchange military information with the Philippines' and felt their troops had 'much greater potential.'[111] Fighting the Cold War mattered more than keeping faith with nationalist sentiment. The decision to omit the Philippines demonstrated Washington's short-sightedness when it came to collective security. The Truman administration looked for global solutions to local problems and made things difficult for US policy later on. They knew the 'most powerful political force' in Asia was 'not Communism, but an intense nationalism.'[112] Yet their reluctance to address it meant

[108] Memorandum by Mr. Robert A. Fearey of the Office of Northeast Asian Affairs, 17 February 1951, FRUS.
[109] Memorandum on the Substance of Discussions at a Department of State-Joint Chiefs of Staff Meeting, 25 July 1951, FRUS.
[110] The Ambassador in the Philippines (Cowen) to the Secretary of State, 15 March 1951, FRUS, 1951, Volume VI, Asia and the Pacific, Part 1, Document 58, https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1951v06p1/d58 (accessed 16 January 2021).
[111] Memorandum by the Special Assistant to the Secretary (Battle), 10 August 1951, FRUS, 1951, Volume VI, Asia and the Pacific, Part 1, Document 104, https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1951v06p1/d104 (accessed 14 January 2021). Memorandum on the Substance of Discussions at a Department of State-Joint Chiefs of Staff Meeting, 11 April 1951, FRUS.
[112] Report to the National Security Council on a plan for national psychological warfare, 10 July 1950, Box 1, Psychological Warfare, SRF.

they continued to lose faith with Asian allies. ANZUS was an example of how the anticommunist lens in Washington made fighting the Cold War in Asia more difficult.

The creation of ANZUS was a sour note for US-Philippine relations that demonstrated the limits of Manila's ability to influence US Cold War decision making. Americans were more comfortable working with Western powers and Manila knew it. ANZUS was an admission that their security still did not figure as part of the "Free World." As Romulo put it, 'assistance should be offered on a basis of equality and mutual respect and not as a special favour of colonial imperialism.'[113] This was the price the Philippines paid for tying itself to Washington. The fact that a multilateral alliance was still inadmissible showed how far away the Philippines were from achieving their goal. This led to a situation where Manila was forced to wait for US strategy to catch up with the reality on the ground. ANZUS was a reminder that there was still a long way to go before the privileges of the "Free World" extended to all its participants.

The agreement had serious repercussions for American policy as well. Nehru characterised it as an 'attempt to reassert Western power in Asia,' whilst communist leaders derided Washington's actions as the 'latest imperialist design.'[114] These criticisms extended to the Philippines. Recto pointed out that 'Australia and New Zealand have been given treaties of alliance and mutual defense with the United States' whilst 'the Philippines have been ignored.'[115] Policymakers in Washington acknowledged that ANZUS was causing problems for American propaganda. They downplayed Quirino's criticisms with patronising suggestions that he was upset about the Japanese peace treaty and looking for 'every pretext for criticizing the US.'[116] The same could not be said for ANZUS' detractors elsewhere. For many in Asia, ANZUS was a sign that the United States was still on the side of the colonial powers. This was a bigger problem than US

[113] Romulo to Acheson, 23 August 1951, digitised copy made available to author, CRF.
[114] Quoted in Romulo speech on Philippine place in Pacific security, undated, p. 4.
[115] Quoted in The Ambassador in the Philippines (Cowen) to the Secretary of State, 17 July 1951, FRUS.
[116] Memorandum of Conversation, by the Consultant to the Secretary (Dulles), 18 July 1951, FRUS, 1951, Volume VI, Asia and the Pacific, Part 1, Document 86, https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1951v06p1/d86 (accessed 6 February 2022).

policymakers were willing to admit. It highlighted the disconnect between decolonization and the Cold War in Washington's thinking and gave non-aligned and communist propagandists the excuse they needed to attack American intervention in Korea. ANZUS showed the United States was always going to fall back on the West even when it was looking towards the East.

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ANZUS fanned the flames of discontent in Manila, but it was not the biggest roadblock in the way of collective security. Truman's system rested on a stable and strong Japan. In order to get it, he needed to end the war and turn Tokyo into a reliable, self-sufficient, and anticommunist ally. Japan figured highly in Washington's "strategic perimeter concept" because of its industrial potential, its position as an island base off mainland Asia, and the military installations under US supervision. Korea intensified this importance as the country provided a launch pad for resupplying UN forces on the peninsula.[117] Creating a lenient peace treaty therefore became a top priority. 'With great difficulty we checked Japan when China and Russia were our allies. Now our only chance is to have Japan on our side,' argued one official.[118] Signed by forty-eight Allied countries on 8 September 1951 in San Francisco, the peace treaty allowed Tokyo to reassert its sovereignty under the democratic leadership of Yoshida Shigeru. It also provided for limited remilitarisation, allocated reparations, and gave Washington the legitimacy it required to continue economically aiding the country.[119] To US policymakers, this was the lynchpin of America's new regional defence system. Combined with ANZUS and the MDT, the treaty represented a crucial pillar in "Free World" security that gave the United States the tactical base it needed to project its imperial power into Asia.

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[117] Futoshi Shibayama & Ayako Kusunoki, 'The Pacific War and the Occupation of Japan, 1941–52', in Makoto Iokibe & Tosh Minohara, eds., *The History of US-Japan Relations: From Perry to the Present* (New York, NY: Springer, 2018), pp. 105-125. Takuya Sasaki & Hiroshi Nakanishi, 'The 1950s: Pax Americana and Japan's Postwar Resurgence', in ibid, pp. 127-148. Heer, *Mr. X and the Pacific*, pp. 50-88. Hunt & Levine, *Arc of Empire*, pp. 121-123.
[118] Memorandum by Mr. Robert A. Fearey of the Office of Northeast Asian Affairs, 14 February 1951, FRUS, 1951, Volume VI, Asia and the Pacific, Part 1, Document 50, https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1951v06p1/d50 (accessed 4 March 2021).
[119] Treaty of Peace with Japan, 8 September 1951.

The Japanese peace treaty was a major sticking point for Quirino that dovetailed with ANZUS and the MDT. Manila had complained about the dramatic reversal in American policy ever since the United States dropped its reparations claims and started pumping aid into Japan. Now, Quirino and his government worried their old enemy would jump up the 'diplomatic food chain' at the Philippines' expense.[120] The treaty included a mechanism for pursuing reparations, but it also introduced a waiver option and set limits on what could and could not be claimed. This was opposed by practically every quarter of Filipino society. The Philippines suffered more death and destruction than any other Allied nation in Asia.[121] Manila worried the Japanese would get off lightly whilst the Philippines continued to pay for the damage. As Romulo put it, 'no other objective of our foreign policy has been pursued with greater consistency and persistence than our claim for reparations from Japan.' Philippine officials resented Japan's privileged position in US strategy. They held fears about rearmament and saw the treaty as a betrayal of their wartime commitment to the United States. 'The Philippines lost a lot of blood and treasure defending US sovereignty in the last war,' argued Romulo.[122] To accept the treaty would be to accept that the Cold War mattered more than the sacrifices they made during World War II.

These conclusions led the Quirino administration to reject Washington's draft. Once Dulles relayed his plans for a non-punitive treaty in the spring of 1951, Filipino officials made it apparent that they would face stern resistance. As Romulo put it in a meeting with Melby, 'the United States could do anything it pleased in the Japanese peace treaty and it would be acceptable to the Philippines except on the question of reparations.'[123] Already under considerable domestic pressure and mindful of the public consensus on reparations, Quirino looked at the peace treaty as valuable leverage. He insisted it was written 'more in the interest of the defeated nation' and

[120] Speech by Romulo entitled 'Our Fight for Reparations', 1951, p. 26, Box CPR0012 – SD, CPRP.
[121] Immerwahr, *How to Hide an Empire*, pp. 203-212.
[122] Speech by Romulo entitled 'The Truth about Reparations', undated, Box CPR0012 – SD, CPRP.
[123] Memorandum by the Deputy Director of the Office of Philippine and Southeast Asian Affairs (Melby) to the Deputy to the Consultant (Allison), 16 March 1951, FRUS, 1951, Volume VI, Asia and the Pacific, Part 1, Document 528, https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1951v06p1/d528 (accessed 15 November 2021).

'practically side-tracks our claim for reparations.'[124] The treaty was a chance to pay the Philippines back for the price of American empire. As it stood, Manila was being short changed.

The Philippine response was not limited to stern words. The Quirino administration also resorted to more devious methods to strengthen its position. On 10 July, the Philippine Embassy in Washington leaked the draft to the press.[125] Editorials castigated the United States for 'kowtowing to an old enemy before compensating her allies.'[126] Nehru insisted signing the treaty would mean giving up on non-alignment and 'lining up with the USA in world politics.'[127] Eager to avoid alienating China or the Soviets, Nehru objected on the grounds that it unfairly infringed on Japanese sovereignty. The Soviet Union and China reiterated their demands to be included, labelling the treaty as part of 'American plans to enslave Japan.'[128] These criticisms presented a challenge to Truman's regional security vision. His administration miscalculated the strength of anti-Japanese feeling in Asia and underestimated how reparations could incite nationalist sentiment. For American policymakers, the Cold War came first. As a result, they offended postcolonial partners like the Philippines and made it harder to deal with non-aligned India.

Philippine commentators made their feelings known in equally scathing terms. Recto pointed out that the Philippines were 'confronted with the possibility that the United States will be Japan's ally, but not ours.'[129] Quirino's advisers urged him to stand up to the United States. Using India as an example, Elizalde insisted that the Philippines needed to 'balance ties with the United States' with 'moral obligations inherent in [its] position as an Oriental nation.'[130] After careful consideration, Quirino's cabinet rejected the draft on the grounds that it failed to live up

[124] Anon, 'Filipinos Burn Dulles Effigy in Protest of Jap Peace Pact', *Washington Post*, 18 July 1951, p. 6. Quoted in Anon, 'Pravda Sees Doom of Japanese Pact', *New York Times*, 17 July 1951, p. 2. Quoted in Raymond Daniell, 'British Safeguard Interest on Japan', *New York Times*, 13 July 1951, p. 5.
[125] Ito Yuko, 'Postwar US Military Policy Toward the Philippines and the "Japanese Factor," 1945-1951', in Ikehata Setsuho & Lydia N. Yu Jose, eds., *Philippines-Japan Relations* (Quezon City, Philippines: Ateneo de Manila University Press, 2003), pp. 324-325.
[126] Quoted in notes for speech by Jose P. Laurel on Mr Quirino and his Caucasian illusions, p. 9, 1951, Box 5, JLP.
[127] Nehru, 'To M.A. Rauf', 23 July 1951, *SWJN*, Second Series, vol. 16, July – October 1951, Part 2, p. 603.
[128] Anon, 'Philippines Scores Japan Pact Draft', *New York Times*, 14 July 1951, p. 3.
[129] Quoted in The Ambassador in the Philippines (Cowen) to the Secretary of State, 17 July 1951, FRUS.
[130] Elizalde to Quirino, 19 June 1951, Box 64, EQP.

to America's wartime responsibilities to rehabilitate the Philippines. Romulo declared the draft had 'filled the Filipino people with profound disillusionment and dismay.'[131] These manoeuvres were meant to highlight how hard it would be to conduct the Cold War without local consent. Philippine policymakers played on American exceptionalism by presenting their demands as a 'reasonable price for the sacrifices we made during World War II.'[132] The islands were a former American colony, devastated in defence of democracy and committed to American leadership in the Cold War. Failing to get Manila's signature would embarrass the United States and open the door for more direct criticism from non-aligned and communist opponents.

Quirino's outlook on Japan was personal and pragmatic. Like many Filipinos, Quirino distrusted the Japanese because of his experiences during World War II. He suffered first-hand the wanton cruelty and devastation that Japan brought on his people. Quirino lost eight family members during the fighting to retake Manila, including his wife and three of his five children. These experiences embedded an abiding hatred for Japanese imperialism that made him wary of bringing Tokyo into the picture.[133] Aside from his personal vendettas, Quirino recognised that the Philippines were getting a raw deal. His government was losing out on reparations, material restitution, and war damages. Given the extraordinary destruction during the occupation, he felt it was inappropriate to rehabilitate an old enemy whilst loyal allies were still struggling. Manila was at least entitled to the 'satisfaction of having a freer hand in negotiating with Japan.'[134] Quirino understood the relationship between empire and security inherent within the treaty. He knew how important it was to US Cold War strategy and saw that his signature carried weight because the Philippines took the brunt of the devastation. If Manila was willing to accept rearmament and limited reparations, then no one else could complain.

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131 Quoted in Anon, 'Philippines Scores Japan Pact Draft', p. 3.
132 Speech by Romulo entitled 'Our Fight for Reparations', 1951, pp. 17-18.
133 Immerwahr, *How to Hide an Empire*, pp. 208-210.
134 Quoted in Anon, 'Excerpts of Speeches Delivered by Delegates at the Japanese Peace Treaty Conference', *New York Times*, 8 September 1951, p. 4.

Really, this disagreement represented the trade-off between security and sovereignty that dictated Philippine foreign policy. Quirino was almost hoping the United States would not give in to his demands. That way, he could strengthen his bargaining position whilst still taking a principled stand. As he put it to Romulo, 'rightly or wrongly, Japan will be at the front of American plans.'[135] This position showed how Philippine policymakers manipulated their objectives to fit within Washington's Cold War mindset. They needed the safety net of American empire to guarantee their voice would be heard. As Romulo put it to Quirino, 'the fact of the matter is that Japan is as scared of communism as the rest of us are, and she needs American military help as much as we need hers.'[136] Quirino tried to have his cake and eat it. It did not matter whether he was arguing with American policymakers or agreeing with them. Every favour came at a price. This perpetuated a neocolonial relationship with Washington that kept the Philippines beholden to US Cold War objectives and damaged the country's reputation amongst other postcolonial states. The "illusion of influence" extended both ways. Washington thought it could make Philippine foreign policy fit a Cold War framework. Quirino thought his allegiance earnt him the right to deviate from the anticommunist line.

Nonetheless, Manila's campaign garnered strong results. The Philippines had more pulling power with the Japanese peace treaty than with ANZUS. The Quirino administration was not the only Allied government upset about American leniency. Leaders in Australia, Indonesia, Burma, and Europe all complained about the reparations issue. The Philippines were the most embarrassing because of their "special relationship" with Washington and their reputation as a Cold War ally.[137] American policymakers looked at the Philippines as a 'model of what could emerge from the colonialism of a past era.'[138] They knew failing to get Manila's signature would weaken the treaty's legitimacy and provide grounds for dismissal amongst other Asian states.

[135] Quirino to Romulo, 14 August 1951, Box CPR0012 – SD, CPRP.
[136] Romulo to Quirino, 13 September 1951, Box CPR0012 – SD, CPRP.
[137] Daniell, 'British Safeguard Interest on Japan', p. 5.
[138] Anon, 'Filipino Red Aims Need Study', p. 18.

Dulles was incensed. He negotiated the treaty and was a key proponent of a non-punitive approach. Melby and Cowen were more sympathetic due to their respective roles as ambassador and Deputy Director of the Office of Philippine and Southeast Asian Affairs. It was their suggestion to create a new defence treaty that would reaffirm Washington's commitment to Manila and go some way toward appeasing their demands for a collective security agreement.[139] No matter how 'absurd' policymakers like Acheson thought it was, the Philippines were the key to America's new security system. If they wanted to unlock it, they needed to give them something in return.[140]

Acheson and the State Department did not fully appreciate what was happening. Since World War II, American policymakers relied on economic and military might to underscore claims to global leadership. The rhetoric of the Four Freedoms and the Atlantic Charter were backed up with initiatives such as the Point Four Program that demonstrated the fruits of liberal capitalist democracy to decolonizing peoples.[141] However, as nations became independent, their leaders wanted to be more than just consumers. Postcolonial Asian elites used this new agency to their advantage. The peace treaty was an expression of that. It showed there was a limit on how much the United States could achieve without indigenous support and highlighted the shortcomings of concentrating on the Cold War instead of local concerns like nationalism. Imperial power could only get the United States so far in Asia. The Truman administration had not realised this yet. The Cold War did not mean much to the Philippines if they were not getting anything out of it.

Although the MDT went some way to satisfying Filipino demands, Quirino still refused to budge on reparations. The summer of 1951 was taken up with negotiations between Cowen and Quirino. Romulo submitted revisions that forced Japan to recognise the claims of Allied nations.

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[139] The Ambassador in the Philippines (Cowen) to the Secretary of State, 19 July 1951, FRUS, 1951, Volume VI, Asia and the Pacific, Part 1, Document 88, https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1951v06p1/d88 (accessed 16 September 2021).
[140] The Secretary of State to the Embassy in Manila, 6 July 1951, FRUS, 1951, Volume VI, Asia and the Pacific, Part 1, Document 629, https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1951v06p1/d629 (accessed 30 September 2021).
[141] Parker, *Hearts, Minds, Voices*, pp. 29-40. Raymond H. Geselbracht, *Foreign Aid and the Legacy of Harry S. Truman* (Kirksville, MO: Truman State University Press, 2015).

He tied Philippine acceptance to the MDT, insisting on 'something a little different' than ANZUS that played up the Philippines' special place in US foreign policy.[142] Eventually, the State Department yielded. Dulles agreed to recognise the Allied right to reparations in the peace treaty. He also acknowledged the 'historic relationship which brought their two peoples together' in the MDT and reaffirmed the American commitment to strengthening 'efforts for collective defense' pending 'a more comprehensive system of regional security.'[143] His acceptance demonstrated the Truman administration's increasing reliance on Cold War proxies to achieve their goals. Dulles knew the peace treaty would be toothless without Philippine support. Washington was slowly accepting that it could not pursue its objectives without acknowledging the aspirations of postcolonial elites. Dulles' decision showed how far US thinking had come since Korea. At the start of the war, his colleague had insisted that the United States 'cannot buy anti-communism' in Asia.[144] One year later, and Dulles was doing exactly that.

Quirino got what he wanted. He got a better deal on the Japanese peace treaty and garnered further security guarantees from the United States. But what did his interventions really achieve? Quirino continued to rely on neocolonial relations with Washington to dictate his priorities. He believed the United States would back him by default and saw American imperial power as a resource rather than a coercive force. This was a weakness inherent within the Filipino elite that contributed to the islands' reputation as an American client state and impeded attempts to create a more equitable security relationship with Washington. Quirino thought Manila's "special" place in American policy meant his administration would play a bigger role in 'talks affecting [the] security of our area.'[145] One look at the MDT and he would have known this was never going to happen. The State Department used Quirino's domestic insecurity to get him to relent. They made

[142] The Ambassador in the Philippines (Cowen) to the Secretary of State, 12 August 1951, FRUS, 1951, Volume VI, Asia and the Pacific, Part 1, Document 106, https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1951v06p1/d106 (accessed 24 October 2021).
[143] Mutual Defense Treaty Between the United States and the Republic of the Philippines, 30 August 1951.
[144] Economic Cooperation Administration objectives and operations in Southeast Asia, 6 August 1950, Box 2, Pacific Rim, SRF.
[145] Quirino to Romulo, 6 October 1952, Box L2 3 C: Folders 72 – 86, CRP.

it clear there was 'an interdependence between this treaty and the contemplated Japanese Peace Treaty in the sense that it is assumed that both of us will sign and ratify both treaties.'[146] The MDT was just lip service. Manila's acceptance demonstrated the drawbacks of being so closely aligned with its former colonizer. For Quirino, the Cold War only mattered when he was given a say. The peace treaty showed that American imperial power would not be used evenly to defend the "Free World" and that local agency had its limits when it came to influencing US Cold War objectives.

Dulles did not go to San Francisco unhappy. He succeeded in fashioning a new security system for the Pacific that better engaged "Free World" allies and firmed up America's defensive perimeter in Asia. However, the road to get there was much longer than he thought. Korea taught the Truman administration that it needed postcolonial allies like the Philippines to give the pretence of local participation in the Cold War. It helped globalise their security commitments and made the continent a vital "Free World" frontier. As Dulles put it, 'to realize such change will require something besides negative and purely defensive policy in Asia on the part of the leaders of the free world.'[147] In doing so, however, policymakers like Dulles actually worsened a longstanding predicament inherent in US Cold War strategy. How could the United States exert its imperial power through the sovereignty of others if it did not trust proxies like the Philippines to do the job? Quirino's outburst enraged Washington. As Dulles put it, 'we feel that we have met Phil [sic] viewpoint just as far as is possible and perhaps we have gone too far.'[148] He felt that 'rather than US having taken Phil for granted as Quirino indicated… it is apparent that Phil have taken for granted US generosity wld [sic] solve all their problems.'[149] In the end, the peace treaty confirmed that they would have to play a more proactive role in the internal affairs of client states like the Philippines. It helped justify a climate of imperial intervention that was perpetuated in

[146] Rusk to Romulo, 29 August 1951, Box CPR0003 – CO, CPRP.
[147] Statement by John Foster Dulles to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee regarding the Japanese Peace Treaty and the Security Treaties with the Philippines, with Australia and New Zealand, and Japan, 21 January 1952, Box 3, JFD-JMA Chronological Series [hereafter JFD-JMA], John Foster Dulles Papers [hereafter JDP], Dwight D. Eisenhower Presidential Library, Abilene, KS.
[148] Dulles to US Embassy in Manila, 12 September 1951, Box 1, JFD-JMA.
[149] Ibid, 17 July 1951, Box 1, JFD-JMA.

more visible Cold War theatres like Indochina.[150] Despite the rhetoric about self-determination, the United States relied on these asymmetrical alliances to keep their Cold War priorities in play. This deepened Washington's dependence on reactionary elites like Quirino and highlighted the relationship between anticommunism and autocracy inherent in the US approach to decolonization. Whether Dulles knew it or not, the biggest consequence of Korea was emboldening the belief that America had the power and resources to extend the Cold War into the most peripheral postcolonial conflicts. Elites like Quirino could join the fight or get left behind.

Manila's participation in the Japanese peace treaty was another low ebb in US-Philippine relations that derailed the country's search for security and embarrassed US Cold War posture in Asia. Nehru looked at it as a 'submission, under pressure of fear, to American policy in the Far East.'[151] Communist parties judged Quirino's decisions as indicative of his 'subservience to American imperialist aggression.'[152] Even colonial allies like Britain were starting to tell the United States how to run things in their own back yard. Diplomats in Whitehall stressed that 'Philippine ineptitude and incompetence in military matters' made it impossible to integrate them into a collective security system. They saw Quirino's break with US policy as leverage to use in debates about their own colonial possessions. As one diplomat put it, 'certain American circles and others never tire of telling us about the Americans' enlightened approach to the Philippines… recently this has failed to bear fruit.'[153] These criticisms created a disconnect between Manila and Washington that threatened Philippine security and hindered American attempts to fight the Cold War in Asia. Isolated from their neighbours and ostracized from their neocolonial sponsor, the Philippines were stuck between a rock and a hard place. Neither part of the Third World nor the "Free World," their confused position within these competing cartographies meant the Philippines

[150] Jessica M. Chapman, *Cauldron of Resistance: Ngo Dinh Diem, the United States, and 1950s Southern Vietnam* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2013). Statler, *Replacing France*.
[151] Nehru, 'To Vijayalakshmi Pandit', 6 August 1951, *SWJN*, Second Series, vol. 16, July – October 1951, Part 2, p. 613.
[152] Quoted in notes for speech by Jose P. Laurel on Mr Quirino and his Caucasian illusions, 1951, p. 16.
[153] Morley to Bevin, 14 September 1950, IOR/L/I/820.

left Korea in a weaker position than when they joined. Had Quirino gone too far this time? Would the United States still back him even if he did not serve Cold War objectives?

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As it turned out, these indiscretions were the final straw. Quirino had to go. Truman and his advisers concluded there was little value in backing him if his government was not going to toe the line on important issues like Japan. The situation in the Philippines had hardly improved. The economy was circling the drain. Quirino's steadfast refusal to reform reaffirmed the American belief that 'if the Philippine government were in fact ably led by persons of competence and integrity, that government apparently would not be in the dire straits which it now confronts.'[154] The 1953 presidential election was an opportunity to shake off the dead wood and find someone capable of turning the Philippines into the beacon of liberal democracy that the United States hoped they could be. Ramon Magsaysay's reputation as 'America's boy' helped rebuild confidence in US-Philippine relations.[155] His election was an American project and it was not long before he had to repay the favour. A new Republican administration was in the White House. President Dwight D. Eisenhower's "new look" policy promised to restore faith in American leadership all whilst protecting Washington's interests. In response to communist gains in Korea, Indochina, and elsewhere in Asia, Eisenhower asked Magsaysay to host a conference between Asian and Western powers that would form the basis of a new collective security agreement. The creation of the Southeast Asia Treaty Organization was the jewel in the crown of Manila's regional security vision. It committed the United States to collective action against communist aggression in Southeast Asia and provided the Philippines with the mouthpiece it wanted to address security concerns to Western powers. However, as the final chapter demonstrates, Philippine participation came at a price. The creation of SEATO occurred amidst an international race revolution that

[154] John D. Sumner to Cleveland and McCune on the Bell Commission Recommendations – Loans and Grants, 19 September 1950, Box 1, Pacific Rim, SRF.
[155] Nick Cullather, 'America's Boy?: Ramon Magsaysay and the Illusion of Influence', *Pacific Historical Review*, vol. 63, no. 2 (1993), pp. 332-335.

concentrated on resisting Western influence rather than engaging it. Calls for anticolonialism, antiracism, and Cold War non-alignment contrasted against Manila's steadfast commitment to the United States. The Philippines completed their transition from colony to client state during the "Bandung moment," highlighting the tricky tightrope that Manila was forced to walk between appeasing American Cold War objectives and courting anticolonial legitimacy. It was at Bandung and in discussions over SEATO that these tensions would come to a head.

The Philippines' role in Korea is often reduced to a footnote in histories of the conflict.[156] It deserves more. Manila was an important, if peripheral, player that indirectly influenced the way the United States approached communist containment in Asia. Their contribution was to help prod US policymakers towards a more comprehensive regional security system that recognised the value of postcolonial allies in the Cold War. Their efforts were successful insofar as they managed to coax further aid and assistance out of an administration who increasingly saw the islands as a liability. Philippine leaders sold collective security as a necessary part of Washington's Cold War strategy. Their participation in Korea reassured American policymakers that the Philippines were still committed to the Cold War whilst affording them more leverage in discussions about aid and assistance. In this sense, their contribution achieved what it needed to. The United States got to hold up Philippine involvement as an example of their commitment to local participation in the Cold War. The Philippines got to play an enlarged role in regional security discussions and draw themselves further under the protection of American empire. This was not how it played out. Philippine participation in Korea convinced US policymakers that the country was not living up to its expectations as a bastion of decolonization management. It furthered Manila's reputation as an American proxy and undermined attempts to build a regional defence system for the Pacific.

[156] William Stueck, *Rethinking the Korean War: A New Diplomatic and Strategic History* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2002). Stueck, ed., *The Korean War in World History*. Stueck, *The Korean War: An International History*. Cumings, *The Korean War: A History*.

The structure of this relationship highlighted the asymmetries within the "Free World" and damaged both countries in their search for Cold War security.

How should scholars evaluate the Philippines' involvement in Korea? Was it all about manipulating Washington for better security assurances? Or was their participation based on more than just self-interest? Historians of the Korean War often point out how much Asian allies got out of the conflict. For Warren Cohen, it was these elites who were the real winners because by 'professing anti-communism' they ensured that America would always come to their aid.[157] Yet, one could argue the United States gave them very little choice. The all-encompassing focus on anticommunism in Washington meant allies like the Philippines were always bound to Cold War objectives. They sympathised with anticommunism partly because failing to do so would mean the end of their monopoly over the Philippine state. This "with us or against us" attitude inherent in the logic of American Cold War strategy helped ingrain a dependent mindset amongst the Filipino elite that dictated their approach to decolonization and the Third World. Philippine participation in Korea demonstrated the shades of sovereignty that existed within the client-patron relationship. It highlighted the competing Cold War cartography between the "free" North and the decolonizing South as well as the contested ways that American and Filipino leaders envisioned their place within the imagined geography of a "Free World."

[157] Warren I. Cohen, *The Cambridge History of American Foreign Relations, Volume IV: America in the Age of Soviet Power, 1945-1991* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1996), p. 80.

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Chapter Four

'I Cannot Defy the Whole World': The Philippines, SEATO, and Confronting Afro-Asia in the Bandung Moment, 1954-1956

'Time has assuaged the bitterness which colonialism has bred among the Asian and African peoples. The Bandung Conference has shown that.'[1]

Carlos P. Romulo

On 23 April 1955, Jawaharlal Nehru stood up to address the Bandung Conference. The gathering of Afro-Asian states was in the middle of a heated discussion about peaceful coexistence in the Cold War, and Nehru was eager to outline his opposition to the recent build-up of Western security agreements in Asia. Nehru took particular issue with the Southeast Asia Treaty Organization (SEATO), a military coalition organised by the United States to fight communism in Indochina. Speaking for the 'unaligned areas,' Nehru criticised SEATO as a neocolonial project to disrupt the region's delicate equilibrium. He felt its Asian participants were subservient to anticommunism and suggested it was 'degrading and humiliating' for them to 'tag on to this kind of group.'[2] For the head of the Philippine delegation Carlos Romulo, this slight was the last straw. All of SEATO's Asian members sent delegations to Bandung – the Philippines, Thailand, and Pakistan – and as a vocal spokesman for this clique of US allies, Romulo felt compelled to tell the conference what 'the Manila Pact really is, not how it is presented to you by those who are prejudiced against it.' Non-alignment was a luxury that the Philippines could not afford. 'I cannot defy the whole world, sir, conscious of my country's limitations,' argued Romulo in response to Nehru. 'How few, indeed, are the nations here that can be like India.'[3] Unable to ignore his country's historical insecurity amid communist advances at home and abroad, Romulo defended

[1] Carlos P. Romulo, 'What the Asians Expect of Us', *New York Times*, 19 June 1955, p. SM9.
[2] Jawaharlal Nehru, 'Speech to Bandung Conference Political Committee', 23 April 1955, in G. M. Kahin, ed., *The Asian-African Conference* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1956), pp. 64-72.
[3] Carlos P. Romulo, 'The Reply of General Romulo to Prime Minister Nehru of India, before the Political Committee', 23 April 1955, in *The Meaning of Bandung*, pp. 79-91.

SEATO as a vital strategic bulwark that committed the United States to protecting Southeast Asia. He portrayed this search for Cold War security as an expression of decolonization, insisting that 'self-determination includes the right of nations to decide exclusively by themselves their ability to assume the responsibilities inherent in an independent political status.'[4] By framing their participation as an illustration of independence, Romulo recast SEATO's Asian allies not as instruments of Western imperialism but as important partners in the battle to build a "Free World." This stood in stark contrast to Nehru's image of a non-aligned and non-aggressive Asia. It depicted anticommunism and anticolonialism as mutually reinforcing objectives and projected an alternate vision of Bandung closely connected to the Cold War and American imperial power.

As archival sources become more accessible across the Global South, examining SEATO's creation and reception during the "Bandung moment" offers a novel approach for exploring how American allies like the Philippines helped shape the intellectual and political parameters of the Third World. Long considered the lynchpin of Afro-Asian solidarity, the legacies of Bandung have been heralded as a unifying event for the Third World and a disappointing crescendo to a movement rife with rivalries and inconsistencies.[5] A more rounded depiction would push against interpretations of Bandung as a moment defined by opposition to Western colonialism, instead pointing to the conference's pro-American undercurrent as illustrative of the contested meanings of Third Worldism.[6] The 'other Bandung' – as Lisandro E. Claudio has dubbed it – offered a distinctive vision for decolonization that privileged Cold War security over postcolonial autonomy. This was not an imperial script handed out by Washington. It was a normative vision for the Global South that saw communism and colonialism as natural bedfellows.[7]

[4] Romulo, 'Statement of Carlos P. Romulo to the Asian-African Conference', p. 77.
[5] For an analysis of Bandung's contested meanings, see Robert Vitalis, 'The Midnight Ride of Kwame Nkrumah and Other Fables of Bandung (Ban-doong)', *Humanity*, vol. 4, no. 2 (summer 2013), pp. 261-288.
[6] Lee, ed., *Making a World After Empire*. Thomas *The Theory and Practice of Third World Solidarity*. For a critique of this preferential analysis, see Roland Burke, "'The Compelling Dialogue of Freedom": Human Rights at the Bandung Conference', *Human Rights Quarterly*, vol. 28, no. 4 (November 2006), p. 949.
[7] Claudio, 'The Anti-Communist Third World'. Pang Yang Huei, 'The Four Faces of Bandung: Detainees, Soldiers, Revolutionaries and Statesmen', *Journal of Contemporary Asia*, vol. 39, no. 1 (2009), pp. 63-86.

There is a similar insulation in histories of SEATO. The treaty is rarely mentioned in the "new" Cold War history. Historiographically, it is depicted as an American attempt to muster "united action" on Indochina.[8] Recently, scholars such as Nabarun Roy have explored how non-aligned India helped dissuade states like Burma and Ceylon from joining its ranks.[9] Yet, SEATO's reputation as a relic of great power politics belies a more complicated history of collective security in Southeast Asia. A fuller picture should consider motivations beyond the traditional Western-centric nexus and analyse how local interests and ideas informed SEATO's creation.[10]

Engaging with a broader scholarly effort to decentre the Cold War from studies of postwar history, this analysis reframes Philippine involvement in SEATO as a product of decolonization rather than the Cold War.[11] In doing so, it makes interventions into the histories of decolonization, the global Cold War, and the political trajectory of the Global South. In a time of heightened ideological tension and nationalist aspiration, Philippine elites imagined the Third World with American power at the centre. They saw military collaboration with the West as a practical necessity, joining the United States in an unequal security partnership as part of an informal, "decolonized" American empire.[12] Philippine diplomacy showed the Eisenhower administration that it 'could scarcely afford the luxury of a choice between the interests of Europe and the

[8] Leszek Buszynski, *SEATO: The Failure of an Alliance Strategy* (Singapore: Singapore University Press, 1982). Damien Fenton, *To Cage the Red Dragon: SEATO and the Defence of Southeast Asia, 1955-1965* (Singapore: National University of Singapore Press, 2012). Roger Dingman, 'John Foster Dulles and the Creation of the Southeast Asia Treaty Organization in 1954', *The International History Review*, vol. 11, no. 3 (August 1989), pp. 409-612. Ji-Young Lee, 'Contested American Hegemony and Regional Order in Postwar Asia: The Case of Southeast Asia Treaty Organization', *International Relations of the Asia-Pacific*, vol. 19, no. 2 (May 2019), pp. 237-267.
[9] Nabarun Roy, 'Assuaging Cold War Anxieties: India and the Failure of SEATO', *Diplomacy & Statecraft*, vol. 26, no. 2 (2015), pp. 322-340. Ang Cheng Guan, *Southeast Asia's Cold War: An Interpretive History* (Honolulu, HI: University of Hawai'i Press, 2018), pp. 68-85. Michael W. Charney, 'SEATO and Burma's Civil War: The Failure of Cold War Appeal in the mid-1950s', *Asia in Global and Comparative Perspectives: Commercial, Cultural and Institutional Connectivity*, Manchester, UK, 6 March 2009.
[10] Matthew Jones, 'The Radford Bombshell: Anglo-Australian-US Relations, Nuclear Weapons and the Defence of South East Asia, 1954-57', *Journal of Strategic Studies*, vol. 27, no. 4 (2004), pp. 636-662. Panagiotis Dimitrakis, *Failed Alliances of the Cold War: Britain's Strategy and Ambitions in Asia and the Middle East* (London, UK: IB Tauris, 2011). Thomas K. Robb & David James Gill, *Divided Allies: Strategic Cooperation against the Communist Threat in the Asia-Pacific during the Early Cold War* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2019). Brian P. Farrell, 'Alphabet Soup and Nuclear War: SEATO, China, and the Cold War in Southeast Asia', in *Cold War Southeast Asia*, pp. 81-131.
[11] Connelly, 'Taking Off the Cold War Lens'. Chen, *Asia as Method*. Byrne, *Mecca of Revolution*. Kwon, *The Other Cold War*.
[12] Woods, *Freedom Incorporated*.

aspirations of Asia.'[13] It sold collective security as a two-way venture and encouraged Washington to think of SEATO as more than a mechanism for fighting communism. These interventions demonstrated how a neocolonial American ally confronted the rise of Afro-Asian internationalism at Bandung in order to chart its own course through the Cold War and towards decolonization.

Despite their positive interpretation of SEATO, many observers believed Philippine leaders were more interested in leveraging American aid than creating a safeguard for regional stability. As a former American colony and firm Cold War ally, the Philippines' very presence at Bandung was contentious. India's envoy to the Philippines Mirza Rashid Ali Baig thought Manila was 'only interested in Southeast Asia through self-preservation.' Communist China accused Romulo of countering the 'mood of anticolonialism' at Bandung to 'cover up US aggressive actions.'[14] As much as Romulo would deny it, his critics had a point. Concerned about Chinese communism and internal subversion, Philippine President Ramon Magsaysay pursued SEATO as a guarantee for American intervention in an increasingly hostile Cold War climate. Membership secured access to SEATO "entitlement aid" and gave Magsaysay a bargaining chip for negotiating sensitive political issues like US military basing.[15] President Eisenhower was happy to cooperate if it lent SEATO a modicum of legitimacy. The division of Vietnam at the Geneva Conference in 1954 rattled Washington. Secretary of State John Foster Dulles wanted SEATO to serve as a 'united front in Southeast Asia' that would 'deter Communist aspirations' and contain China.[16] Nehru's calls for peaceful coexistence and Cold War non-alignment were a persistent thorn in his side. This resistance echoed broader nationalist criticisms of Western intrusion into Asian security.

[13] USIA News Policy Note 0827-1545, 27 August 1954, Box 27, Alphabetical Subject Files containing Policy Guidance Records Series, RG 306.
[14] Address of Indian Minister Ali Baig, 31 August 1954, p. 17. Report from the Chinese Foreign Ministry, 'Attitudes of Various Countries towards the Asian-African Conference on the Eve of the Conference', 11 April 1955.
[15] Department of Foreign Affairs research paper on the Philippine experience in combatting communist subversion, 13 January 1955, pp. 1-4, Box 17, SLP. George Modelski, 'The Asian States' Participation in SEATO', in George Modelski, ed., *SEATO: Six Studies* (Melbourne, Australia: Australian National University, 1962), pp. 119-143. Cullather, *Illusions of Influence*, pp. 146-152.
[16] Memorandum of Conversation by the Officer in Charge of Philippine Affairs (Bell), 5 April 1954, FRUS, 1952-1954, Volume XII, East Asia and the Pacific, Part 1, Document 144, https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1952-54v12p1/d144 (accessed 18 July 2019).

In the Middle East, accusations of neocolonial interference from a resurgent Arab nationalism made Washington hesitant to engage with the British-sponsored Baghdad Pact.[17] By courting Asian members, the Eisenhower administration relied on friendly allies like the Philippines to help justify SEATO to a Third World audience. As the President himself argued, 'small or not,' these nations 'at least provided the semblance of Asian participation.'[18]

Philippine support for SEATO illuminates an untold story of Bandung and its political and intellectual "afterlives."[19] Scholars such as Jason Parker have taken Manila's position as an indication of Washington's ability to use Cold War proxies.[20] Alongside the Thai and Pakistani delegations, State Department officials worked closely with Romulo to build a proactive case for SEATO. Together, they undermined communist and non-aligned perspectives by arguing that a 'new empire of communism' was threatening Asia.[21] This analysis shows that Bandung was a significant challenge to SEATO that the Eisenhower administration took seriously and largely averted. However, it negates the agency of Asian partners like Romulo and fails to capture the disputed understandings of Third Worldism that developed around Bandung. As a right-leaning neocolonial American ally, the Philippines navigated a complex terrain between Cold War collaboration and conciliation with an emerging Afro-Asian bloc.[22] Romulo encapsulated this tension, having been characterised as both an American "stooge" and an 'enemy of colonialism.'[23] In truth, Romulo earnt a modest reputation as an advocate for decolonization and individual liberty

[17] Anon, '"Aggressive Grouping" in West Asia Condemned', *Times of India*, 22 November 1955, p. 7.
[18] Memorandum of Discussion at the 195th Meeting of the National Security Council, 6 May 1954, FRUS, 1952-1954, Volume XIII, Indochina, Part 2, Document 838, https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1952-54v13p2/d838 (accessed 18 July 2019).
[19] Lee, ed., *Making a World After Empire*.
[20] Parker, 'Cold War II', pp. 867-892. Parker, *Hearts, Minds, Voices*, pp. 79-91. Eric D. Pullin, 'The Bandung Conference: Ideological Conflict and the Limitations of US Propaganda', in *Neutrality and Neutralism in the Global Cold War*, pp. 52-72.
[21] Romulo, 'The Reply of General Romulo to Prime Minister Nehru of India', p. 91.
[22] In his first-hand account of Bandung, the African American author Richard Wright noted that the Philippines were in the 'awkward position of having to carry water on both shoulders, [they] would have to talk Right to keep faith with Washington and to act Left to prove that she was still free in her heart and understood the language of her disinherited Asian brothers.' Wright, *The Color Curtain: A Report on the Bandung Conference* (New York, NY: World Books, 1956), p.128.
[23] Horace R. Cayton, 'World at Large', *Pittsburgh Courier*, 30 April 1955, p. 25. Anon, 'Indonesia to abide by decision of UN', *New York Times*, 8 August 1947, p. 6.

during his presidency of the UN General Assembly and participation at anticolonial meetings such as the 1949 New Delhi Conference on Indonesia.[24] Although undoubtedly pro-American, his anticommunism was grounded by a strong belief in anticolonialism that was determined to shape US policy in the Global South. SEATO was an integral part of this ambition. Romulo's position at Bandung showed that SEATO was not bound to anticommunism, nor was it tied to the superpower imperatives that informed its establishment. Instead, Romulo portrayed Philippine engagement as part of a different Afro-Asian internationalism, one that reconciled nationalist ambition with American leadership in the hope of achieving a more assertive voice in the Cold War. 'It could be that Russia's bombs or America's bombs will determine the future shape of the world,' argued Romulo in his opening statement, 'but this by no means leaves us helpless to act in our own interest. Quite the contrary, because it is precisely in our lands, in our continents, that the most important decisions are going to be made. And it is we who will make them.'[25]

The chapter begins by examining how interlinking concerns about decolonization and security influenced Philippine understandings of SEATO. Focusing on the Pacific Charter – a document that declared SEATO's support for self-determination – it shows how Philippine elites used non-alignment and the revolutionary crisis in Indochina to portray SEATO as more than a consequence of the Cold War. Part two examines SEATO's formation at the Manila Conference. It demonstrates how the Asian delegations utilised their individual and collective agency to guarantee the charter's passage and publicise their security concerns to Western partners. Finally, part three considers SEATO's reception at Bandung. It argues that far from being performative "proxies," the Philippine delegation projected a unique vision of Afro-Asian internationalism that depicted SEATO as a testament to their independence.

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[24] Espiritu, "'To Carry Water on Both Shoulders'". Claudio, 'The Anti-Communist Third World'.
[25] Romulo, 'Statement of Carlos P. Romulo to the Asian-African Conference', p. 74.

The Southeast Asia Treaty Organization (also known as the Manila Pact) was a mutual defence agreement signed at Manila in September 1954 by the United States, Britain, France, Thailand, the Philippines, Australia, New Zealand, and Pakistan. According to its charter, SEATO's objectives were to 'resist armed attack' and 'counter subversive activities' in Southeast Asia.[26] As Romulo noted at the time, the title was a misnomer that gave communist propagandists plenty of 'additional ammunition.'[27] Of the eight countries that joined SEATO, only the Philippines and Thailand were located in Southeast Asia. The treaty also extended its provisions to Cambodia, Laos, and the Republic of Vietnam despite them not signing the agreement or attending the negotiations. It was this neocolonial interference in Indochina that drove communist criticisms and aroused suspicions from India. The Chinese leader Mao Zedong felt the US was 'bent on harming us whenever they have the opportunity to do so.' Nehru questioned why the signatories had joined together to protect those 'that will not join them.' Both agreed SEATO sabotaged the 'good atmosphere created by the Indochina settlement' and created 'new spheres of influence' that perpetuated Western colonialism.[28]

They were right. The Eisenhower administration saw SEATO as a way of legitimising further American intervention into Indochina. Washington's efforts to negotiate a favourable peace settlement at Geneva were scuppered by the French defeat at Dien Bien Phu.[29] Meanwhile, a new five-power grouping launched at Colombo between Burma, Ceylon, India, Indonesia, and Pakistan sought to demonstrate to 'the Geneva powers and the world that the only plan that would ensure peace in Asia would be the one formulated or approved by the leaders of free Asian countries.'[30] Frustrated with non-alignment and Western failures at Geneva, Dulles asked

[26] For the full treaty, see https://avalon.law.yale.edu/20th_century/usmu003.asp (accessed 14 September 2019).
[27] Romulo, *Crusade in Asia*, pp. 276-277.
[28] Anon, 'Summary of talks with Mao Tse-tung in Beijing', 19 October 1954, *SWJN*, Second Series, vol. 27, 1 October 1954 – 31 January 1955, pp. 6-11. Nehru, 'Statement at the second session of the Conference of the Prime Ministers of the five Colombo countries', 29 December 1954, ibid, pp. 114-118.
[29] Waite, *The End of the First Indochina War*, pp. 121-184.
[30] John Lionel Kotelawala, *An Asian Prime Minister's Story* (London, UK: George G. Harrap, 1966), p. 118.

Magsaysay to host a conference between Asian allies and Western powers to discuss Indochina.[31] By organising the meeting, Dulles hoped to bypass communist victories at Geneva and exert indirect American influence over a region where Washington felt it 'had little or no control.'[32]

SEATO was an American project. Yet, this focus on the United States and the Cold War obscures how local concerns about decolonization and security informed its creation.[33] Philippine leaders approached SEATO as a consequence of decolonization rather than the Cold War. Since independence, successive administrations in Manila had lobbied Washington to support a military coalition capable of underwriting the region's stability and alleviating the government's domestic security challenges.[34] The Hukbalahap were still waging a guerrilla war against the government in the rural heartlands of Central Luzon. Although Magsaysay had broken the back of the rebellion by 1954, communist rebels continued to pose a threat. In the southern islands of Mindanao and the Sulu archipelago, Philippine forces struggled to assert control over a Muslim population reluctant to accept Manila's Christian rule.[35] Postcolonial instability drove Philippine interest in SEATO. Manila wanted to develop a robust regional security apparatus that could put pressure on the West. The crisis in Indochina was an opportunity to provoke a more forceful American approach to regional security that could transform into more substantive assistance.

Although they faced different circumstances, Thailand and Pakistan shared similar security concerns to the Philippines that motivated them to join SEATO. Having never been formally colonized by a Western power, the military junta in Bangkok was cautious about joining any

[31] Romulo, *Crusade in Asia*, pp. 274-275.
[32] Memorandum of conversation between Dulles and the President, 17 August 1954, Box 1, White House Memoranda Series [hereafter WHMS], JDP.
[33] Most historical accounts of SEATO begin with the American response to Geneva. See Cohen, *The Cambridge History of American Foreign Relations*, pp. 96-97. Dingman, 'John Foster Dulles and the Creation of the South-East Asia Treaty Organization in 1954', pp. 409-512.
[34] Mabon, 'Elusive Agreements', pp. 147–177. Park, 'Frustrated Alignment', pp. 217-237.
[35] Fuller, *Forcing the Pace*, pp. 291-322. Anon, 'Magsaysay Warns of Red Danger', *South China Morning Post*, 10 April 1954, p. 20. Saulo, *Communism in the Philippines*, pp. 52-58. Anon, 'Moros Battle Filipinos', *New York Times*, 1 August 1954, p. 17. Patricio N. Abinales, *Making Mindanao: Cotabato and Davao in the Formation of the Philippine Nation-State* (Quezon City, Philippines: Ateneo de Manila University Press, 2000).

institution that could reduce the country's delicate independence.[36] By 1954, communist encroachment warranted a change of heart. Chinese communism worried Thai elites. The border with Indochina threatened the country's internal security.[37] According to the Foreign Minister Prince Wan Waithayakon, Bangkok supported SEATO to 'prevent violation of Thailand's 1000-mile border with the neighbouring states of Laos and Cambodia.'[38]

Pakistan was the real outlier, having bucked its Colombo Power allies and chased membership despite its location in South Asia. After independence from Britain in 1947, Karachi increasingly requested US assistance to offset India's economic and military predominance. The communal violence that accompanied partition soured relations with London, and the threat of regional rivals like India fostered a sense of postcolonial insecurity that demanded strong superpower alliances to help unite the country against internal ethnic, social, and territorial tensions.[39] As Prime Minister Mohammed Ali argued, 'in cooperation with other friendly and freedom-loving nations, Pakistan could make an important contribution to the strength and stability of this region.'[40] Conflict in the Middle East also made SEATO an attractive prospect. The 1954 Mutual Cooperation Agreement between Turkey and Pakistan opened up the possibility of further regional alliances with American allies like Iraq and Iran. In May, the Pakistani government cemented its US alliance by signing the Mutual Defence Assistance Agreement.[41] This decision set the stage for Pakistan's entry into SEATO, signalling Karachi's embrace of the United States and Britain's diminishing influence in South Asia.[42]

Decolonization guided these US allies towards SEATO. Each faced domestic security problems that were insurmountable without outside assistance and each had developed a robust

[36] Fineman, *A Special Relationship*, pp. 127-168.
[37] Anon, 'Premier Concerned Over Communist Threat', 1 September 1949. Anon, 'Phibun Plans Own SE Asian Block', 27 August 1949. Wongsurawat, 'From Yaowaraj to Plabplachai', pp. 165-186.
[38] Chalmers M. Roberts, 'Thailand Plans UN Action on Indochina', *Washington Post*, 26 May 1954, p. 5.
[39] McGarr, *The Cold War in South Asia*, pp. 9-25.
[40] Quoted in Anon, 'Pakistan Asks United States for Arms Aid', *Washington Post*, 23 February 1952, p. 1.
[41] Anon, 'Military Aid Pact Condemned, *Times of India*, 9 May 1954, p. 9.
[42] McMahon, *The Cold War on the Periphery*, pp. 162-175.

relationship with Washington as a benefactor for their fragile states. These leaders understood the relationship between empire and the Cold War. They viewed themselves as 'directly on the frontline between the Communist World and the Free World' and knew their security was increasingly embroiled in the struggle between the Soviet Union and the United States.[43] SEATO was a means to an end for these governments. As paid-up members of the Western orbit, they aimed to exert a larger say in regional security that could turn into greater stability at home.

The biggest challenge for the Philippines and other American allies was persuading the US to carve out a bigger security role for Asian powers alongside their traditional European partners. It was a good time to bring this issue to Eisenhower as his administration was already feeling the weight of "Free World" leadership. For Eisenhower and Dulles, SEATO's value was tied to its ability to manage the nationalist revolutions in Indochina and contain Chinese communism. In practice, this meant supporting European engagement as a safeguard against Chinese or Indian influence. Yet, Washington viewed Western failures at Geneva as symbolic of the floundering European policy in Southeast Asia. 'I can see no justification for the British undertaking a unilateral approach,' argued Charlton Ogburn (Regional Planning Adviser in the Bureau of Far Eastern Affairs). 'In the case of Indochina an irremediable disaster has resulted from our determination to conduct through the French our relations with the unhappy peoples of the Associated States.'[44] The American tendency to approach regional security through the intermediary of European powers played into the hands of communist propaganda.[45] Frustrated with American posture in Southeast Asia, congressmen such as John W. McCormick warned that communism was making headway by 'accusing the US of favouring colonialism and imperialism.'[46]

[43] Lopez to Villareal, 3 February 1955, Box 17, SLP.
[44] Memorandum by the Regional Planning Adviser in the Bureau of Far Eastern Affairs (Ogburn) to the Acting Assistant Secretary of State for Far Eastern Affairs (Drumright), 23 July 1954, FRUS, 1952-1954, Volume XII, East Asia and the Pacific, Part 1, Document 266, https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1952-54v12p1/d266 (accessed 11 September 2019).
[45] Anon, 'Peiping Attacks US Policy', *Washington Post*, 22 April 1954, p. 9. Robert Trumbull, 'Nehru Decries U S Policy on Asia and the Cold War', *New York Times*, 2 March 1954, p. 1.
[46] Quoted in Anon, 'Invite Asian leaders to Join Five-Power Talks', *Times of India*, 11 June 1954, p. 8.

Asian allies like the Philippines were alert to the heightened Cold War stakes in Southeast Asia and used Washington's increasing entanglement in Indochina to their advantage. As Magsaysay argued to Dulles, 'our first concern is, and always has been, our national security… in the Indochina crisis, however, there is an element which is of great concern to the Philippines as an Asian country. This is the political element of independence.'[47] Philippine leaders thought the crisis in Indochina proved that any collective security agreement had to include meaningful engagement with Asian partners. By meeting Cold War concerns on local terms, they focused the relationship between security and decolonization in Washington's thinking. This diplomacy sold SEATO as a necessary instrument for developing a stronger American commitment to self-determination, helping to influence Washington's understanding of regional security as more than a corollary of the Cold War.

The Philippine insistence that SEATO should support decolonization led Magsaysay to suggest the creation of a Pacific Charter in April 1954. The "Asian Atlantic Charter," as Manila dubbed it, committed SEATO to supporting 'self-determination of peoples' and independence for all nations 'whose peoples desire it.'[48] Viewed as an ironic piece of Cold War point-scoring, the charter has often been dismissed given most Western signatories were far from relinquishing their colonial possessions.[49] For the Philippines, it was a hard-won addition to the Manila Pact. Philippine elites wanted to bring their security concerns into line with Washington's focus on the Cold War. Acutely aware of Indian influence and the power of non-alignment, they pushed the Eisenhower administration to think of collective security as something greater than a protective measure against communism. 'We feel this, more than anything else, will attract many of those who are still hesitating, many of those who have a tendency to be fence sitters, many who, perhaps,

[47] Quoted in Romulo, 'The Philippines New Look: Extension of remarks by Herbert H. Lehman in the United States Senate', 23 April 1954, in United States Congress, ed., *Congressional Record: Proceedings and Debates of the United States Congress* (Washington, DC: US Government Printing Office, 1954), pp. A2293-A2995.
[48] For the text of the Pacific Charter, see https://avalon.law.yale.edu/20th_century/usmu005.asp (accessed 14 October 2019).
[49] Yates, *Understanding ASEAN's Role in Asia-Pacific Order*, pp. 59-60.

may have a tendency to be neutral,' argued Salvador Lopez.[50] Imagined as SEATO's public face in the Global South, the Pacific Charter represented the greatest challenge that the Philippines faced in fashioning a more equitable role for regional allies.

By promoting the Pacific Charter, Manila wanted to show Washington that collective security meant more than containing communism. After Magsaysay's announcement in April, Romulo embarked on a US speaking tour to help publicise the idea to American audiences. First, Romulo used contacts from his time as a journalist to organise a talk at the National Press Club in Washington, DC. In a packed room of pundits and policymakers, Romulo peddled the charter as an important statement of America's intentions towards Indochina. He argued it would show that the Eisenhower administration was 'not supporting colonialism but was for the freedom of the peoples of Asia.' Afterwards, Romulo approached friendly Congressional leaders such as Senator Edward Thye of Minnesota and Senator Herbert Lehman of New York to muster greater enthusiasm in Washington. His speech was inserted into the Congressional Record and picked up by Thye on the Senate floor.[51] Finally, Romulo took his show on the road. He spoke at town halls and college commencements across the country, portraying the Pacific Charter as the 'element which alone can give meaning to any security arrangement in Southeast Asia.'[52] Throughout the campaign, Romulo depicted SEATO as a measure of America's commitment to self-determination. He reminded Washington that a collective security agreement in Southeast Asia would be fruitless without indigenous support. 'The Asian reservoir of good will and faith in democracy,' Romulo argued, 'will not be kept filled by a show of military power… what can impress the Asian peoples is a readiness to keep in mind their point of view.'[53] By emphasising its

[50] Continuation of the verbatim proceedings of the fourth plenary session of the Manila Conference, 7 September 1954, p. 21, Box 17, SLP.
[51] Romulo, *Crusade in Asia*, pp. 274-277.
[52] Romulo, 'The Philippines New Look', p. A2995.
[53] Romulo, *Crusade in Asia*, p. 273.

value as a snub to Nehru and non-alignment, Romulo sold the charter as an indication that American interests extended beyond strategic Cold War considerations.

The Philippines ran into several roadblocks whilst cultivating a more encouraging American response to the Pacific Charter. The principal issue was Eisenhower's reluctance to find a bigger space for regional partners alongside more important European allies. Washington was mindful of Asian nationalism and agreed that communist influence needed to be resisted. Yet, US officials were cautious about engaging with local allies too closely in case they were drawn into military or economic commitments they were not willing to make. Eisenhower's "New Look" policy promised to balance the books at home whilst shrewdly projecting American influence abroad.[54] His administration was careful to avoid promising too much with SEATO. Dulles never imagined the alliance having the same capacity as NATO. As he put it, 'if the US started earmarking forces for here, there, and everywhere, it would run out of forces very rapidly.'[55] Equally damaging was the charter's potential to upset European powers. The Philippines, Thailand, and Pakistan were incapable of contributing any military clout to SEATO. Washington knew it needed European support to offset communism in Southeast Asia. Too much enthusiasm for the Pacific Charter risked disrupting the status quo and rattling colonial partners like Britain and France.

The 1954 Five Power meetings between the United States, Britain, France, Australia, and New Zealand ignited the war of words that surrounded American security strategy in Southeast Asia. The secret meetings considered plans for united action on Indochina and generated significant opposition once the news leaked in May.[56] The Thai Chargé d'Affaires in Washington, Thuaithep Devakul, judged the discussions as 'another example of the archaic idea of the white

[54] Saki Dockrill, *Eisenhower's New-Look National Security Policy, 1953-1961* (London, UK: Macmillan, 1996). Richard M. Leighton, *Strategy, Money, and the New Look, 1953-1956* (Washington, DC: Historical Office, Office of the Secretary of Defense, 2001). Robert R. Bowie & Richard H. Immerman, *Waging Peace: How Eisenhower Shaped an Enduring Cold War Strategy* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 1998). Parker, *Hearts, Minds, Voices*, pp. 65-91.
[55] Memorandum of Conversation, by the Counselor of the Department of State (MacArthur), 5 September 1954, FRUS, 1952-1954, Volume XII, East Asia and the Pacific, Part 1, Document 350, https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1952-54v12p1/d350 (accessed 15 July 2019).
[56] Dana Adams Schmidt, 'Five Power Talks is Due in US Soon', *New York Times*, 23 May 1954, p. 4.

man's burden.' He suggested that 'Thailand accepted "united action" without reservation but apparently there is some reservation regarding the Thai.'[57] Philippine diplomats were just as stern. As Dulles noted, 'we are being accused in Manila of "drawing the color line" and snubbing our close allies.'[58]

Philippine diplomacy played on the Five Power fiasco to help sell the Pacific Charter. As Magsaysay suggested to Dulles, 'what you are proposing… is not a political plan to cleave to in defiance of communism.'[59] Philippine leaders accused America of neglecting the very people that such meetings were meant to protect. Along with earlier alliances such as the 1951 ANZUS treaty, Manila used its exclusion from the Five Power meetings as further evidence of Washington's tendency to ignore Asian allies. As Romulo contended, 'the key to the salvation of Southeast Asia is not British or French cooperation but Asian cooperation… you cannot save a people from communism unless they want to be saved and they will not wish to be saved unless you give them freedom as a better alternative to communism.' Romulo portrayed the situation in Indochina as a test of America's commitment to decolonization. He insisted the Pacific Charter was an assurance that the Cold War could be carried out alongside the battle for colonial liberation. 'Arrangements for an alliance,' argued Romulo, 'will have meaning in the eyes of the peoples of Southeast Asia only after it is made clear to them that those arrangements are being made in the interests of defending the rights and freedoms of the people of Southeast Asia and not in the interests of the colonial powers.'[60] This initiative situated the Indochina crisis as a local nationalist conflict rather than an auxiliary of great power politics. More importantly, it showed US policymakers that they could not maintain the pretext of local participation without listening to their Asian allies.

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[57] Quoted in Memorandum of Conversation by the Officer in Charge of Thai and Malayan Affairs (Landon), 27 May 1954, FRUS, 1952-1954, Volume XII, East Asia and the Pacific, Part 1, Document 208, https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1952-54v12p1/d208 (accessed 9 July 2019).
[58] The Secretary of State to the Embassy in the United Kingdom, 4 June 1954, FRUS, 1952-1954, Volume XII, East Asia and the Pacific, Part 1, Document 215, https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1952-54v12p1/d215 (accessed 4 July 2019).
[59] Quoted in Romulo, *Crusade in Asia*, p. 274.
[60] Quoted in Chalmers M. Roberts, 'Romulo Suggests That US Take Lead in Framing "Atlantic Charter" for Asia', *Washington Post*, 31 May 1954, p. 9.

Manila's emphasis on decolonization, Indochina, and the challenge of non-alignment had the desired effect: it enhanced Washington's understanding of SEATO as more than a product of the Cold War. Romulo's cross-country tour incited considerable editorial attention in the United States. As the *New York Times* put it, 'we can make a defensive alliance in Southeast Asia a potent bulwark of liberty. But we must "join" rather than "lead."'[61] The charter enjoyed cross-party support in Congress, where Asia experts like Walter Judd encouraged his colleagues to support an 'authentic voice of liberty.'[62] This lobbying prompted serious reflection in the Eisenhower administration. The American Chargé in the Philippines William Lacey informed the State Department that ignoring Asian partners inevitably provided 'further evidence' of the 'US preference for white Westerners' and the 'exclusion [of] colored and Asian powers even when [the] security [of] SEA [is the] subject [of] discussion.'[63] US officials increasingly realised the value of having Asian allies in their corner. For Dulles, the damaging notion that Washington was pursuing the Cold War without local support determined the importance of meeting the Philippine position. He wanted to avoid the perception that Southeast Asia was a 'poor runner up' for American interests by demonstrating that Washington supported independence for Indochina as long as it was not in communist hands.[64] As he contended at the start of negotiations in Manila, 'we are rightly zealous against [the] communist threat. But the Western powers should be careful that their zeal does not blind them to the sensibilities of those who still associate colonialism with the West.'[65]

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The Pacific Charter was a Philippine project, and the Magsaysay administration did a lot to stress its importance onto the other delegations at Manila.[66] Although in the minority as Asian

[61] Anon, 'Partnership in Asia', *New York Times*, 8 August 1954, p. 8.
[62] Quoted in Romulo, 'The Philippines New Look', pp. A2293-A2995.
[63] Quoted in the Secretary of State to the Embassy in the United Kingdom, 4 June 1954, FRUS.
[64] Address before the National Peace Conference, New York, 19 February 1951, p. 8.
[65] Opening Ceremonies of the Manila Conference, 6 September 1954, Box 17, SLP.
[66] The ambassador in the Philippines (Spruance) to the Department of State, 22 August 1954, FRUS, 1952-1954, Volume XII, East Asia and the Pacific, Part 1, pp. 777-778.

nations, the Philippines, Thailand, and Pakistan wielded an individual and collective agency that successfully promoted their security concerns to Western partners and ensured the charter's passage. Circulated in late August, the Philippine proposal was accepted by Thailand and Pakistan as an essential part of the negotiations.[67] The original draft included unambiguous declarations about the right of self-government and promised to take 'effective practical measures to ensure the progress of peoples towards self-rule.'[68] The Western powers studied the charter prior to assembling and agreed that 'its provisions as presently drafted' were wholly unacceptable.[69]

The French, British, and Australian delegations were the main critics. As colonial powers with territorial claims in Indochina and Malaya respectively, neither France nor Britain were willing to support an agreement that explicitly denounced their right to rule in Southeast Asia. The head of the British delegation Gerald Rufus Isaacs insisted that Whitehall's policy had always been to grant independence as soon 'as the peoples of these possessions qualify themselves to exercise the powers and responsibilities of self-government.' In his reply to the Philippine delegation, Isaacs maintained he was not disputing 'the general principle of self-determination but merely the appropriate need of including an article in the treaty.'[70] Australian concerns centred around a racist belief that 'too much independence' would cause the natives in Samoa, New Guinea and Papua to revolt. 'These are simple people,' claimed the head of the Australian mission Richard Casey, 'they have no experience in the world of self-government.'[71]

The Philippine delegation insisted that the Pacific Charter remained on the table. They also demanded that a reference to self-determination be included in the treaty's preamble. Their

[67] Ibid. Memorandum by the Counselor of the Department of State (MacArthur) to the Secretary of State, 3 September 1954, FRUS, 1952-1954, Volume XII, East Asia and the Pacific, Part 1, Document 346, https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1952-54v12p1/d346 (accessed 16 August 2019).
[68] Romulo, *Crusade in Asia*, pp. 280-281.
[69] Memorandum by the Counselor of the Department of State (MacArthur) to the Secretary of State, 3 September 1954, FRUS.
[70] Continuation of the verbatim proceedings of the fourth plenary session of the Manila Conference, 7 September 1954, pp. 9-15.
[71] Memorandum of Discussion at the 214th Meeting of the National Security Council, 12 September 1954, FRUS, 1952-1954, Volume XII, East Asia and the Pacific, Part 1, Document 362, https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1952-54v12p1/d362 (accessed 15 July 2019). Ibid, p. 15.

position continued to privilege colonialism over communism as the critical issue in Southeast Asia, encouraging the Western delegates to see SEATO as more than the sum of its parts. As Lopez argued, 'communist aggression is only one of the two significant phenomena in Asia today; the other is the desire of the Asian peoples for freedom… can the proposed treaty address itself completely to the first and just as completely ignore the second? We think not.'[72] Lopez maintained that SEATO had to grasp the strength of nationalist feeling in Indochina to be effective. He emphasised that the "Free World" would be stronger if it placed regional partners on a more equal footing. This showed Manila's growing unwillingness to compromise decolonization at the cost of Cold War confrontation. It also highlighted how the Philippine delegation used self-determination for Indochina to create a bigger role for themselves in the negotiations. Lopez and his peers knew SEATO was a precursor for greater American intervention that required at least tacit local support. By focusing on Western failures in Indochina, they made it clear that the West needed regional allies as much as they needed them.

Thailand and Pakistan bolstered the Philippine position by emphasising the document's importance as a symbol of good faith towards Indochina. The head of the Thai mission Prince Waithayakon argued the charter would have a 'tremendous spiritual and psychological effect' that would hamper communist and non-aligned criticisms. Pakistan's chief delegate Muhammad Zafarullah Khan felt it was important to address self-determination in order to show other Asian powers that SEATO could be 'something of their own.'[73] These statements identified decolonization and Cold War security as irrevocably linked. The Asian nations at Manila all saw SEATO as a remedy for their domestic instability. They viewed military collaboration with the West as a strategic priority and felt that non-alignment was an optimistic and inefficient way of protecting their independence. In contrast to Nehru, these leaders wanted to sit at the top table of

[72] Statement by Minister Salvador Lopez in the working group meeting, afternoon session, 2 September 1954, Box 17, SLP.
[73] Continuation of the verbatim proceedings of the fourth plenary session of the Manila Conference, 7 September 1954, p. 22.

regional security negotiations as reciprocal partners rather than act as mediators between East and West. The aim was to provoke a more assertive American response to Indochina that could underwrite their own security and help maintain regional stability.

Asian pressure brought decolonization to the forefront of the Manila Conference. 'This running away' from communism frustrated Dulles, who nevertheless recognised that the 'Asian members of conference feel it very important to set forth this principle and say it even if repetitiously.'[74] Dulles hoped the United States could avoid taking a 'leading role in this discussion.'[75] Ultimately, however, his hand was forced by the conflict between Western and Asian powers. Dulles smoothed over the Philippine proposal by softening the language and reframing it along the lines of the Potomac Charter signed by Eisenhower and British Prime Minister Winston Churchill in June.[76] This redrafted version removed the reference to self-rule and inserted a clarification that the signatories would 'earnestly strive by every peaceful means to promote self-government and to secure independence of all countries whose peoples desire it and are able to undertake its responsibilities.'[77]

Steadfast to the end, the Asian delegations insisted that a statement on decolonization remained. To secure the charter's passage, they withdrew their opposition on the understanding that a reference to self-determination would be included in the treaty's preamble. At the end of negotiations, Carlos Garcia (head of the Philippine delegation as well as Vice President and Foreign Secretary) neatly summarised why the document was so important to SEATO's validity: 'this is not an abstract idea. It is a practical idea to try to appeal to the spiritual and psychological side of all of the peoples of this area to the end that they may be extradited from the clutches of

[74] Memorandum of telephone conversation between Dulles and Merchant, 30 August 1954, FRUS, 1952-1954, Volume XII, East Asia and the Pacific, Part 1, p. 820. Ibid, p. 32.
[75] Memorandum of a meeting of the United States delegation to the Manila Conference, 5 September 1954, FRUS, 1952-1954, Volume XII, East Asia and the Pacific, Part 1, p. 846.
[76] The Potomac Charter committed Britain and the United States to uphold the 'principle of self-government' and secure 'the independence of all countries whose peoples desire and are capable of sustaining an independent existence.' For the full text, see Anon, 'Anglo-American Discussions on International Situation', 28 June 1954, *State Department Bulletin*, vol. 31, no. 785 (12 July 1954), pp. 49-50.
[77] Text of the Pacific Charter: https://avalon.law.yale.edu/20th_century/usmu005.asp (accessed 14 October 2019).

communism.'[78] This final push for acceptance located Asia as the front line of the Cold War. It combined decolonization and Cold War security into one complementary objective and pressured the Western delegations into accepting that nationalism was a force that needed fostering if it was going to work to their benefit.

Eventually, the Western nations recognised the charter's value for bolstering SEATO's already tenuous legitimacy. They acknowledged the 'initiative of the Philippine government' in bringing decolonization to the top of the agenda and agreed to sign the Pacific Charter.[79] Dulles praised this as 'the most momentous product of the conference.'[80] The United States Information Agency (USIA) enthusiastically promoted it as evidence of SEATO's good intentions, hailing the summit as the 'first conference where representative nations of Asia and of the West sat down together to work out a program of mutual security.'[81] Privately, Dulles reported that the most 'significant aspect of the meeting was the confrontation of the colonial and Asiatic powers trying to work out common problems.' He felt the charter would provide a 'better basis for fellowship between the East and the West' and that 'real progress had been made' on uniting Western and Asian allies.[82] As a result, Washington was optimistic that SEATO could help curtail communist influence and dampen non-alignment's appeal. Its acceptance demonstrated the Eisenhower administration's increasing awareness of Asian agency in influencing Cold War decision-making as well as a newfound willingness to give these allies a louder voice in regional security discussions.

Dulles did not leave the Philippines empty-handed. He succeeded in creating a military-minded agreement against communism and used it as a basis for ongoing intervention into

[78] Continuation of the verbatim proceedings of the fourth plenary session of the Manila Conference, 7 September 1954, pp. 30-31.
[79] Verbatim proceedings of the sixth plenary session of the Manila Conference, 8 September 1954, Box 17, SLP.
[80] John Foster Dulles, 'Text of radio and television address by John Foster Dulles', 15 September 1954, in Department of State, ed., *The Manila Pact and the Pacific Charter* (Washington, DC: Department of State Public Services Division, 1954), p. 4.
[81] Report Prepared by the National Security Council, 2 March 1955, FRUS, 1955-1957, Volume IX, Foreign Economic Policy; Foreign Information Program, Document 185, https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1955-57v09/d185 (accessed 16 May 2019). Ibid, p. 4.
[82] Memorandum of Discussion at the 214th Meeting of the National Security Council, 12 September 1954, FRUS.

Indochina. Yet, his delegation found no easy victories at Manila. SEATO's Asian members ground out a greater role in Western security policy than they had before. They diluted the focus on the Cold War and combatting communism in order to accommodate their own security priorities. Two days before the conference, Dulles met with Garcia at his behest. During the meeting, Garcia secured a formal declaration that 'an attack on the Philippines by an aggressor would bring about an "automatic" counterattack by the United States.' This was the guarantee that Manila had been looking for since independence. The treaty's inclusion of subversion within its definition of aggression was another big win for the Asian powers given the potential for outside forces to interfere in their internal affairs. The real victory, however, was the Pacific Charter. As Romulo argued, 'the Asian delegations had firm ideas of what they considered to be right and necessary, and were not slow in making their wishes known.' Together, they had shown 'that to fight communism successfully, all colonialism must come to an end.'[83] This focus on self-determination for Indochina impressed the importance of meeting local perspectives onto the Western delegations at Manila. It showed that decolonization was here to stay and that independent Asian nations had to be given a voice if they were to be successfully incorporated into the "Free World."

In spite of all the pageantry that accompanied the Manila Conference, reaction to SEATO was unsurprisingly mixed. Chiang Kai-shek sent congratulations from his exiled government in Taiwan. The anticommunist ally 'applauded the Manila Pact as a great achievement' and argued the 'US was doing better in Asia than in Europe' as a result.[84] Others were more acerbic. Beijing saw SEATO as a provocation. Mao believed the 'US was carrying on a policy of increasing tension right around China.'[85] Nehru wondered whether the treaty had 'relaxed tensions in Southeast Asia or increased them… I neither see any lessening of tension nor any advance towards peace.'[86] To

[83] Romulo, *Crusade in Asia*, pp. 279-288.
[84] Memorandum of Discussion at the 214th Meeting of the National Security Council, 12 September 1954, FRUS.
[85] Anon, 'Summary of talks with Mao Tse-tung in Beijing', 19 October 1954, p. 7.
[86] Jawaharlal Nehru, 'Speech while initiating a debate on the international situation and the policy of the government of India, Lok Sabah', 29 September 1954, *SWJN*, Second Series, vol. 26, June 1954 – September 1954, p. 320.

many Asian leaders, the Manila Pact did little more than advance American interests and protect Western colonialism. This debate over the relationship between decolonization and the Cold War got to the heart of SEATO's strategic inconsistencies and posed the greatest challenge that the nascent institution faced. In six months, a different conference with a vastly different agenda threatened to paralyse SEATO before it got off the ground.

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Amidst the international precarity of the Cold War, the global race revolution of the 1950s forged a movement built on anticolonialism, antiracism, and Cold War non-alignment that found its voice at the Bandung Conference in April 1955. Announced in December 1954 by the Colombo Powers and organised by Nehru and Sukarno (the non-aligned leader of Indonesia), the meeting of twenty-nine Afro-Asian states was a significant impediment to SEATO that looked to unite the continents of Asia and Africa and show they were no longer playthings for the West. If SEATO was Washington's response to Geneva, then Bandung was the 'response to the response.'[87] Nehru wanted to foster a sense of anticolonial solidarity around Bandung that repudiated superpower politics and concentrated on peaceful coexistence. He saw conciliation with communist China as a strategic requirement because of its vast size, its large border with India, and the ongoing tensions between the two countries over Tibet. For Nehru, Bandung was an opportunity to gauge China's intentions and bring Beijing back into the international fold.[88] The Sino-Indian Agreement of 1954 yielded a different approach to regional security that coalesced around the "Five Principles" or *Panchsheel* – a Chinese idea embraced by Nehru that promoted mutual respect for each country's territorial integrity and sovereignty, non-aggression, non-interference in each other's internal affairs, equality and mutual benefit, and peaceful coexistence.[89] By pushing Bandung to accept

[87] Parker, 'Cold War II', p. 872.
[88] Andrew B. Kennedy, 'Nehru's Foreign Policy: Realism and Idealism Conjoined', in David M. Malone, C. Raja Mohan & Srinath Raghavan, eds, *The Oxford Handbook of Indian Foreign Policy* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2015), pp. 92-103. Benvenuti, 'Constructing Peaceful Coexistence', pp. 91-117.
[89] Anon, 'Agreement on Tibet', *South China Morning Post*, 30 April 1954, p. 13.

these principles, Nehru aimed to expose the limits of Western military alliances and undermine the benefits of Cold War confrontation.

Philippine diplomats placed a profound emphasis on defending SEATO at Bandung. Alongside the Thai and Pakistani delegations, Romulo painted the treaty as a necessity that protected decolonization from the looming spectre of communism. Romulo's view was that the Philippines had neither the time nor the ability to follow a separate course from the superpowers. As he argued in his opening statement, 'it is perilously easy in this world for national independence to be more fiction than fact.'[90] By framing Manila's participation in SEATO as an example of independence, Romulo negotiated the contested nationalist priorities displayed at Bandung. He argued that the Cold War was an unavoidable reality for the Third World and insisted that sacrificing sovereignty for a better sense of security was a logical choice for newly independent non-communist countries. As he put it, 'we fully appreciate the intensity of Asian-African suspicion of the West. But we are working on the assumption that the West intends to follow through on its promises, that it will share its knowledge and wealth with the world's less fortunate people, that it will hasten the day when all people will be truly independent.'[91] This position cut both ways. It allowed Manila to keep faith with nationalist sentiments and engage with likeminded neighbours. But it also alleviated American anxieties about the formation of an anti-Western bloc in the hope of getting better assistance. In this respect, the Philippines were together and apart from the intellectual and political geography of the Third World. Romulo positioned the islands as a bridge between East and West, North and South. In doing so, he outlined a distinctive brand of Afro-Asian internationalism that portrayed Cold War security as a postcolonial priority.

Bandung posed a serious challenge to both Cold War camps. Convened as a forum to assert Afro-Asian solidarity, the meeting consciously prevented superpowers from attending. Yet,

[90] Romulo, 'Statement of Carlos P. Romulo to the Asian-African Conference', p. 66.
[91] Carlos P. Romulo, 'Warning to Americans: Watch Bandung!', *Los Angeles Times*, 17 April 1955, p. k7.

the decision to hold the conference directly after the SEATO negotiations presented a particularly vexing problem for the Eisenhower administration. American anxieties centred on two key factors: SEATO's reception at Bandung and the threat of non-alignment. Bandung's announcement amid heightened Cold War tensions made Dulles 'considerably depressed' about the 'general situation in Asia.'[92] Aside from the stalled peace process in Indochina, conflict in the Taiwan Strait threatened regional stability. Skirmishes between Chinese communists and Nationalists came to a head over Quemoy and Matsu.[93] Washington worried Afro-Asian sympathy for Beijing would give a 'greenlight to the Chinese communists to take Formosa.' This suggestion that China 'would utilise [the] conference as [a] sounding board for propaganda' presented a public relations crisis that could turn the Global South towards the East and make SEATO less effective.[94]

Equally concerning was the sense of worldmaking that surrounded the meeting. Nehru's calls for peaceful coexistence and Cold War non-alignment threatened to push Washington out of the picture. Dulles felt Bandung was a sign that 'Asian solidarity in an anti-Western sense might be hardening.'[95] The completion of the Baghdad Pact between Turkey, Iraq, Britain, Pakistan, and Iran in February 1955 provided further evidence for Nehru's charges of Western meddling.[96] The Afro-Asian Working Group, set up within the State Department to formulate Washington's response, argued the US should be 'chiefly concerned with [the] impact on uncommitted elements in neutralist countries' and concentrate on 'expressing the determination of Manila Pact members to meet the problems of communist expansion.'[97] This feeling that the Cold War would be side-lined at Bandung prompted concerns that Nehru and non-alignment would gain significant ground

[92] Memorandum of a Conversation between the British Ambassador (Makins) and the Secretary of State, 7 April 1955, FRUS, 1955-1957, Volume XXI, East Asian Security; Cambodia; Laos, p. 80.
[93] Parker, 'Cold War II', pp. 872-873.
[94] Memorandum of a Conversation between the British Ambassador (Makins) and the Secretary of State, 7 April 1955, FRUS, p. 80. The Secretary of State to Certain Diplomatic and Consular Offices, 31 December 1954, FRUS, 1952-1954, Volume XII, East Asia and the Pacific, Part 1, Document 433, https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1952-54v12p1/d433#fn:1.5.4.4.1126.14.2 (accessed 5 September 2019).
[95] Ibid, p.80.
[96] Anon, 'Guns Cannot Win Minds, says Premier', *Times of India*, 11 February 1955, p. 10.
[97] Memorandum from the Acting Chief of the Afro-Asian Working Group to the Secretary of State, 8 February 1955, FRUS, 1955-1957, Volume XXI, East Asian Security; Cambodia; Laos, pp. 29-30.

at the meeting. In contrast to the forthcoming SEATO Conference in Bangkok, where delegations would be made up of 'whites and a few Asian people,' Bandung would be 'practically all colored.'[98] Washington worried this disparity would be used by Nehru and Communist China to create an anti-Western coalition capable of interrupting American interests. As Dulles argued, 'the question of war or peace in the Far East could be significantly affected by what happens at Bandung.'[99]

In Manila, opinion was split on whether attending Bandung would be advantageous. Magsaysay was reluctant to send a delegation because of his reputation as a staunch American ally. This made the Philippines vulnerable to communist propaganda and the belligerent non-alignment of India, who considered Filipino leaders to be entirely 'pro-American' and 'anti-Asian.'[100] For Romulo, declining the invitation only reinforced the opinion that the islands were 'outcasts in Asia.'[101] Romulo encouraged Magsaysay to let the Philippines attend.[102] He thought this would present a united front against communism whilst shirking the perception that the islands operated as an American lackey. 'The only way to insure [sic] that the communists dare not move is to help the free world build an unchallengeable defense.'[103] Magsaysay relented. He appointed Romulo as head of the Philippine delegation and allowed him to coordinate with Washington to prepare a public defence for SEATO. Whether or not US officials pressured Romulo into making this move remains uncertain. Clearly, however, they agreed it would be mutually beneficial. Romulo used Bandung as another opportunity to demonstrate the importance of regional partners to American observers. The Eisenhower administration wanted committed allies present to help steer the conversation. Both knew that SEATO would be a target that had to be protected if it was to last.[104]

[98] Memorandum of Telephone Call, Dulles and Robertson, 31 December 1954, Box 3, Telephone Calls Series, JDP.
[99] Memorandum of a Conversation between the British Ambassador (Makins) and the Secretary of State, 7 April 1955, FRUS, p. 80.
[100] Quoted in Pullin, 'The Bandung Conference', p. 57.
[101] Romulo, 'Warning to Americans', p. k7.
[102] Jose, 'The Philippines during the Cold War', p. 71.
[103] Romulo, 'Warning to Americans', p. k7.
[104] Romulo, *The Meaning of Bandung*, pp. 19-20. Memorandum from the Department of State to the Philippine Embassy in Washington outlining US objectives at the Afro-Asian Conference, 1 February 1955, Box CPR00024 – FA, CPRP.

Alongside Washington, Romulo worked hard to prepare an explanation for SEATO suitable for Afro-Asian audiences. In February 1955, Douglas MacArthur II (Counsellor to the State Department) met with Romulo at his request to help formulate the Philippine approach. During the meeting, Romulo asked for 'assistance in terms of papers and ideas' that only the State Department could provide. Romulo was 'particularly concerned about the color question' and wanted to work with other Asian allies to offset attacks on SEATO's membership. He suggested pointing to the treaty as proof 'that there can be cooperation between Asian and Western nations, regardless of color, race, or creed.'[105] In doing so, Romulo could dampen communist and non-aligned criticisms by emphasising that Manila approached SEATO through their own security concerns rather than at the behest of the United States. By tempering SEATO into a positive example of East/West cooperation rather than a symbol of Western imperialism, Romulo wanted to outline the advantages of "Free World" association. He planned to hold up the Pacific Charter as a symbol of SEATO's sincerity and show that the alliance was a meaningful way to talk about regional security with Western powers.

Prior to the conference, both Manila and Washington portrayed SEATO as a productive sign of East/ West collaboration that would allow decolonization to flourish in Southeast Asia. Copies of the Pacific Charter were circulated across Asia via the USIA.[106] Meanwhile, speeches on regional security by prominent Philippine leaders like Romulo, Garcia, and Magsaysay were reproduced by the Philippine Department of Foreign Affairs and shipped to embassies across the continent. This material stressed that 'a small country like the Philippines cannot defend itself alone against powerful aggression.' It argued Manila joined SEATO by choice and that the alliance facilitated cooperation with 'countries of similar or identical political ideologies.'[107] At the Bangkok

[105] Memorandum for the Record by the Counselor of the Department of State (MacArthur), 10 February 1955, FRUS, 1955-1957, Volume XXI, East Asian Security; Cambodia; Laos, Document 13, https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1955-57v21/d13 (accessed 14 June 2019).
[106] The Pacific Charter, Box 29, Press and Publications Service, Operations Branch, Master File Copies of Field Publications Series, 1951-1979, RG 306.
[107] Carlos P. Garcia, 'Philippine Foreign Affairs of 1954: A Review', 7 January 1955, in anon, ed., *Philippine Department of Foreign Affairs Review*, vol. 2, no. 1 (January 1956), pp. 7-13.

meeting, SEATO's Asian members sent a message to Nehru and Sukarno, reaffirming the Pacific Charter and expressing 'the hope that out of their conference at Bandung would come increased assurances that the free nations would remain free and that all peoples would come increasingly to enjoy, in peace, the blessings of liberty.'[108] This put Bandung's organisers 'on the spot' by arguing that communism and colonialism were equally dangerous.[109] It portrayed their participation in SEATO as a product of their independence and framed the treaty as a vital measure in the unfriendly atmosphere of the Cold War.

SEATO still remained a propaganda target before Bandung. China's Ministry of Foreign Affairs repeatedly derided SEATO, arguing anticolonial sentiment at the conference would produce 'united opposition against American aggression and American war policy.'[110] Privately, Beijing worried 'the anti-peace and anti-neutral countries headed by Thailand and the Philippines' would counter the Five Principles by asking 'the conference to accept the Pacific Charter.'[111] In New Delhi, Philippine diplomats reported that SEATO was 'arousing the peoples' ire.'[112] Nehru accused the alliance of upsetting 'all expectations of peace in the Far East.' He urged Bandung's attendees to ignore the Cold War and concentrate on combatting 'racialism and colonialism.'[113] Indian diplomats felt that Romulo's appointment proved the American desire to influence the meeting. Nehru wondered whether to invite the islands at all given their obvious alignment with the United States.[114] According to New Delhi, allowing the Philippines to attend would 'counteract any anti-SEATO move' that India could offer.[115] In the end, however, Nehru concluded that a

[108] Anon, 'Statement on Asian-African Meeting', 26 February 1955, *State Department Bulletin*, vol. 32, no. 819 (7 March 1955), p. 373.
[109] Telegram from the Secretary of State to the Department of State, 26 February 1955, FRUS, 1955–1957, Volume XXI, East Asian Security; Cambodia; Laos, p. 62.
[110] Hsi-En Chen, 'The Bandung Clash: A Case Study of Red Propaganda Methods', *Los Angeles Times*, 12 July 1955, p. a4.
[111] Report from the Chinese Foreign Ministry, 'Attitudes of Various Countries towards the Asian-African Conference on the Eve of the Conference', 11 April 1955.
[112] Felipe Mabulay to Leon Ma Guerrero, 19 January 1955, Box 15, Leon Ma Guerrero Papers, Private Collection, Manila, Philippines.
[113] Quoted in Anon, 'Mr Nehru Denounces Regional Pacts', *Manchester Guardian*, 1 April 1955, p. 7.
[114] Nehru, 'Thoughts on the Afro-Asian Conference', 20 December 1954, *SWJN*, Second Series, vol. 27, 1 October 1954 – 31 January 1955, pp. 107-112.
[115] Quoted in Pullin, 'The Bandung Conference', p. 57.

'selective and exclusive' guest list would only antagonise one bloc or the other.[116] Part of his reasoning for including China was to foster a 'climate of peace' that could bring Beijing into line with international norms.[117] He wanted to alleviate anxieties amongst smaller Southeast Asian powers who feared that Mao's regime were sponsoring subversive activities through the Chinese diaspora.[118] This was a tactical misstep that spoke to Nehru's tendency to put aside the scale of Cold War divisions. The battle lines were drawn as soon as Bandung was announced. Neither side were going to miss an opportunity to participate in this war of words.

Philippine leaders were mindful of SEATO's reputation and used the negative publicity to highlight the importance of local participation in the Cold War. Writing in the *Los Angeles Times* on the eve of the conference, Romulo warned that the Philippines were likely to be a 'minority pro-Western voice at Bandung.' He portrayed China's participation as a sign of Beijing's growing influence and argued Nehru's push for non-alignment could cause a 'frightening split in the Free World' that would hinder SEATO and damage American prestige. By portraying the conference as the physical embodiment of anticolonial feeling, Romulo encouraged Washington to think of Bandung not as a crisis to be averted but as an opportunity to be seized. 'The American people have not grasped the real nature of anti-colonial emotionalism. But it must be grasped. Otherwise, the US cannot formulate workable policies to keep former colonial areas from being overwhelmed.' If the US was willing to listen at Bandung and 'guide itself by what it sees,' then the challenge of non-alignment could be subdued and more countries would see the benefits of American leadership.[119]

On the ground, developments proceeded along the lines that Washington had feared. China's chief delegate, Zhou Enlai, appealed to anticolonial sentiment by denouncing Western

[116] Nehru, 'Thoughts on the Afro-Asian Conference', pp. 108-109.
[117] Quoted in Anon, 'Military Pacts Serve No Useful Purpose', *Times of India*, 13 July 1955, p. 11.
[118] Memorandum prepared by John Melby concerning conversation with General Mariano Castañeda, Chief of Staff of the Philippine Army, on the effect of China on the Philippines, 27 December 1948, pp. 1-3. Department of Foreign Affairs research paper on the Philippine experience in combatting communist subversion, 13 January 1955, pp. 1-4.
[119] Romulo, 'Warning to Americans', p. k7.

security agreements and praising the Third World struggles for national liberation. 'The courses which we peoples of the Asian and African countries have taken in striving for freedom and independence may vary,' argued Zhou in his speech at the plenary session, 'but our will to win and preserve our freedom and independence is the same.' Zhou insisted the United States was responsible for tensions in the Taiwan Strait. He saw SEATO solely as neocolonial interference, arguing 'countries outside of Asia and Africa are establishing more and more military bases in the Asian and African countries.'[120] Situating China as the victim of Western aggression was part of Beijing's broader Third World charm-offensive to end its national isolation and focus on economic development. Bandung gave Beijing breathing room to regenerate regional relationships and allay anxieties about Chinese expansion. Although he would later change his mind, Mao let Zhou play "smile diplomacy" at the conference as a means of consolidating his government's legitimacy.[121]

Nehru led the charge for non-alignment by denouncing military alliances and superpower politics. Alongside Zhou, he portrayed the Manila Pact as a vehicle for Western imperialism and positioned the United States as the ultimate aggressor in Asia. He accused SEATO's Asian members of being 'lulled into a false sense of security' and argued it was an 'intolerable humiliation for any nation in Asia or Africa to degrade itself by becoming a camp-follower.' Nehru believed Communist China was a reality that the world had to live with. He pleaded with the conference to eschew Cold War conflict and asked whether the 'countries of Asia and Africa' were 'devoid of any positive position except being pro-communist or anti-communist?'[122] Nehru and Zhou were Bandung's political heavyweights, and their words made an impression. Even pro-Western governments like Afghanistan praised their cordiality and agreed that the meeting contributed to

[120] Main Speech by Premier Zhou Enlai, Head of the Delegation of the People's Republic of China, Distributed at the Plenary Session of the Asian-African Conference, 19 April 1955, HPDA, Translation from China and the Asian-African Conference (Documents) (Peking: Foreign Languages Press, 1955), pp. 9-20, http://digitalarchive.wilsoncenter.org/document/121623 (accessed 16 November 2019).
[121] Brazinsky, *Winning the Third World*, pp. 75-105. Jeremy Friedman, *Shadow Cold War: The Sino-Soviet Competition for the Third World* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2015), pp. 25-59. Benvenuti, 'Constructing Peaceful Coexistence', p. 107.
[122] Nehru, 'Speech to Bandung Conference Political Committee', 23 April 1955, pp. 64-72.

world peace.[123] This proved to be Nehru's greatest achievement at Bandung. The Indian leader was not naïve to the dangers of communism. He had taken drastic steps to curb the Indian Communist Party.[124] He would certainly live to regret his truce with Beijing as relations unravelled over Tibet and border tensions escalated into a humiliating war that saw China defeat India in 1962.[125] At the time, however, Nehru felt Mao's radicalism was secondary to his desire for economic development. Nehru knew India had limited military capabilities to respond to their rivals. By pushing Beijing to embrace peaceful coexistence, he aimed to contain Mao's revolutionary impulses and get him to concentrate on nation-building at home.[126]

In delivering his response, Romulo continually emphasised Manila's independence in joining SEATO. This framed Philippine involvement as a reaction to decolonization rather than the Cold War. 'I think we ought to say plainly to each other when we think a puppet is a puppet,' argued Romulo in his opening statement. Romulo put Nehru on the back foot by highlighting New Delhi's hypocrisies. Romulo suggested it was unfair for Nehru to demean his government's involvement in SEATO, aligning Manila's participation with the same postcolonial insecurity that governed India's military concerns. 'If I asked my good friends in India and Pakistan why almost half their national budgets are going into military preparations, both would say that this is being done not because the government or the people are spoiling for a fight, but because there is a situation in Kashmir which might be even more difficult to settle fairly if only one side were armed.' He took a similar line against communism. Criticising Nehru's détente with China, Romulo stated that 'the non-communist world faces the indisputable fact that a communist neighbour is an active

[123] Report from the Chinese Foreign Ministry, 'Comments on the Asian-African Conference from the Participating Countries After the Conference', 10 May 1955, HPDA, PRC FMA 207-00059-01. Obtained by Amitav Acharya and translated by Yang Shanhou. https://digitalarchive.wilsoncenter.org/document/114686 (accessed 9 November 2019).
[124] John Callaghan, 'Jawaharlal Nehru and the Communist Party', *The Journal of Communist Studies*, vol. 7, no. 3 (September 1991), pp. 350-356. Amrit Varsha, 'Nehru and the Communists: Towards the Constitution – Making', *Proceedings of the Indian History Congress* , vol. 72, no. 1 (2011), pp. 740-752.
[125] Amit R. Das Gupta & Lorenz M. Lüthi, eds., *The Sino-Indian War of 1962: New Perspectives* (London, UK: Routledge, 2017).
[126] Singh, *Power and Diplomacy*, pp. 143-190. Nehru, 'Discussions on the International Situation', 29 December 1954, *SWJN*, Second Series, vol. 27, 1 October 1954 – 31 January 1955, p. 116.

and continuing aggressor.' He cast doubt on the Five Principles by citing China's intervention into Korea and the tensions in the Taiwan Strait. Romulo felt peaceful coexistence already existed in the "Free World." He portrayed SEATO as a symbol of this cooperation and argued that the Pacific Charter represented a 'clear and dramatic disavowal of the methods and purposes of colonial imperialism in the region.'[127] That Romulo saw SEATO as useful for more than combatting communism was not surprising. His experiences travelling through Southeast Asia on the eve of World War II taught him that centuries of colonial exploitation provided fertile propaganda for Japan's imperial expansion.[128] Western words were no longer enough. These countries needed aid, and they needed it quickly if they were to be saved from communism. This argument presented SEATO as a logical choice for non-communist countries concerned about the longevity of their independence in the Cold War. Critically, it situated SEATO as a safety net for Indochina that instilled a greater Western appreciation for nationalist feeling in Southeast Asia.

Likeminded leaders were quick to defend SEATO at Bandung. Both Thailand and Pakistan stressed their independence in joining the agreement. Prince Waithayakon batted away accusations of imperialism by claiming the Pacific Charter had been 'calculated to assure to all peoples the progressive attainment of full freedom and independence.' The Pakistani Prime Minister Mohammed Ali reserved Karachi's 'right to self-defence, exercised singly or collectively' and warned the conference 'not to open the door to new and more insidious forms of imperialism.' Despite not being members, other Asian delegations helped rebuke attacks on SEATO. The Foreign Minister of Iraq Fadhel Jamali denounced communism as a 'form of colonialism more deadly than the old.'[129] He justified the Baghdad Pact as a necessary evil 'pending an ideological disarmament throughout the world.'[130] This pro-American bloc interpreted decolonization as

[127] Romulo, 'Statement of Carlos P. Romulo to the Asian-African Conference', pp. 67-89.
[128] Romulo, *I Walked with Heroes*, pp. 212-238. Spencer, *Romulo: Voice of Freedom*, pp. 65-80.
[129] Quoted in Romulo, *The Meaning of Bandung*, pp. 21-27.
[130] Quoted in telegram from the British Embassy in Djakarta summarising the introductory speeches at the Bandung Conference, 26 April 1955, available online: https://www.cvce.eu/content/publication/2015/10/20/831656d3-62e4-4978-a44f-c043c8fb9011/publishable_en.pdf (accessed 22 October 2019).

irrevocably linked to Cold War security. Together, they influenced Bandung by injecting the conference with ideological imperatives and inhibiting Nehru and Zhou's attempts at appeasement. Nehru was unable to muster unanimous support for the Five Principles and was forced to include a reservation in the final communiqué that respected 'the right of each nation to defend itself singly or collectively.'[131] Both sides took what they wanted out of the confrontation, but it was obvious that neither had the upper hand. Nehru saw much of the Five Principles embodied in the ten principles eventually agreed by the conference. Romulo took the rejection of peaceful coexistence as an indication that the Philippines were not as isolated as he thought.[132] Really it showed that the future of Afro-Asia was a contested one, attuned to fighting communism as much as it was to combatting colonialism.

Washington watched Bandung closely and was happy with the results. As the USIA argued, instead of the conference 'becoming a neutralist or pro-communist vehicle for the condemnation of the Western powers, as many had feared, it provided a forum in which a number of champions of democracy fearlessly expressed their challenge to communism.'[133] Dulles felt SEATO's Asian members 'put on an amazing performance at Bandung.' This 'teamwork and coordination of strategy' was incredibly gratifying for Washington, who took it as an indication that their regional allies were growing in 'self-reliance and self-confidence.'[134] The conference prompted a renewed determination for Washington to put its weight behind decolonization. Dulles even suggested hosting a 'Bandung in reverse,' where the 'colonial, and perhaps some of the ex-colonial, powers would get together in a dramatic way to lay out an independence program.'[135]

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[131] Anon, 'Full Text of the Final Communiqué of the Conference', in *The Meaning of Bandung*, pp. 101-102.
[132] Nehru, 'Note to Chief Ministers', 28 April 1955, *SWJN*, Second Series, vol. 28, February 1955 – May 1955, pp. 129-138. Romulo, *The Meaning of Bandung*, pp. 22-28.
[133] Report Prepared by the National Security Council, 31 August 1955, FRUS, 1955–1957, Volume IX, Foreign Economic Policy; Foreign Information Program, Document 190, https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1955-57v09/d190 (accessed 10 August 2019).
[134] Minutes of a Cabinet Meeting, 29 April 1955, FRUS, 1955-1957, Volume XXI, East Asian Security; Cambodia; Laos, p. 92.
[135] Dulles to Hoover, 23 November 1955, Box 12, JFD Chronological File Series, JDP.

What he failed to realise was that he had essentially done just that. The timeline between Geneva, Manila, and Bandung confirmed the growing feeling within the Eisenhower administration that European colonialism was causing more damage than it was worth. This position went in tandem with the evolving realisation that Washington had to have local partners to help communicate its foreign policy objectives to the Global South. In a national intelligence estimate prepared in November 1955, State Department officials identified that 'Afro-Asian ties will assume increasing importance' in the Cold War and that a failure to 'recognize and adjust' to anticolonial sentiment would 'stimulate existing antagonisms.'[136] Unfortunately, these reflections failed to produce any concrete change in strategy. Washington was wrong to think that the pace of decolonization could be managed alongside reluctant European powers. This strained relations with colonial allies like Britain over issues such as the Suez Crisis and entrenched the popular Afro-Asian opinion that the United States was taking up the imperial mantle.[137] The Eisenhower administration learnt an important lesson about Afro-Asian power at Bandung. The question over how they would respond remained undecided.

Romulo's public defence of SEATO influenced Bandung and the historical development of the Third World by highlighting the multiple, contested understandings of decolonization that were displayed at the conference. The fact that this served American interests was a foregone conclusion. Romulo actively colluded with Washington to discredit non-alignment and attack communism. What mattered most was that he had conveyed this position to an audience already dubious of his country's relationship with the United States. What is more, he had done so on his own terms. Romulo did not hold back when it came to calling out SEATO's inadequacies. He was critical of America's reluctance to disengage from European colonialism and insisted that pursuing

[136] National Intelligence Estimate, 1 November 1955, FRUS, 1955-1957, Volume XIX, National Security Policy, Document 39, https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1955-57v19/d39 (accessed 15 January 2020).
[137] Parker, 'Cold War II', pp. 887-888. Ray Takeyh, *The Origins of the Eisenhower Doctrine: The US, Britain, and Nasser's Egypt, 1955-57* (New York, NY: Palgrave, 2000). Cole Kingseed, *Eisenhower and the Suez Crisis of 1956* (Baton Rouge, LA: Louisiana State University Press, 1995). Memorandum from Carlos P. Romulo to President Magsaysay analysing the Middle East situation after Suez, 3 November 1956, Box CPR0002 – CO, CPRP.

the Cold War without sufficient local support would be futile. By selling SEATO as an expression of Manila's independence, Romulo turned the logic of self-determination on its head. He framed Cold War security as part and parcel of decolonization and translated its importance to Western audiences through the intermediary of Bandung. 'Asian allies,' Romulo lectured, should be taken into the confidence of their Western partners.' They 'must be shown… that the old friends are friends indeed. And they must be shown this against the background of the irreversible march of nationalism in Asia and Africa.'[138] This helped crystalise the relationship between decolonization and the Cold War in Washington. Most significantly, it presented a distinctive path for Afro-Asian nations that prioritised American power over Cold War non-alignment. It promised security in return for loyalty and provided sovereignty under the safety of a "Free World."

Romulo's position served more practical purposes. By positioning the islands as a bridge between the First and Third Worlds, Manila encouraged Washington to provide more aid to showcase the fruits of American association. As Magsaysay put it to Dulles, 'the other peoples of Asia are watching me. They know what I have done and am doing for the United States. For me not to be able to show something really worthwhile that I am getting for my people from the United States will give them the impression that even America's best friend is ignored and this, I fear, would not have a favourable impact in Asia propaganda-wise.'[139] Dulles responded by insisting that 'the full force of the United States is committed to… [the Philippines'] defense.'[140] Washington earmarked over $9 million to build up the Philippine military in 1955 alone.[141] More importantly, the Eisenhower administration learnt to better appreciate the Philippines after

[138] Romulo, 'What the Asians Expect of Us', p. SM9.
[139] Letter from President Magsaysay to Secretary of State Dulles, 15 March 1956, FRUS, 1955–1957, Volume XXII, Southeast Asia, Document 383, https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1955-57v22/d383 (accessed 15 July 2019).
[140] Telegram from the Secretary of State to the Department of State, 16 March 1956, FRUS, 1955–1957, Volume XXII, Southeast Asia, Document 384, https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1955-57v22/d384 (accessed 15 July 2019).
[141] Instruction from the Department of State to the Embassy in the Philippines, 22 June 1955, FRUS, 1955–1957, Volume XXII, Southeast Asia, Document 352, https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1955-57v22/d352 (accessed 22 July 2019).

Bandung. The renegotiation of economic relations through the 1955 Laurel-Langley Agreement and the revisions to American military basing demonstrated Washington's increased respect for Philippine opinion.[142] As the American ambassador Albert Nufer put it, 'to follow a constructive path here we must adjust our relationships to meet changing conditions… we must, therefore, be willing to consult with them; giving greater cognizance and weight to their legitimate aspirations and giving them greater evidence of trust and respect for them as a sovereign nation.'[143] For Manila, this had been the objective all along.

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SEATO's time in the limelight faded almost as soon as it began. The 'high-handed manner' that surrounded its creation masked 'an utter lack of accomplishment' during the Cold War.[144] American policymakers were so focused on Vietnam that they left little time for SEATO. This was the issue that defined SEATO and blighted US foreign policy throughout the Cold War. Romulo's failure was to think that the weight of Asian nationalism would be enough to wrestle the United States away from its European allies and stop Washington dragging its feet over decolonization. Ironically, it was this willingness to participate in the Cold War that proved to be Manila's greatest obstacle. Blinded by the scope of its postwar power, Washington assumed that America alone was responsible for the security of the "Free World." This perception that the United States was 'better off by itself' in Southeast Asia provoked a 'rapidly deteriorating morale' amongst SEATO's members.[145] With American attention elsewhere, Philippine leaders viewed the Manila Pact as an example of America's faltering dedication to their security and the need to put the "Filipino First."[146] Pakistan left SEATO in 1973, followed by the French decision to selectively participate.[147]

[142] Cullather, *Illusions of Influence*, pp. 146-152. Cullather, 'America's Boy', pp. 332-335.
[143] Telegram from the Embassy in the Philippines to the Department of State, 27 August 1956, FRUS, 1955–1957, Volume XXII, Southeast Asia, Document 407, https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1955-57v22/d407 (accessed 24 July 2019).
[144] Cabell to Dulles, 12 September 1955, p. 1, Box 1, WHMS, JDP.
[145] Memorandum of telephone conversation between Dulles and Merchant, 30 August 1954, FRUS, p 820. Ibid, p. 1.
[146] Remarks of Dr Jose P. Laurel on the Filipino First Policy and International Relations, 5 April 1959, Box 7, JLP.
[147] Fenton, *To Cage the Red Dragon*, pp. 5-6.

After withdrawing from Vietnam, American interest faded further. Already promoting regional cooperation elsewhere, the Philippines and Thailand channelled their energy into the Association of Southeast Asian Nations.[148] SEATO was disbanded in 1977 in the aftermath of the Vietnam War, relegated to the backdrop of Cold War history as a vestige of great power politics.

SEATO's demotion to a Cold War relic hides the messy linkages between Manila and Bandung whilst distorting the fractured genealogy of the Third World. SEATO undoubtedly aggravated Cold War tensions in Southeast Asia and entrenched Western colonialism. Yet, its Asian participants joined because of local concerns that resonated beyond the Western interests that catalysed its creation. Philippine elites entered into SEATO as a response to decolonization rather than the Cold War. From the periphery, they succeeded in fashioning a more robust security treaty that focused on independence and respect for Asian nations as well as combatting communism. These efforts were successful to the extent they were able to bring their interests to bear on an increasingly occupied Eisenhower administration. Postcolonial insecurity convinced these elites that American engagement was not only desirable but essential. Critiquing a vacillating policy that faltered over the extent and importance of American assistance to Asia, Philippine interventions into SEATO indicated how a neocolonial American ally grappled with the delicate balance between security and autonomy that defined the Cold War in the Global South for many postcolonial elites. Restoring their agency enhances understandings of decolonization, the Cold War, and the formation of the Third World by identifying their connections to SEATO and making them more precise.

In light of this, how should historians evaluate the Philippine contribution to SEATO? Was Manila interested simply for parochial reasons? Recently, histories of the Cold War in the Third World have tended to re-evaluate the nature and significance of local agency.[149] Others have

[148] Yates, *Understanding ASEAN's Role in Asia-Pacific Order*, pp. 99-116.
[149] McMahon, ed., *The Cold War in the Third World*. Westad, *The Global Cold War*. Westad, *The Cold War*. Goscha & Ostermann, eds., *Connecting Histories*. Artemy M. Kalinovsky & Sergey Radchenko, eds., *The End of the Cold War and the Third World: New Perspectives on Regional Conflict* (London, UK: Routledge, 2011). Tsuyoshi Hasegawa, ed., *The Cold War*

argued for a removal of the Cold War lens altogether, insisting that it is a distraction for understanding the broad spectrum of postcolonial futures imagined after World War II.[150] Interestingly, scholars of US-Philippine relations have also called into question the omnipotence of American imperial power by emphasising the "illusions of influence" that governed Washington's relationship with Manila. Often, however, these analyses tend to emphasise self-interested concerns about aid and assistance over the intellectual motivations that drove such decision making.[151] The truth, as is often the case with history, lies somewhere in the middle. Filipino elites were motivated by a realpolitik desire to maintain their position as viable postcolonial leaders. They believed in the Cold War to the point that they relied on American patronage and were willing to incorporate their own priorities into US strategy. However, Philippine support was not a foregone conclusion. Nor was it entirely selfish. Rather, Filipino elites interpreted the Cold War through a lens of postcolonial insecurity intrinsically connected to the longer histories of empire and occupation that defined the Philippine state. They saw communism and colonialism as equally threatening and were willing to operate under the blanket of a "deterritorialized" American empire if it afforded them greater security. This spoke to the Philippines' confused position within the "Bandung moment" and their contradictory engagement with the Third World as a political space. Their participation in SEATO was revealing of the wide-ranging visions for independence imagined by postcolonial Asian elites after World War II and the indelible mark they made on the Cold War struggle for ideological dominance.

in East Asia, 1945-1991 (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2011). James & Leake, eds., *Decolonization and the Cold War*.

[150] Connelly, 'Taking off the Cold War Lens'. Byrne, *Mecca of Revolution*. Nancy Mitchell, 'Roundtable Review: The Cold War: A World History', *Cold War History*, vol. 18, no. 2 (2018), p. 240.

[151] Cullather, *Illusions of Influence*. Cullather, 'America's Boy?'. Eva-Lotta E. Hedman, 'Late Imperial Romance: Magsaysay, Lansdale and the Philippine-American "Special Relationship"', *Intelligence and National Security*, vol. 14, no. 4 (1999), pp. 181-194. Woods, *Freedom Incorporated*.

Conclusion

'There is No Consolation in Being Free When People Around Us Think We Are Not': Reconciling with the Price of Empire

'Whether we like it or not, nations, like individuals, live a dual life; what they are and what others think they are.'[1]

Felixberto Serrano, Philippine Secretary of Foreign Affairs, 1957-1961

Philippine independence embodied the conflict between security and sovereignty that defined decolonization in the Third World. Economically, politically, and militarily weak after World War II, the Filipino elite opted for the former over the latter. Unlike Nehru, they saw the Cold War as an advantage and helped project an exceptionalist view of independence that aided Washington's appeal to colonized hearts and minds. In return, the United States gave them the resources they needed to ensure their hold on power. This shared interest in security – assuring it in Manila's case and exploiting it in Washington's – goes a long way to explaining why the Philippines stayed so close to the United States after independence. Their vulnerability meant Filipino leaders were prepared to sacrifice sovereignty for a greater sense of safety. This insecurity shaped Filipino actions decisively. But it also facilitated Washington's attempts to retain influence in a strategically vital Cold War theatre. The "loss" of China, the Korean War, and the nationalist revolutions in Indochina and elsewhere in Asia convinced US policymakers that the Philippines had an important part to play in the fight against communism. They saw Philippine freedom as a benchmark for American ambitions in Asia and wanted to set a strong example of decolonization management that would satisfy nationalist demands for self-determination whilst protecting Western interests.[2] Devastated by war and desperate to re-establish their control over the country,

[1] Felixberto Serrano, 'Towards a Respectable National Identity, 1959', in Jose V. Abueva, ed., *The Making of the Filipino Nation and Republic: From Barangays, Tribes, Sultanates, and Colony* (Quezon City, Philippines: University of the Philippines Press, 1998), p. 576.
[2] Anon, 'US Policy on the Philippines, National Security Council', 9 November 1950, pp. 105-110.

Filipino elites accepted that American intervention would mean the difference between survival or destruction for their fledgling government. They knew Washington was not perfect but believed the United States was the only country able to 'fully satisfy our search for maximum guarantees for Philippine security.'[3] This was difficult for Nehru to understand given India's contrasting wartime experiences and route to nationhood. Aside from the British, India did not suffer the same defeat or foreign occupation that Manila did at the hands of Japan. Filipino leaders knew what it felt like to have their security taken away from them. As Romulo put it, 'we have ourselves accepted without a murmur of complaint the penalties of liberation and paid in full the high price of freedom.'[4] Their decision to align themselves with the United States was reflective of the longer histories of empire and occupation that characterised Philippine independence.

Postwar Filipino leaders put security before self-determination. And it worked, for a while. But this dynamic could only sustain Manila for so long. As anticolonial internationalism got louder and the Cold War got hotter, their reliance on the United States created more problems than it solved. Communist movements across the world denounced the 'US exploitation of the Philippines' as part of an 'American imperialist drive to dominate the countries of Asia.'[5] Non-aligned leaders like Nehru kept Manila at arm's length, insisting that 'if we rely on others, whatever great powers they might be… then we are weak indeed.'[6] European observers were just as unimpressed, albeit for different reasons. British diplomats resented the insincerity that accompanied American lectures on colonialism. As one policymaker in Whitehall put it, 'despite the bleakness of the Philippine picture a strong note of self-congratulation is evident in all comment.'[7] In the age of decolonization, actions spoke louder than words. For all of Washington's bravado about ending empire, American actions in the Philippines showed that the United States

[3] Memorandum for his Excellency, the President on the Mutual Defense Pacific Pact, 1 August 1951, Box CPR0025 – FA, CPRP.
[4] Carlos P. Romulo, 'Statements by Ambassador Romulo', 8 October 1950, in anon, ed., *Philippine Department of Foreign Affairs Review*, vol. 1, no. 8 (February 1951), p. 155.
[5] Mendoza, 'Philippine Workers in the Struggle for National Independence', p. 19.
[6] Nehru, 'Speech to Bandung Conference Political Committee', pp. 64-72.
[7] Morley to Hughes, 20 February 1946, p. 1.

was still an imperial power. The result was a one-sided postcolonial relationship that diminished Washington's reputation in the Global South and undermined Manila's independence. 'Having suffered tremendously for the ideals we share in common with the United States, we suffered no less in damage to our prestige,' argued the Secretary of Foreign Affairs Felixberto Serrano.[8] Unable to turn anywhere else, the Filipino elite continued to rely on colonial patronage to underwrite their authority. Neither a friend nor a foe to their Third World peers, their dependence on the United States highlighted the permanent mark that American imperialism made on the struggle for decolonization in the Global South.

This was the price the Philippines paid for being part of the postwar American empire. Filipino leaders got the protection they wanted but lost the leeway they needed to dictate independence on their own terms. As Serrano put it, 'there is no consolation in being free when people around us think we are not."[9] To Magsaysay's successors, the Cold War stakes were getting higher without offering much in return. The quagmire in Vietnam, the crisis in Suez, and the constant foot-dragging over European colonialism all represented Washington's ailing commitment to Asian freedom. President John F. Kennedy's promise that the United States would 'bear any burden' to combat communism cemented a universalist binary between East and West that made Filipino elites even more reliant on anticommunism and even less accountable to the country that they governed.[10] The United States became increasingly blind to autocracy if it helped win the Cold War. The Philippines were no exception. President Ferdinand Marcos used largely unfounded fears about impending communist revolution as one of his justifications for declaring martial law in 1972.[11] In the end, the United States abandoned 'evangelical hopes' that the Philippines could operate as a bastion of ordered decolonization management. To American

[8] Serrano, 'Towards a Respectable National Identity', p. 576.
[9] Ibid.
[10] Inaugural Address of President John F. Kennedy, Washington, DC, 20 January 1961, available online: https://avalon.law.yale.edu/20th_century/kennedy.asp (accessed 26 September 2022).
[11] Francia, *A History of the Philippines*, pp. 225-226.

policymakers, 'military bases and a familiar government' were 'more important than the preservation of democratic institutions.' Even in the Philippines, Washington's 'colonial stepchild' and 'showcase of democracy,' the Cold War mattered more than decolonization.[12] As a result, the United States lost the initiative when it came to winning Third World hearts and minds. American policymakers squandered the moral high ground over European powers and eroded the goodwill that came with wartime rhetoric about self-determination. They blamed Filipino leaders for their inability to reform, but the fault was as much their own. They failed to see that keeping the islands so close helped perpetuate the colonial environment that allowed democratic dysfunction to thrive. The rampant abuses of the Marcos years typified the irony of US foreign policy in the Global South. By helping decolonizing peoples protect their freedoms from Soviet or Chinese imperialism, the United States allowed countries like the Philippines to pursue dictatorship in the name of anticommunism.

Considering the longer story of US-Philippine relations during the Cold War, what conclusions can historians draw from the early years of independence? What does it say about the nature of postwar American power and how does it alter existing understandings of the Third World? First and foremost, it points to the complex ways that American imperialism influenced decolonization in the Global South. To be sure, Philippine independence was not unique. As histories of Thailand, Japan, Taiwan, South Vietnam, South Korea, or Pakistan suggest, Filipino elites were not the only Asian leaders to embrace American empire for the sake of better protection.[13] Like countless other governments, they used the Cold War for their own ends and wrestled with the same conundrum that Manila did: how could they get the most out of the United States without losing too much in return? The Philippines shared many parallels with these client

[12] Anon, 'Martial Law, Staff Report for the US Senate Foreign Relations Committee', 18 February 1973, in *Philippines Reader*, pp. 166-169.
[13] Matthew Phillips, *Thailand in the Cold War* (New York, NY: Routledge, 2016). Miller, *Cold War Democracy*. Lin, *Accidental State*. Edward G. Miller, *Misalliance: Ngo Dinh Diem, the United States, and the Fate of South Vietnam* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2013). Chapman, *Cauldron of Resistance*. Brazinsky, *Nation Building in South Korea*. McGarr, *The Cold War in South Asia*. McMahon, *The Cold War on the Periphery*.

states. Like Chiang Kai-shek, Syngman Rhee, or Vietnam's Ngo Dinh Diem, Filipino leaders tried to balance their need for American protection against their desire for self-determination. They all confronted domestic security problems that were exacerbated by nationalist and Cold War tensions. And they all wanted to guarantee their independence inside a strong Asian community capable of exerting influence on the United States. Some were more successful than others. Japan and South Korea largely escaped being branded a US lackey partly because their economic "miracles" helped shield them from outside interrogation and domestic dissent.[14] Quirino and Diem were not so lucky. Perhaps because their respective investments in American empire never really paid off. Despite these different conditions and outcomes, the objective was roughly the same: a privileged place in American policy that promised to protect their independence from the dangers of decolonization.

What sets the Philippines apart from these other client states is the sense of predeterminism that accompanied the US-Philippine alliance. The Philippines were not a European possession like Vietnam or Pakistan. Their colonizers were not bankrupt by war like France or Britain. Yes, they were occupied and colonized by Japan. But not nearly to the same extent as China or South Korea. Instead, the Philippines had a direct line to the strongest economic and military force on the planet. The longer histories of empire and exceptionalism that bound the Philippines and the United States together helped create a shared vision for decolonization that relied on the strength of postwar American power. Of course, there were Filipinos that thought different. Those that believed in Japan's Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere, those that wanted communist revolution, or those that favoured Cold War neutrality.[15] But for most elites, the United States was the only real option to give them the protection they needed to make their rule last. They saw American influence as a positive and used their privileged place in US foreign

[14] Edward R. Beauchamp, ed., *The Japanese Economy and Economic Issues Since 1945* (New York, NY: Routledge, 2011). Tat Yan Kong, *The Politics of Economic Reform in South Korea: A Fragile Miracle* (New York, NY: Routledge, 2000).
[15] Matthiesen, *Japanese Pan-Asianism and the Philippines*. Fuller, *Forcing the Pace*. Lorenzo M. Tañada, 'The Economic Nationalism of Claro M. Recto', *Philippine International Law Journal*, vol. 2, no. 1 (Jan 1963), pp. 375-381.

policy to position themselves within the Cold War geography of a "Free World." In doing so, they challenged existing ideas about decolonization and development by presenting this alliance as an expression of self-determination. Independence was testament to the difficult choice between security or sovereignty that postcolonial leaders were forced to make because of the Cold War. It showed how the Philippines disrupted inter-Asian debates about self-determination and illuminated the long shadow that American imperialism cast over the Global South.

Philippine independence helped shape the postwar American empire. Yet, it also affected the historical trajectory of the Third World by influencing debates about self-determination, nationalism, and Cold War non-alignment. Thanks to new transnational research, the traditional binaries between East and West, North and South, are being broken down. Scholars now point to the fractured genealogy of the Third World project, arguing that postcolonial leaders never reached a consensus on how to achieve modernity.[16] The Philippines are a pertinent example of how American client states helped support and distort the emergence of postcolonial internationalism and South-South solidarity during the global Cold War. To many of their neighbours, Manila's relationship with Washington demonstrated the limits of neocolonialism. Nehru saw independence as a token gesture. At meetings like Bandung, he worked hard to convince other decolonizing countries that relying on the superpowers would never give them the autonomy they needed.[17] Filipino elites responded by challenging prevailing assumptions about anticolonial solidarity and economic nationalism. Using postcolonial conferences as a platform to defend their independence, they justified their actions by presenting the search for security as a logical part of decolonization. To Romulo, Quirino, or Magsaysay, non-alignment was just not an option. They saw their alliance with Washington as an expression of self-determination and exposed the shortcomings of inter-Asian cooperation by highlighting the fragility of independence during the

[16] Ewing, "With a Minimum of Bitterness'. Ewing, 'The Colombo Powers'. Mark T. Berger, ed., *After the Third World?* (London, UK: Routledge, 2009). Adom Getachew, *Worldmaking After Empire: The Rise and Fall of Self-Determination* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2020).
[17] Nehru, 'Speech to Bandung Conference Political Committee', pp. 64-72.

Cold War. 'In the world as we know it today, the phrase "independent foreign policy" has no semantic significance,' argued Romulo. 'They want us to align ourselves strictly with the Asian and Arab states, knowing that these countries, with all the best will in the world, would be unable to help us if we were attacked.'[18] These discussions highlighted the different priorities that motivated postcolonial internationalism in the Cold War. They showed how this right-wing neocolonial ally positioned itself inside and outside of the Third World project by presenting American power as an inevitable part of the postwar international order.

This is not to say that Filipino elites were a passive mouthpiece for the United States. On the contrary, it was precisely because of this exceptionalist belief in liberal capitalist democracy that Filipino leaders felt they were able to speak so openly about the pitfalls of American policy. To them, the Philippines were a powerful broker between East and West, North and South. They wanted the United States to embrace the Third World, and for the Third World to embrace the United States in return. Sometimes this meant defending American policymakers, as in the case of Korea. With Indochina and SEATO, it meant reminding Washington that the Cold War could never be won without the support of decolonizing peoples. As Romulo insisted at Bandung, 'the United States has at times appeared to us lacking in consistency and vigour in upholding the right of non-self-governing peoples to independence. It has on some issues leaned heavily in favour of colonial powers and has sometimes disheartened us because of its failure to make its actions dovetail with its ideals of equality and freedom.'[19] Manila wanted Washington to take the lead on decolonization and live up to the wartime expectations of American leadership laid out in the Four Freedoms and the Atlantic Charter. These administrations believed that 'only as free men will the peoples of Asia put their heart into the struggle against communism' and saw their independence

[18] Commencement address by Romulo before the graduating classes of the University of the Far East, 28 April 1951, p. 4.
[19] Romulo, 'Statement of Carlos P. Romulo to the Asian-African Conference', pp. 65-66.

as a sign of the 'basic good faith of the United States.'[20] Their confused place within the history of the Third World project speaks to the opposing ways that postcolonial leaders interpreted decolonization. It shows how neocolonial American allies helped reinforce and reject ideas about anticolonial solidarity by presenting the vices and virtues of Washington's postwar power.

With these issues in mind, what further work needs to be done to fully understand how the Philippines fits into the contested cartography of the Third World? How can other scholars use the Philippine-American relationship as a basis for exploring how American empire shaped the Global South as it is today? This study has highlighted an elite Filipino vision for decolonization that accepted the Cold War and American empire as an inescapable influence in the Third World. However, there is more to say about the alternative nationalisms that existed in the Philippines (both elite and popular) as well as how they interacted with Manila's understanding of independence. Take, as an example, the Hukbalahap. How did this revolutionary communist movement perceive independence? What transnational connections (if any) did they make in the Global South? And how did their struggle for national liberation interact with wider historical developments like decolonization, non-alignment, and the formation of the Third World during the global Cold War?[21] Logistical and linguistic barriers make it difficult to produce a more thorough picture of the Filipino side of the story.[22] However, it is local scholars and sources who will provide a clearer sense of how these developments played out amongst the people. In the future, students of US-Philippine relations should continue to engage with local archivists,

[20] Commencement address by Romulo before the graduating classes of the University of the Far East, 28 April 1951, p. 4.
[21] There is a small literature on the Huks. See Benedict J. Kerkvliet, *The Huk Rebellion: A Study of Peasant Revolt in the Philippines* (London, UK: University of California Press, 1977). Vina A. Lanzona, *Amazons of the Huk Rebellion: Gender, Sex, and Revolution in the Philippines* (Quezon City, Philippines: Ateneo de Manila University Press, 2010). Guiraldo C. Fernandez Jr., 'The Peasants' Notion of Peace: Kinabuhi sa Kinaiyahan ug Gugma sa Isig ka Tawo', *Social Ethics Society Journal of Applied Philosophy*, vol. 5, no. 2 (October 2019), pp. 63-84. Ridler, 'The Fertile Ground of Hell's Carnival', pp. 15-29.
[22] The Philippines has well over one hundred recognised languages. On the linguistic challenges of archival research in the Global South, see Sara Honarmand Ebrahimi & Ismay Milford, 'Roundtable: The Archives of Global History in a Time of International Immobility', *Historical Research*, DOI: https://doi.org/10.1093/hisres/htac015 (accessed 24 August 2022).

translators, and researchers to better explore how these popular movements influenced the fight for freedom in the Third World.

Similarly, this study has shown how Filipino elites utilised their agency to craft a client-patron relationship with the United States built on shared commitments to anticommunism, anticolonialism, and liberal capitalist development. It has highlighted the challenges they faced in rationalising their approach and demonstrated how they presented their decisions as an expression of self-determination. Yet, there is less information on how other Third World countries understood Manila's arguments. Or how internal conversations about the Philippines helped influence non-aligned nations like India. A broader base of Third World sources would offer interesting transnational perspectives on Philippine independence that could further complicate ideas about anticolonial solidarity and South-South interaction during the Cold War. On this point, the economic, environmental, and ethical implications of archival research in the Global South have never been more relevant. It is no longer financially or ecologically viable for scholars to fly around the world. The trend of Western researchers travelling to Third World countries to find "lost" archival material conjures up unpleasant parallels with colonial anthropologists. This is why digital humanities has started to play an increasingly important role in international history.[23] Online repositories such as the Cold War International History Project are leading the way by helping to translate, digitise, and share sources.[24] But academics could make more direct efforts to work together. A more holistic picture of international relations history would move away from the fetishization of "new" archival material and towards more collaborative projects with researchers from different localities and disciplines.

[23] David Allen & Matthew Connelly, 'Diplomatic History After the Big Bang: Using Computational Methods to Explore the Infinite Archive', in Frank Costigliola & Michael J. Hogan, eds., *Explaining the History of American Foreign relations*, 3rd edition (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2016), pp. 74-101.
[24] The Cold War International History Project, History and Public Policy Program Digital Archive, Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, Washington, DC, https://www.wilsoncenter.org/program/cold-war-international-history-project (accessed 20 December 2015).

Whatever the future holds for histories of the Third World, it is clear that the Philippines should be an important part of it. Likewise, for studies of American empire and intervention in the Global South. The same problems that blighted US-Philippine relations during the Cold War are still prevalent today: ineffective aid, unequal security arrangements, and competing strategic priorities. These conditions have persisted even though the US role in the country has greatly diminished.[25] Still, it is clear that both countries need each other. In light of China's growing influence and investment in the Global South, the United States needs loyal Asian allies to offset the challenge to American hegemony.[26] Amidst the so-called "Asian Century," the Philippines still needs the United States to help protect the islands.[27] Going forward, as the Philippines and United States face new threats together at home and abroad, there is hope that a new generation of leaders will emerge in Manila that can create a fairer and more balanced foreign policy. One that is self-sufficient and able to support Washington without being indebted to it. Similarly, if US policymakers can learn to show a little more carrot and a little less stick, then perhaps the United States will be able to claw back some of the credibility that underscored American leadership in the postwar world. In this respect, the story of Philippine independence is a story of crossed wires and chances not taken. The Philippines failed to forge a more individually minded foreign policy that was resilient to outside interference. The United States failed to make the most of their greatest imperial asset and missed the chance to foster stronger ties with postcolonial nations through their actions in the Philippines. Their uneven alliance serves as an enduring reminder of how American imperialism shaped the Global South.

[25] Francia, *A History of the Philippines*, pp. 281-324.
[26] Renato Cruz De Castro, 'The Philippines-US Alliance and 21st Century US Grand Strategy in the Indo-Pacific Region: From the Obama Administration to the Biden Administration', *Defence Studies*, DOI: 10.1080/14702436.2022.2073224, pp. 1-19.
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