

FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT'S ATTITUDE TOWARD THE  
ASIAN EMPIRES OF GREAT BRITAIN AND FRANCE

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The purpose of this thesis is to examine Franklin D. Roosevelt's role as an anti-colonialist and his plan for a post-war world. Roosevelt believed that colonialism was the cause of hatred, discontent and war. With this in mind, he pursued an anti-colonial policy against the British and French empires, to him, the mainstay of colonial power.

The primary sources used in this study are the documents printed in the Foreign Relations series and personal accounts of people who worked with Roosevelt during this time such as Winston Churchill, Charles De Gaulle, Cordell Hull and Elliott Roosevelt.

The thesis is divided into five chapters, each centering around a particular phase of Roosevelt's ideas on colonialism. Chapter One traces the development of Roosevelt's anti-colonialist views from school days to the presidency and World War II. Chapter Two deals with his opposition to the British empire in the Far East, especially India. While Roosevelt was sympathetic to the Indian people's desire for

nationhood and pressured Churchill to grant independence, he was reluctant to go too far, for he feared it might hurt the overall war effort. Roosevelt's task, then, was to persuade Churchill to end colonial rule and at the same time remain on good terms with the British.

In pursuit of this policy, Roosevelt sent William Phillips to India in the hope of bringing about a settlement. Phillips' mission, which ended in failure, is the topic of Chapter Three.

Chapter Four deals with the French Empire and with Roosevelt's attempts to prevent France from reinstating itself in Indo-China after the war. Taking advantage of his country's position in liberating Indo-China from Japan, Roosevelt planned to end the French empire in that area.

In his plans for a new and better world, Roosevelt believed in replacing colonial empires with a trusteeship system under the United Nations. This plan is discussed in Chapter Five. He believed that as head of the leading allied nation, he would be able to prevent the British and the French from keeping their empires at the end of the war. With Roosevelt's death, however, his dream did not come true. Harry Truman, influenced by the Joint Chiefs of Staff, relented on Roosevelt's stand and strove for harmony among the victorious nations. As a result the trusteeship system

was limited and pertained only to those areas taken from the Axis nations and to those areas placed voluntarily under the system's control.

While researching my thesis, I found little evidence that Roosevelt was a political opportunist who wished to abolish the British and French empires only to replace them with his nation's rule over them. I found no evidence that Roosevelt planned to put United States military bases in Asiatic countries once they were liberated from their mother country. This plan belonged to the Joint Chiefs of Staff and not to Roosevelt, who had opposed the Joint Chiefs on this point. Roosevelt believed that by eradicating colonialism, he would be ridding the world of much hatred and thus lessen the chance of future war. Seeing little difference between Nazi aggrandizement in Europe and colonial ambitions in Asia, he included in the Atlantic Charter a clause which pertained to the self-determination of all nations in the world. I have concluded that Roosevelt was an idealist and genuinely dedicated to the eradication of the "seeds of conflict," of which colonialism was one.

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

Since its birth, the United States, at least in theory, has championed anti-colonialism and self-determination. Few of its statesmen down through the years have failed to pay homage to these highly touted principles, and Franklin Delano Roosevelt, thirty-second president, was no exception. During the Second World War when European imperial powers lost control of distant holdings and nationalism rose to new heights, Roosevelt encouraged the cause of independence. During this period, the United States under Roosevelt's leadership pursued a course, often contrary to the wishes of her allies, opposing extension of colonialism and urging colonial powers to give up their empires.

Roosevelt had not always advocated anti-imperialism. In the early 1900's, he upheld the concept of humanitarian imperialism as a means by which a Christian democracy, such as the United States, could impose civilization on the backward and less fortunate people of the world.<sup>1</sup> He thought

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<sup>1</sup>Frank B. Freidel, The Apprenticeship, Vol. I of Franklin D. Roosevelt, 3 vols. (Boston, 1952), p. 270.

that his country, as well as the rest of the world, would benefit from the establishment of a nation whose people, after having received advantages of humanitarian imperialism--education and economic stability--would be more content and therefore less inclined to engage in conflict. Another benefit would be enhancement of the United States' economic position from the development of trade.

As Woodrow Wilson's Assistant Secretary of the Navy, Roosevelt often expressed this concept of humanitarian imperialism. During this period he approved the United States role as watchdog of the Western Hemisphere. He believed that the economic position of his country in a peaceful world should not be threatened by international instability. This view prompted him to speak aggressively on April 27, 1919, in reference to the Mexican Revolution. "Sooner or later, it seems, the United States must go down there and clean up the Mexican political mess. I believe that the best time is right now."<sup>2</sup>

His desire to promote the United States economy reflected influence of Alfred Thayer Mahan. Since the position of the United States was dependent upon foreign trade, a strong navy

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<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 232, citing Milwaukee Sentinel, April 27, 1914.



was needed to protect shipping lanes from any danger. A strong navy could intervene, when required, in affairs of unstable governments. Thus, a strong navy would serve a two-fold purpose: one of restoring stability and the other of securing the United States' trading position in the world.

'If you cut off the United States from all trade and intercourse with the rest of the world you would have economic death in this country before long.' Moreover, it would end the humanitarian work of the United States in its possessions and Latin America.<sup>3</sup>

Armed with his belief in humanitarian imperialism and its relation to a nation's economy, Roosevelt excused such aggressive moves as the Marine intervention in Haiti by explaining that he was interested in the development of such small nations so that no other country could ever exploit them.<sup>4</sup> In 1920, when running for the vice presidency, he described his government experience in remarking that, "One of my jobs was to look after a couple little republics [Dominican Republic and Haiti] that our navy is running." He also claimed credit for writing the Haitian constitution.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Ibid., p. 260, citing Flushing Times, December 22, 1915.

<sup>4</sup> Samuel I. Rosenman, editor, The Tide Turns--1943, Vol. XII of The Public Papers and Addresses of Franklin D. Roosevelt, 13 vols. (New York, 1950), p. 430.

<sup>5</sup> Robert Ferrell, American Diplomacy--A History (New York, 1969), p. 454.

In reference to the Marine landings in Haiti and Santo Domingo, he used the word "interesting" and emphasized the danger of revolution in those two nations to United States citizens and property and to the Panama Canal.<sup>6</sup> He believed that his country was the big brother of the Central American states and was actually acting as a trustee for them.<sup>7</sup>

In January, 1917, the Department of Navy sent Roosevelt to Haiti, Santo Domingo, and Cuba to see what the Marines had done for these nations since their intervention. This trip offered proof to Roosevelt that the policy of humanitarian imperialism helped underdeveloped nations to realize their potential and to stabilize their governments. He saw none of the bitterness and repressive hostility that oppressed people feel; instead, he saw only examples of how intervention benefited these nations.<sup>8</sup> Even later in life, when he realized that other nations resented big-brother tactics of

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<sup>6</sup>Elliott Roosevelt, editor, F.D.R.: His Personal Letters, 1905-1928 (New York, 1948), II, 223.

<sup>7</sup>Frank B. Freidel, The Ordeal, Vol. II of Franklin D. Roosevelt, 3 vols. (Boston, 1954), p. 81, citing speech given at Butte, Montana, August 12, 1920.

<sup>8</sup>Freidel, Franklin D. Roosevelt, I, 281-282.

his country, he would still point with pride to Marine accomplishments throughout Central America.<sup>9</sup>

An exact date cannot be given for the reversal of Roosevelt's attitude towards imperialism. This transition was a gradual one but is evident as early as the 1920's. On May 2, 1925, Roosevelt took a first step in the formulation of his future good neighbor policy when he stated in the Macon Daily Telegraph (Macon, Georgia):

But every American wants to see this country play the part of a man and lead in the advancement of civilization as a whole, and in the lessening, not only of the horrors of war, but of the chances of war itself. Are you satisfied, by the way,<sup>10</sup> that America is today doing its full duty to mankind?

This statement reflected a definite shift in Roosevelt's emphasis from military aggressiveness to lending a helping hand economically and thereby lessening world discontent. Despite the campaign oratory of 1920, when campaigning for the vice presidency, the horrors of World War I had changed Roosevelt's ideas on imperialism. He was also filled with Wilsonian idealism which called for eradication of war and the causes of discontent and aggression by promoting a friendly

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<sup>9</sup> Elliott Roosevelt, editor, F.D.R.: His Personal Letters, 1928-1945 (New York, 1950), III, 404-405.

<sup>10</sup> Donald Scott Carmichael, editor, F.D.R., Columnist; The Uncollected Columns of Franklin D. Roosevelt (Chicago, 1947), p. 65 citing Macon Daily Telegraph, May 2, 1925.

atmosphere to counteract distrust and hatred that could lead to conflict.<sup>11</sup> Roosevelt had been affected by Point Five of Wilson's Fourteen Points which dealt with the rights of colonial peoples to determine for themselves their own course as nations. He once stated, "We in the United States do not seek to impose on any other people either our way of life or our internal form of government."<sup>12</sup> Roosevelt also displayed an understanding of the importance of the Golden Rule when he observed, "Mankind will ever be grateful to the heroes living and dead who taught the world that the teaching 'Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself' applies to nations as truly as to individuals."<sup>13</sup> This became one of the underlying themes of Roosevelt's foreign policy in dealing with colonial nations.

Further expanding his philosophy of world betterment, he published an article for The Standard (Dutchess County, New York) on September 20, 1928. He pointed out that the

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<sup>11</sup>Willard Range, Franklin D. Roosevelt's World Order (Athens, Georgia, 1959), pp. 27-28.

<sup>12</sup>Samuel I. Rosenman, editor, The Continuing Struggle for Liberalism--1938, Vol. VII of The Public Papers and Addresses of Franklin D. Roosevelt, 13 vols. (New York, 1941), p. 565.

<sup>13</sup>Freidel, Franklin D. Roosevelt, II, 127.

United States, as a leading power, would benefit more from maintenance of good relations with foreign countries in the areas of trade and commerce than by intervention. He emphasized that "this country is not liked by its neighbors." He said, "We are viewed with suspicion . . . because of our general attitude in the past." He went on to support the promotion of peace "through the elimination of the causes of trouble . . . ." <sup>14</sup> Thus, the idea of economic betterment through intervention was altered from an aggressive course to a passive one.

Outlining his concepts of international relations and also hoping to create a plank for the Democratic party in the presidential election of 1928, Roosevelt published an essay in Foreign Affairs. <sup>15</sup> Noting that imperialism might benefit a colony with its humanitarian achievements, Roosevelt pointed out that it more often created much ill-will and animosity among the exploited. With this, he set forth the proposition that a good neighbor policy, in which the United States would uphold the sovereignty of the countries of Latin

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<sup>14</sup> Carmicahel, F.D.R., Columnist, p. 136, citing The Standard, September 20, 1928.

<sup>15</sup> Franklin Delano Roosevelt, "Our Foreign Policy," Foreign Affairs, VI (July, 1928), 573-586.

America and maintain their dignity, would do much to improve relations with that area. Turning to the question of Philippine independence, he outlined a method whereby Filipinos were to be gradually educated towards self-government.<sup>16</sup> Applying these concepts of a good neighbor policy and gradual preparation for independence on a world-wide scale, Roosevelt developed the basis for his foreign policy in dealing with imperialistic nations. Motivated by humanitarian sentiment, he hoped eventually to abolish colonialism and establish an atmosphere of enlightened self-interest. In this manner, a nation of the world would realize that its progress, security, and welfare depended on the progress, security, and welfare of other nations.<sup>17</sup>

Strengthened by the belief that the concept of the good neighbor would change the old world order of hate, Franklin Roosevelt took the oath of office as President of the United States in March, 1933. In the conduct of foreign policy, Roosevelt would emphasize faith in the Good Neighbor Policy, for surely a trusting hand extended to floundering nations would do more to foster good will and friendship than would

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<sup>16</sup>Ibid.

<sup>17</sup>Range, Roosevelt's World Order, p. 52.

armed intervention. On the topic of the good neighbor, Roosevelt believed that although the Good Neighbor policy aimed to promote peace everywhere, it was conceived primarily in the national interest.<sup>18</sup> The underlying idea of this statement was that in helping other nations achieve their destiny through agreements and negotiations and not by intervention, wars which might involve the United States would be less likely to occur. As President, Roosevelt enforced his Good Neighbor Policy and his belief in a better world by refusing to intervene in Cuba. He also withdrew the Marines from Haiti and approved the Tydings-McDuffie Act which provided for Philippine independence within ten years. In order to keep his word that the United States was not interested in any territorial gains, he authorized the State Department to negotiate for the termination of his country's territorial rights in China.<sup>19</sup> In the same manner, he became one of the sharpest critics of colonialism, because he feared that the discontent felt by the colonial peoples could eventually lead to war and thus threaten the United

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<sup>18</sup>Thomas H. Greer, What Roosevelt Thought; The Social and Political Ideas of Franklin D. Roosevelt (East Lansing, Michigan, 1958), p. 161.

<sup>19</sup>Cordell Hull, The Memoirs of Cordell Hull (New York, 1948), II, 1257.

States' position in world trade. Believing that advanced nations must recognize and respect human dignity of all nations and that the colonial powers such as Great Britain and France had only exploited colonial peoples, Roosevelt used World War II as a means of negotiating the end of colonial empires.



## CHAPTER II

### ROOSEVELT AND INDIAN INDEPENDENCE

During World War I, the British government announced a change in its Indian policy. Believing it beneficial to the war effort, the British promised to grant the people of India self-government immediately after the war. This announcement marked the beginning of the Indian struggle for autonomy that reached its peak during World War II. The Indian people received the declaration of 1917 with enthusiasm, for it appeared that British domination would soon end. This sentiment was cut short, however, when the British Parliament put off their promise and passed a series of repressive laws pertaining to India.<sup>1</sup> The Indian people under the leadership of Mohandas Gandhi, a member of the powerful All-Indian Congress Party, protested the British actions. At first the protests were peaceful, but they soon became more aggressive. In spite of British concessions for greater local self-government, the people of India continued their non-cooperation and civil disobedience.<sup>2</sup> These

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<sup>1</sup>John S. Hoyland, Indian Crisis: The Background (London, 1943), p. 78.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., pp. 80-81.

disturbances prompted the British government to send Sir John Simon to India on a fact-finding mission. His recommendations, along with those made at a series of conferences, became the basis for a new constitution in the Government of India Act of 1935.<sup>3</sup> Although the Indian people reluctantly accepted the new constitution which granted increased self-government, they did not give up their desire for complete self-government.<sup>4</sup>

The Indian situation was one of quiet before the storm in 1939 when war broke out in Europe, and Japan expanded over Asia. The Indian people, content to watch world events from the sidelines, were suddenly jolted into the reality of war when the British viceroy declared India at war with Germany in September, 1939. This move surprised the Indian people, for they had not been consulted about such a momentous decision involving their destiny. This action convinced distrustful Indian leaders that the British still regarded India as a dependency and that the dream of self-government, despite British promises, was still far in the future.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>3</sup>Stewart C. Easton, The Rise and Fall of Western Colonialism; A Historical Survey From the Early Nineteenth Century To The Present (New York, 1964), p. 142.

<sup>4</sup>Hoyland, Indian Crisis, p. 83.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid., p. 84.

Displaying disapproval of British action, members of the Congress Party resigned their elected positions in the provinces, thus bringing an abrupt end to local self-government and reinforcing the British autocratic rule in the central government. Sensing India's defiant mood, Britain renewed plans for autonomy but added the stipulation that it would be granted only after the war. Believing that India's position in Asia, as well as her manpower, was vital to Britain's war effort in Europe, Indian leaders decided to bargain with Britain. They refused to cooperate with the British unless local self-government was granted immediately on all levels of Indian government and definite assurances were given for complete self-rule after the war.<sup>6</sup>

India's lack of interest in the war in Europe and her continued resistance to Britain's war effort greatly alarmed President Franklin Delano Roosevelt and Secretary of State Cordell Hull. Although the United States was not yet at war, it watched with particular interest the events in Asia. India's approval of Japanese slogans calling for "Asia for the Asiatics" and her interest in Japan's southerly moves greatly alarmed the United States.<sup>7</sup> President Roosevelt

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<sup>6</sup>Easton, The Rise and Fall of Western Colonialism, p. 181.

<sup>7</sup>Gaddis Smith, American Diplomacy During the Second World War, 1941-1945 (New York, 1965), p. 82.

and Secretary Hull agreed with the opinion of United States Ambassador to China, Herschel Johnson, who wired a prophetic message describing the rise of Japanese prestige in Asia:

'But in striking a death blow at Britain's historical prestige and traditional morale, she immeasurably enhances her own position and value. The present blow to Great Britain is not as great in effect as it will be in the future. Japan hopes that as Britain's power and prestige suffer in South China, hers will rise proportionately in the eyes of the Chinese and all Asiatic peoples.'<sup>8</sup>

Convinced that the Indians would cooperate to a greater extent with the British if assured of independence, the United States decided to explore through diplomatic channels the possibility of dominion status for India sometime after the war.<sup>9</sup> Aware of the awkwardness of United States meddling in British affairs, the State Department worked on a proposal that would grant India self-government. This plan closely resembled United States policy toward the Philippine Islands and entailed a program of gradual self-government.<sup>10</sup>

In a message to the British government Assistant Secretary Adolf Berle, Jr. emphasized United States interest

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<sup>8</sup>Foreign Relations of the United States, 1938 (Washington, D.C., 1954), III, 377.

<sup>9</sup>Foreign Relations of the United States, 1941 (Washington, D.C., 1959), III, 177, 179.

<sup>10</sup>Hull, Memoirs, II, 1482.

in the grave Indian situation. He recognized India's strategic position in Asia and pointed out her importance to the Middle East when he stated:

Her status is of interest to all of the surrounding nations, and the degree to which and the methods by which she becomes integrated into a common cooperative effort of free peoples undeniably will affect the attitude of the Middle East countries.

Enumerating advantages India, with her vast reservoir of manpower and her location for supplying vital war materials, could offer the allies, Berle concluded, "To that end the . . . United States hopes that His Majesty's Government will promptly explore the possibility of bringing India into the partnership of nations on terms equal to the other members of the British Commonwealth."<sup>11</sup> Any hopes for a quick settlement of the dilemma were quickly dashed, however, when Prime Minister Winston Churchill voiced vehement opposition to dominion status.<sup>12</sup> The only recourse for the United States in the matter was left to President Roosevelt.<sup>13</sup>

The two leaders of the free world, although both dedicated to liberty and freedom, held differing views on colonialism. Winston Churchill had been raised in the British tradition of

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<sup>11</sup>Foreign Relations, 1941, III, 177.

<sup>12</sup>Ibid., p. 179.

<sup>13</sup>Ibid., p. 181.

colonialism and, like most Englishmen, was convinced that if England were to lose its empire it would become a second-rate power.<sup>14</sup> Taking the attitude that it would be disappointing to win the war at the cost of losing India, Churchill had gone so far as to state that the Indian question was as important to him as a separate peace with Germany.<sup>15</sup> He firmly believed that it was the duty of the British government to protect the four hundred million Indians from Japan.<sup>16</sup> Expressing doubts on dominion status for India during the war, Churchill pointed out that without the British restraining influence, the bitter hatred between the two major religious groups in India--the Moslems and the Hindus--would be strained and disorders would be inevitable.<sup>17</sup> Although Churchill expressed desire to settle the Indian problem, he was often criticized by opponents for lack of a forward policy on the Indian situation.<sup>18</sup> Churchill was

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<sup>14</sup>Arthur Creech Jones, editor, New Fabian Colonial Essays (New York, 1959), p. 57.

<sup>15</sup>Winston S. Churchill, The Hinge of Fate, Vol. IV of The Second World War, 6 vols. (Boston, 1950), p. 322.

<sup>16</sup>Ibid.

<sup>17</sup>Ibid., p. 212.

<sup>18</sup>St. Louis Post Dispatch, August 1, 1941, sec. B., p. 3.

always quick to point out the loyalty of Indian soldiers and officers to the British during the war. Yet, he could not overlook hostility or indifference to the allied cause by the two major political parties--the All-India Congress Party and the Moslem League. Crediting this attitude to the fact that the Indian people were threatened for the first time under British rule with an invasion, Churchill noted, "The atmosphere in India deteriorated in a disturbing manner with the westward advance of Japan into Asia."<sup>19</sup> But many Indians believed that if India were not a part of England's empire, Japan would have no reason to invade their country. These Indians followed Gandhi's policy of passive resistance to the war effort in hope that the Japanese would not consider them enemies.<sup>20</sup>

As President of the United States, Franklin Roosevelt reflected widespread American suspicion of the British Empire.<sup>21</sup> Armed with the conviction that colonialism was one of the causes of war, Roosevelt intended to wage a personal battle against this system. In so doing, he hoped

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<sup>19</sup>Churchill, Second World War, IV, 205.

<sup>20</sup>Ibid., p. 206.

<sup>21</sup>Anthony Eden, The Reckoning, Vol. III of The Memoirs of Anthony Eden, Earl of Avon, 3 vols. (Boston, 1965), p. 593.

that former colonial territories once free of their masters would become politically and economically dependent on the United States.<sup>22</sup> Roosevelt often expressed himself strongly on the injustice of colonialism:

The thing is, the colonial system means war. Exploit the resources of an India, a Burna, a Java; take all the wealth out of those countries, but never put anything back into them, things like education, decent standards of living, minimum health requirements--all you're doing is storing up the kind of trouble that leads to war. All you're doing is negating the value of any kind of<sub>23</sub> organizational structure for peace before it begins.

In a discussion with his son Elliott concerning plans for a post-war world, he pointed out there was no room for colonialism. "When we've won the war, I will work with all my might and main to see to it that the United States is not wheedled into the position of accepting any plan . . . that will aid or abet the British Empire in its imperial ambitions."<sup>24</sup>

It was only natural that when Churchill and Roosevelt met there would be disagreements on the status of dependent nations. One such meeting of the two leaders occurred from August 9 to August 12, 1941 off the coast of Argentia, Newfoundland,

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<sup>22</sup>Ibid., p. 593.

<sup>23</sup>Elliott Roosevelt, As He Saw It (New York, 1946), p. 74.

<sup>24</sup>Ibid., pp. 115-116.



where they discussed broad principles designed to coordinate policies of their countries. On the topic of a post-war British Empire, Churchill made clear that he had not become Prime Minister for the purpose of presiding over the Empire's dissolution. To which, Roosevelt expressed his belief that, "America won't help England in this war simply so that she will be able to continue to ride roughshod over colonial peoples."<sup>25</sup> Roosevelt further vented his anti-colonial feelings in the ensuing conversation with the Prime Minister by pointing out that colonialism has kept the peoples of India and Africa backward.<sup>26</sup> He went on to emphasize that British colonial practices were eighteenth century methods which took all the wealth out of a nation and returned nothing to it. Roosevelt pressed for twentieth century methods which "include increasing the wealth of a people by increasing their standard of living, by educating them, by bringing them sanitation--by making sure that they get a return for the raw wealth of their community."<sup>27</sup> He also questioned how one could wage war against fascist slavery and not at the same time work to free all people, including those under colonial rule, from oppression.<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>25</sup>Ibid., p. 25.

<sup>26</sup>Ibid., p. 36.

<sup>27</sup>Ibid.

<sup>28</sup>Ibid., p. 37.

From the shipboard conference emerged a document known as the Atlantic Charter which listed eight points that would serve as basic policy for Britain and America after the war. Point three, however, which stated that all people had a right to choose their form of government and that self-government would be restored to all those deprived of it, did cause some controversy between the two men.<sup>29</sup> The Atlantic Charter and the self-determination principle became closely associated with Roosevelt and the United States and made him and his nation symbols of hope to oppressed people throughout the world. Even during the darkest days of the Indian situation, the Indian people looked upon Roosevelt as a savior. "The magic name over here is Roosevelt; the land, the people would follow and love, America."<sup>30</sup>

The nations of the free world cheered the precepts of the Atlantic Charter as a pledge given by two world leaders against aggression and oppression. The only criticism came from the Axis powers who, while calling it propaganda, accused the British of ignoring the principle of self-determination in its quest for more land.<sup>31</sup>

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<sup>29</sup>St. Louis Post Dispatch, August 14, 1941, Sec. A. p. 1.

<sup>30</sup>Foreign Relations of the United States, 1942 (Washington, D.C., 1960), I, 630.

<sup>31</sup>St. Louis Post Dispatch, August 14, 1941, Sec. A. p. 1.

Many people questioned not the sincerity of the document, but its meaning. The meaning of point three was of particular concern to colonial peoples. Did it apply to all nations of the world, even those belonging to the British Empire? When asked to give the meaning of this article, Churchill replied that it applied only to European nations under Nazi domination.<sup>32</sup> He emphasized this meaning in an address to the House of Commons on September 9, 1941, when he said, "At the Atlantic meeting we had in mind the restoration of the sovereignty . . . of the states . . . now under the Nazi yoke." In reference to the colonies, he stated that the question of self-government in these areas was "a separate problem from the progressive evolution of self-governing institutions . . . ."<sup>33</sup> These words added new determination to India's resistance to the war effort and to its demands for independence. They also encouraged pro-Japanese arguments in India, for the Japanese promised to give India independence.

Roosevelt also interpreted point three. Explaining his position during a fireside chat he stated, "The Atlantic

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<sup>32</sup>Foreign Relations, 1941, III, 182-183.

<sup>33</sup>Chester Wilmut, The Struggle for Europe (New York, 1952), p. 633.

Charter applies not only to the parts of the world that border the Atlantic but to the whole world . . . ." <sup>34</sup> Guided by the principle that "unless dependent peoples were assisted toward ultimate self-government and were given it . . . they would provide kernels of conflict," Roosevelt was more frank on the topic of British colonialism and its relation to the Atlantic Charter in private conversation. <sup>35</sup> While talking to his son Elliott, he revealed that he had tried to make Churchill understand that while the United States was Britain's ally, England must never believe that the United States would help it retain archaic ideas of empire. He added, "Great Britain signed the Atlantic Charter. I hope they realized the United States government means to make them live up to it." <sup>36</sup>

After the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor and the subsequent United States and British involvement in a global war, the State Department and the President became even more alarmed by the Indian situation. The Indian people, led by Gandhi, continued resistance to the British war effort and demanded self-government and independence as the price

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<sup>34</sup>Smith, American Diplomacy, p. 82.

<sup>35</sup>Hull, Memoirs, II, 1477-1478.

<sup>36</sup>Elliott Roosevelt, As He Saw It, p. 122.

for participation. The United States, now as an ally, renewed pressure on the British to end the present situation, for a "failure to solve the Indian problem would hamper military operations in the Far East and might later constitute a threat to peace when the war was over." Roosevelt also feared that the Asiatic people might think that his country was aiding Great Britain in the maintenance of her colonies.<sup>37</sup> Publicly, the Department of State and the President kept their statements regarding India of a general nature, but in private, their concern was more candidly expressed. One example of such concern was a message sent by Adolf Berle to Under Secretary of State Sumner Welles. Berle summed up his country's interest:

Secretary Hull has twice taken up with the British Government the possibility of a prompt recognition of India's aspiration to a freer existence and a full membership in the British family of nations. The President has indicated his sympathy with this general line.<sup>38</sup>

Berle recommended that the British make India a full partner in the proposed United Nations. He added that the United States and Roosevelt would welcome this step. In agreement with Berle's message, President Roosevelt asked United States

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<sup>37</sup>Hull, Memoirs, II, 1482-1483.

<sup>38</sup>Foreign Relations, 1942, I, 603.

ambassador to the United Kingdom, John G. Winant, to inquire into Churchill's views on the idea of dominion status.

"'I hesitate to send him a direct message, because, in a strict sense, it is not our business. It is, however, of great interest to us from the point of view of the conduct of the war.'"<sup>39</sup> His message to Winant reflected alarm over a report sent to him by General Chiang Kai-shek who had visited India during the previous year. In his message to the President, the general expressed shock at seeing the Indian military and political situation in shambles. He added that he did not think Churchill could possibly be aware of the true situation in India.

'If the British Government should wait until Japanese planes begin to bomb India and the Indian morale collapses, it would already be too late. If the solution is postponed until after the Japanese armies enter India, then it will be certainly too late. If the Japanese should know of the real situation and attack India, they would be virtually unopposed.'<sup>40</sup>

He also commented that if the Indian political situation changed for the better, any designs the Japanese had on India would be considerably damaged. He recommended self-government for India because "'only such a policy could halt the Indian trend to part from the British Empire and make it obvious

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<sup>39</sup>Ibid., p. 604.

<sup>40</sup>Ibid., p. 605.

that it is unpolitic and disadvantageous to secede from the Empire.'"41

The Senate Foreign Relations Committee also pressured Hull and Roosevelt to solve the Indian situation. Assistant Secretary of State Breckinridge Long summed up the committee's feelings and his own in a memorandum to Sumner Welles. Long observed that "even if they [Indians] had equipment in their hands and capable American officers to direct them, the Indians would not have the desire to fight just in order to prolong England's mastery over them."42 He expressed the opinion that the only way to compel the Indian people to participate effectively in the war was to grant India autonomy. Emphasizing that members of the Foreign Relations Committee, such as Robert La Follette, also expressed anti-British sentiment, Long warned that they might use their positions on the committee to attack the administration's policy toward Great Britain

for its alleged failure to take advantage of the position of power in which it finds itself and for having failed to use the force of its authority in arranging for large-scale military support of the manpower which the United States is now putting into the Far East.43

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41 Ibid.

42 Ibid., p. 606.

43 Ibid., p. 607.

The political pressures brought to bear by the Senate committee as well as a need to receive first hand information on the Indian situation prompted Roosevelt to send an economic and production mission to India. The mission's announced purpose was to mobilize and unite the war effort in India.<sup>44</sup> On March 9, 1942, Secretary Hull announced that Colonel Louis Johnson, former Assistant Secretary of War, was to be chairman of the Advisory Mission to Assist the War Effort in India.<sup>45</sup> In agreeing to the mission, the British made clear that Johnson was to stay out of Indian politics and that as a colony, India could not establish diplomatic relations with another country, even though the British government would recognize Johnson as a personal representative of the President with the rank of minister.<sup>46</sup> Although Johnson was not able to do very much in solving the Indian problem he did serve as an important source of information for Washington as later events will show.

Breckinridge Long's views were typical of the State Department's continued concern over India. The Department recommended dominion status for India within a stated period

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<sup>44</sup>Ibid., p. 613.

<sup>45</sup>Ibid.

<sup>46</sup>Ibid., p. 618.



after the war and pointed out that such British action would do much to curb anti-British feeling in the United States. This sentiment, according to the State Department, hindered support the United States could make to the war effort in India. In response, Churchill told the President that his government was considering a declaration of dominion status after the war. This declaration would include the option of secession from the commonwealth if India desired.<sup>47</sup>

Roosevelt's reply to Churchill on March 10 attempted to clarify the United States' position. Emphasizing this country's desire to keep out of British affairs, he, nonetheless, made a series of recommendations.<sup>48</sup> Roosevelt referred to the Confederation period in United States history and added:

Perhaps the analogy . . . to the travails and problems of the United States from 1783 to 1789 might give a new slant to India itself, and it might cause the people there to forget hard feelings, to become more loyal to the British Empire, and to stress the danger of Japanese domination, together with the advantage of peaceful evolution as against chaotic revolution.<sup>49</sup>

With this premise, Roosevelt suggested creation of a temporary government, representing all castes, occupations, and religions,

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<sup>47</sup> Ibid., p. 612.

<sup>48</sup> Hull, Memoirs, II, 1487.

<sup>49</sup> Foreign Relations, 1942, I, 615, 616.

to carry out the main duty of establishing a permanent government over a period of years. He believed that if the British would follow his recommendations, they would be in line with the world changes of the past fifty years and with the democratic process for which they were fighting. In conclusion, the President stressed that he did not want to be brought into the matter. "It is, strictly speaking, none of my business, except insofar as it is a part and parcel of the successful fight that you and I are making."<sup>50</sup>

Churchill did not accept Roosevelt's comparison of the Confederation period with the Indian situation. Upon receiving the President's recommendations, he observed that they were very interesting because:

it illustrates the difficulties of comparing situations in various centuries and scenes where almost every material fact is totally different, and the dangers of trying to apply any superficial resemblances which may be noticed to the conduct of the war.<sup>51</sup>

Yet because Churchill was aware of the importance of a pro-British India and wanted to lessen United States criticism of British policy in India, he announced creation of a commission on March 11, 1942. The commission was headed by

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<sup>50</sup> Ibid., p. 616.

<sup>51</sup> Churchill, Second World War, IV, 214.

Sir Stafford Cripps who was sent to India for the purpose of reaching a settlement. In appointing Cripps, a minister of the War Cabinet and a proponent of immediate partnership in the commonwealth for India, Churchill hoped to prove his government's honesty of purpose and interest in reaching a settlement.<sup>52</sup> He reasoned that if the Indians refused to adopt the recommendations made by Cripps, at least British sincerity would be proved to the world, and consequently much of the anti-British feeling in the United States would subside.<sup>53</sup>

The Cripps mission, although hailed in the United States as a step toward the end of colonialism in India, appeared doomed from the start. Two major components of Indian politics had already expressed their own separate plans for their country. Mohammed Ali Jinnah, President of the Moslem League, spoke for almost eighty million Moslems in India when he stated that his people would "accept no solution of the Indian problem which did not provide separate and autonomous Moslem and Hindu states."<sup>54</sup> This demand was in

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<sup>52</sup>Ibid., p. 215.

<sup>53</sup>Ibid.

<sup>54</sup>St. Louis Post Dispatch, March 24, 1942, Sec. A.  
p. 2.

contrast to the Hindu plan for a united India for Hindus and Moslems alike.<sup>55</sup>

Upon arrival at New Delhi, Cripps discussed the future of India with Indian leaders from all levels of Indian society. Guided in the belief that he was solely a mediator to set up a plan from which the Indians could solve their problems after the British withdrew, Cripps broadcast to the people of India and to a waiting world his recommendations for a post-war India.<sup>56</sup> In his broadcast he reassured the Indians:

the British Government and the British people desire the Indian peoples to have full self-government with a constitution as free in every respect as our own in Great Britain or of any of the Great Dominion members of the British Commonwealth of Nations.<sup>57</sup>

He then laid down a broad outline which he thought could best bring about Indian independence with the least amount of friction between the various groups in India. This outline provided for the direct election of provincial representatives to a constituent assembly which was to write a constitution and provide temporary government until the war ended. Avoiding mention of the name Pakistan, he stated that if, in the

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<sup>55</sup>Foreign Relations, 1942, I, 620.

<sup>56</sup>Ibid., p. 622.

<sup>57</sup>Ibid.

post-war years, any province wished to withdraw from the Indian union, it could do so. Cripps then concluded his message with an appeal to the Indian people "to bury the past and march side by side with Britain to a new era of liberty for all peoples."<sup>58</sup> These proposals were then given to the All-India Congress working committee for deliberation and discussion.

Although observers in London predicted a "speedy solution to India's problems," there was very little hope that the working committee would accept Cripps's proposals.<sup>59</sup> Britain's ambassador to the United States, Lord Edward Halifax, in a meeting with Secretary Hull predicted that the Indians would not accept the British plan, but would be content to put the plan aside hoping that in the meantime the British would propose more satisfactory conditions.<sup>60</sup> Halifax's predictions were correct, for on April 2, 1942, the committee reported its dissatisfaction with the proposals, especially the proposal which would allow the various provinces to secede from India once dominion status was attained.<sup>61</sup>

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<sup>58</sup> Ibid., pp. 622-623.

<sup>59</sup> St. Louis Post Dispatch, March 23, 1942, Sec. A, p. 1.

<sup>60</sup> Foreign Relations, 1942, I, 623.

<sup>61</sup> Ibid., pp. 624, 625.

Compromise on the Cripps proposals appeared out of the question. If the British gave in to the working committee's demands, they would alienate other groups in Indian society. Jinnah, President of the Moslem League, had already made clear his people's position, which was to accept nothing short of separation from India.<sup>62</sup>

In view of the Indian attitude toward his proposals, Sir Stafford sent Churchill possible alternatives to the problem. Advised of Cripps' message to Churchill, Louis Johnson, Roosevelt's personal representative who had kept Roosevelt advised of the situation, wired the President that:

Unless the President feels that he can intercede with Churchill, it would seem that Cripps' efforts are doomed to failure. Cripps so believes too. Such failure will adversely affect war effort. I respectfully urge therefore that the President . . . consider further effort with Churchill.<sup>63</sup>

He also observed that the feeling in the Indian Congress was anti-British and for this reason the Indians would not support any plan that would place them in the position of being "mercenaries" for the British. In closing, Johnson mentioned that Nehru had asked the United States and China

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<sup>62</sup>St. Louis Post Dispatch, March 24, 1942, Sec. A., p. 2.

<sup>63</sup>Foreign Relations, 1942, I, p. 627.

to urge the British to make concessions on the Cripps proposals.<sup>64</sup>

After carefully studying Johnson's appraisal, Roosevelt sent his reply through Acting Secretary of State Sumner Welles. Reflecting the United States' hesitation in becoming involved, Welles pointed out that he and the President had fully discussed Johnson's wire but found it better to abstain from any personal interference in the British-Indian affairs. "It is feared that if at this moment he [the President] interposed his own views, the result would complicate further an already overcomplicated situation."<sup>65</sup>

Any further attempts to reach a settlement on the Cripps proposals came to an abrupt halt on April 7 when the Indian Congress unanimously rejected the proposals.<sup>66</sup> In summation of Cripps' attempt to reach a solution, Johnson assured the State Department that Cripps had been sincere in his desire to reach a settlement. Johnson believed that Cripps had been handicapped in making any alterations in his original proposal, because changes required approval of Commander-in-Chief Wavell and the Viceroy Linlithgow before Churchill

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<sup>64</sup>Ibid.

<sup>65</sup>Ibid., p. 628.

<sup>66</sup>Ibid., p. 630.

would be informed of them. Johnson pointed out that the Cripps proposals contained little more than an unkept promise given by the British during World War I. Voicing his skepticism of British intention, he queried, "Does England prefer to lose India to enemy retaining claim of title at peace table rather than lose it by giving freedom now? I have my own opinion about it [sic]." <sup>67</sup>

In a message to Churchill regarding his mission's failure, Cripps maintained that rejection of his proposals came from the Indian belief that they could accept nothing short of immediate self-government and the establishment of a free constitutional government. He also observed that the British attempt to create a new approach to the Indian problem had been completely frustrated when the Indians realized that the proposals varied only slightly from former British proposals. <sup>68</sup> Keeping Roosevelt informed of developments in the Indian situation, Churchill sent the contents of Cripps' message to Roosevelt. In addition to this, he also sent the President a copy of his reply to Cripps in which he praised Sir Stafford for doing everything possible to bring

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<sup>67</sup> Ibid., p. 631.

<sup>68</sup> Ibid., p. 632.



about a settlement and for proving "how great was the British desire to reach a settlement."<sup>69</sup> Adding a few words of encouragement, Churchill remarked, "The effect throughout Britain and in the United States has been wholly beneficial. The fact that the break comes on the broadest issues and not on tangled formulas about defense is a great advantage."<sup>70</sup> This statement reflected Churchill's belief that even though the mission failed, the British government had proven its sincerity to the critics of his colonial policy in India.<sup>71</sup>

Churchill's optimistic outlook was soon dampened when he received Roosevelt's message urging postponement of Cripps' departure from India. The President pointed out that, contrary to Churchill's opinion, the American people believed the negotiations failed because of "'unwillingness of the British Government to concede to the Indians the right of self-government . . . .'"<sup>72</sup> Roosevelt added that the American people could not understand why the British Empire was willing to let part of the Empire secede after the war,

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<sup>69</sup>Ibid., p. 633.

<sup>70</sup>Ibid.

<sup>71</sup>Churchill, Second World War, IV, 215.

<sup>72</sup>Foreign Relations, 1942, I, 633.

but was reluctant to grant self-government during the war. Believing a solution could still be found, he again brought up his plan for the establishment of a government similar to the Confederation of early United States history.

'If you made such an effort and Cripps were then still unable to find an agreement, you would at least on that issue have public opinion in the United States satisfied that a real offer and a fair offer had been made by the British Government to the peoples of India and that the responsibility for such failure must clearly be placed upon the Indian people and not upon the British Government.'

The Prime Minister wired Roosevelt that he had received his telegram too late to keep Cripps in India, for the emissary was already enroute back to England. He added that he could not desert the Indian people and leave them in anarchy.<sup>74</sup> In years to come Churchill summed up his feelings with the following words:

The human race cannot make progress without idealism, but idealism at other people's expense and without regard to the consequences of ruin and slaughter which fall upon millions of humble homes cannot be considered as its highest or noblest form. The President's mind was back in the American War of Independence, and he thought of the Indian problem in terms of the thirteen colonies . . . I, on the other hand, was responsible for preserving the peace and safety of the Indian

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<sup>73</sup>Ibid., pp. 633-634.

<sup>74</sup>Ibid., p. 635.

continent, sheltering nearly a fifth of the population of the globe.<sup>75</sup>

India's war effort became even more important as riots and bloodshed spread again throughout the country in protest of the Cripps failure. Attempting to clarify the Indian position, Jawaharal Nehru, who had taken over leadership of the All-India Congress party upon Gandhi's resignation, wired President Roosevelt that although the Indian people had reacted unfavorably to the mission's failure, they would still do their utmost to defend India and to become closer allied with the cause of freedom and democracy.<sup>76</sup>

Roosevelt also received a message from Madame Chiang Kai-shek who had watched with interest the Indian situation. Expressing very much the same opinion as Nehru, she felt the Cripps failure had made the Indians even more hostile towards the British and towards their efforts to rouse the people of India against Japan.<sup>77</sup>

In view of the deteriorating situation, Louis Johnson made one last effort to reopen negotiations when he wired the State Department urging Roosevelt to take positive steps

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<sup>75</sup>Churchill, Second World War, IV, 219.

<sup>76</sup>Foreign Relations, 1942, I, 636.

<sup>77</sup>Ibid., p. 639.

in this direction. Stating that "saving India concerns America as much as Great Britain," Johnson thought that outside pressure must be applied to bring about a settlement.<sup>78</sup>

Answering Johnson's message, Roosevelt offered no new hope for a solution. He believed that any initiative which he might take to settle the stalemate would prove detrimental to any answer and would only complicate the matter more.<sup>79</sup>

Reiterating the top priority of winning the war, Roosevelt made clear that he did not wish to take action that could further alienate the Indian leaders and the British, thus impairing the war effort.<sup>80</sup> Roosevelt, although deeply committed to liberty throughout the world, was hampered in making any statements on the Indian situation, for he did not want to overstep his bounds and interfere in a British problem. He had done as much as he considered possible when he had written Churchill urging establishment of an Indian government similar to that under the Articles of Confederation.<sup>81</sup>

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<sup>78</sup>Ibid., p. 650.

<sup>79</sup>Ibid., p. 628.

<sup>80</sup>Ibid., p. 650.

<sup>81</sup>Churchill, Second World War, IV, 212-213.

The Indian situation appeared even more grave when rumors reached the United States that Gandhi was planning agitation against recruitment and war production if his demands for independence were not met.<sup>82</sup> As the Japanese moved close to India, Nehru's position of supporting the British war effort became very unpopular. Most Indian leaders, believing that the British must leave India in order to remove the Japanese threat, had deserted him and had joined Gandhi's pacifist ranks.<sup>83</sup>

Roosevelt's name was brought into the Indian situation when Maulana Azad of the working committee of the All-India Congress discussed possible compromise on his committee's demands. He recommended that Roosevelt and the United States serve as watchdogs to insure the British promise of independence after the war. During the interim period, Roosevelt or the United Nations would help work out a settlement.<sup>84</sup> Chiang Kai-shek also urged Roosevelt to help India and Britain seek a reasonable solution to their problem.<sup>85</sup>

Although Roosevelt would have enjoyed the position as arbitrator between colony and mother country, he agreed with

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<sup>82</sup>Foreign Relations, 1942, I, 663.

<sup>83</sup>Churchill, Second World War, IV, 221.

<sup>84</sup>Foreign Relations, 1942, I, 690-691.

<sup>85</sup>Ibid., pp. 697-698.

the British government that "suggestions coming at this moment from other members of the United Nations would undermine the authority of the only existing government in India and would tend to create that very crisis in India which it is . . . my hope may yet be averted."<sup>86</sup>

As hope for British renewal of negotiations dwindled, Indian grumblings of dissatisfaction grew louder. To curb the situation, the British passed a resolution to jail civil disobedience leaders, Gandhi and others, bent on frustrating the war effort.<sup>87</sup> Although the measures temporarily put an end to the civil disobedience movement, there was the added danger that more violent leaders would take command of the resistance while the more moderate leaders were driven underground or arrested.<sup>88</sup> Gandhi's arrest followed a demonstration held in Bombay on August 9, 1942, in which five persons were killed.

The belief once held by the Indian people that Roosevelt and the United States supported their fight for independence changed as reports of violence spread throughout India. Gandhi, as well as other Indians, took the attitude that

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<sup>86</sup>Ibid., p. 706.

<sup>87</sup>Ibid., pp. 704-705.

<sup>88</sup>Ibid., p. 712.

United States forces in India were allied with the British against the dissenting Indian People. Presidential assistant Lauchlin Currie, while on a special mission in China, observed the growing anti-American attitude and remarked:

This tendency endangers your moral leadership in Asia and therefore America's ability to exert its influence for acceptable and just settlements in post-war Asia. It is to Britain's own long-term interest that Asiatic belief in American disinterestedness be preserved.<sup>89</sup>

Prompted by Currie's evaluation of the Indian attitude, Roosevelt released a statement giving exact reasons for United States presence in India. Believing that it was of paramount importance for American troops to avoid shedding Indian blood, Roosevelt stressed that his country's sole purpose in India was to help the war effort. He pointed out, however, that if an Indian uprising occurred while American troops were engaged in trying to defeat the enemy, the uprising could not be separated from Japanese aggression.<sup>90</sup>

Soon after, Chiang Kai-shek reminded Roosevelt of his position as world leader and as author of the Atlantic Charter. The Generalissimo was alarmed by the arrest of the working committee of the All-India Party Congress, as well

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<sup>89</sup>Ibid., p. 713.

<sup>90</sup>Ibid., p. 738.

by recent Japanese gains in Burma. He urged Roosevelt to intervene in the Indian situation, thereby serving as an example to all who resist aggressors throughout the world.<sup>91</sup>

In reply, Roosevelt attempted to clarify his ideas on the Atlantic Charter by pointing out that the long standing policy of his government had been to help those who aspire to independence, but that he would refrain from offering advice on the Indian problem for fear of making it worse.<sup>92</sup>

Roosevelt observed that while he did not want to become an actual part of the controversy, he hoped to promote an agreeable settlement which would enhance the allied war effort in Asia. He emphasized, however, that he would gladly help clear up the situation if called upon by both sides to do so.

I think that you and I can best serve the people of India at this stage by making no open or public appeal or pronouncement but by letting the simple fact be known that we stand ready as friends to heed any appeal<sup>93</sup> for help if that appeal comes from both sides.

Meanwhile, the State Department carefully weighed recommendations of Sir Girja Shankar Bajpai, Agent General

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<sup>91</sup>Ibid., pp. 714-715.

<sup>92</sup>Ibid., p. 715.

<sup>93</sup>Ibid., pp. 715-716.



of India, to replace Louis Johnson, Roosevelt's advisor in India. The purpose was to enable the new representative to inform the British Viceroy on current United States thinking. In this manner, the Viceroy's attitude might change in favor of Indian independence, and he in turn might try to convince Churchill to change his present policy towards India.<sup>94</sup>

After much discussion of this plan, the State Department appointed William Phillips, former United States ambassador to Italy and director of the London division of the Office of Strategic Services, as Roosevelt's personal representative in New Delhi. In Making this announcement on November 3, 1942, the United States carefully noted that Phillips was not to act as mediator between the British and the Indians.<sup>95</sup>

The instructions sent to Phillips from the State Department reflected his country's position in India. Using the Philippines as an example, Phillips was reminded of Roosevelt's sympathy for colonial peoples and of the proper way a nation should treat a colony. His instructions

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<sup>94</sup>Ibid., pp. 728-729.

<sup>95</sup>Ibid., pp. 744, 747.

emphasized that the United States would not bring pressure which would be objectionable to the British, but that he could talk bluntly with various British officials regarding the situation as long as the talks remained friendly.<sup>96</sup> With this information, Phillips left for New Delhi.

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<sup>96</sup>Ibid., p. 747.

### CHAPTER III

#### THE PHILLIPS MISSION TO INDIA

The appointment of William Phillips to replace Louis Johnson as Roosevelt's personal advisor in India reflected the President's continuing interest in India as well as his desire for a settlement. Aside from sympathy for Indian independence, Roosevelt was interested in India for military purposes. American troops used the Indian province of Assam, close to Burma, as a route to ship supplies into China.<sup>1</sup> Viewing any attempt to frustrate the war effort as a threat to a final United Nations victory, Roosevelt attempted to alleviate the Indian situation. In choosing Phillips, Roosevelt pursued a "velvet glove" approach to India by carefully picking a man who would quietly encourage a solution to the Indian problem from behind the scenes.<sup>2</sup> His mission was an important one, for, as Roosevelt's representative, he would be the President's main contact with

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<sup>1</sup>William Phillips, Ventures in Diplomacy (Boston, 1952), p. 344.

<sup>2</sup>St. Louis Post Dispatch, December 17, 1942, Sec. B, p. 2.

India and also the main provider of information regarding prevalent Indian attitudes.

In New Delhi, Phillips met with Indian and British leaders to develop a better understanding of both sides of the dilemma. During these meetings he noticed that the general feeling held by the Indians concerning the Cripps mission was that Cripps had been recalled because he had exceeded instructions and had conceded too much in his proposals for India. Moreover, in his dealings with the officials, he noted that the government in India was not representative of the Indian people, and that the Indian participants were merely puppets selected by the Viceroy without consultation of Indian party leaders.<sup>3</sup> In a message to Roosevelt, Phillips revealed that while both Hindus and Moslems disliked and distrusted the British, the Moslems refused to back Hindu claims for independence. As a minority group, the Moslems feared being left out of an all-Indian administration, and preferred British rule in India unless demands for a separate Moslem nation were met. He also discerned a marked difference in British attitudes toward India. While in London, Phillips had observed a trend which

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<sup>3</sup>Phillips, Ventures, p. 353.

avored dominion status as soon as the Indians could agree on a form of government, whereas the British officials in India, oblivious to the changing sentiment in their homeland, were hostile to any variation in India's status.<sup>4</sup> In conclusion, Phillips underlined the importance of Prime Minister Winston Churchill, without whose consent no settlement to the problem could be reached.<sup>5</sup>

Although Phillips had met many of the major political figures involved in the Indian problem, he had not yet visited with Mohatma Gandhi who had been put into custody during the civil disobedience strikes of August, 1942. To avoid overstepping his authority as Roosevelt's personal representative and also in accordance with the President's wishes, Phillips called upon the Viceroy to ask permission to see Gandhi. During this meeting, the Viceroy disclosed Gandhi's proposed fast to begin on February 9, the six-month anniversary of his imprisonment.<sup>6</sup> To allay any American suspicions that Gandhi would fast to his death in prison and receive improper medical treatment, the Viceroy

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<sup>4</sup>Foreign Relations of the United States, 1943 (Washington, D.C., 1964), IV, 181-182.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid., p. 183.

<sup>6</sup>Ibid., p. 185.

pointed out that the British were willing to set the Indian leader free for the duration of the fast, but that he had refused.<sup>7</sup> Under the circumstances, the British policy of no visitors would prevent Phillips' visit.<sup>8</sup> During this meeting, Phillips noticed that the Viceroy, who was unsympathetic toward any change in India's status, displayed a distrust of Phillips' mission and of United States interest in India.<sup>9</sup>

After gathering as much information as possible, Phillips incorporated his recommendations in a message to Roosevelt. Phillips believed the first point of major concern was to transfer civil authority to an Indian civilian government.<sup>10</sup> In recommending this, he reflected ideas of many Indian leaders who had emphasized British insincerity in their promise to grant independence after the war. If the British were interested in more than simply maintaining the status quo, the Indian leaders believed the British government could at least transfer civil powers to an Indian provisional government as a show of good faith.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>7</sup>Ibid., p. 186.

<sup>8</sup>Ibid., p. 185.

<sup>9</sup>Ibid., pp. 187-188.

<sup>10</sup>Ibid., p. 190.

<sup>11</sup>Ibid., p. 187.

His role as observer for Roosevelt was severely tested when Gandhi began his fast on February 9, 1943. Under the direction of the President, Phillips met once more with the Viceroy. During this interview he emphasized his country's interest in the political crisis and underlined the serious effect Gandhi's possible death would have on the war effort.<sup>12</sup> Realizing the futility of his entreaties, Phillips later observed, "I left with the impression that he [the Viceroy] feels the importance of maintaining the prestige and power of the Government here and that the release of Gandhi would be interpreted by the Indian public as weakness and therefore to be avoided."<sup>13</sup>

As the Indian leader's condition grew weaker and he appeared near death, various Indian leaders called on Phillips to ask for Gandhi's life and for his unconditional release. Although the Viceroy had offered to free Gandhi for the duration of his fast, Gandhi had taken the position that only an unconditional release and apology from the British government would gain his freedom.<sup>14</sup> In a message to Roosevelt, Phillips noted, "Indians seem to feel that pressure by the

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<sup>12</sup>Ibid., p. 195.

<sup>13</sup>Ibid., p. 196.

<sup>14</sup>St. Louis Post Dispatch, February 10, 1943, Sec. A, p. 8.

United States is their last hope," and if the United States did not make a move soon, American prestige in India would be lost and nothing could prevent the Indians from moving ideologically towards Japan.<sup>15</sup> Believing it important that his country go on record to help Gandhi, Phillips urged Roosevelt to exert influence through British Ambassador Halifax for Gandhi's release.<sup>16</sup> Roosevelt followed Phillips' advice but with little effect. The British were more concerned over the presence of a representative of the United States government in India--Phillips--than they were about the status of the Indian leader.<sup>17</sup>

As Gandhi's health worsened, Phillips, corresponding regularly with Roosevelt, reported British censorship on Gandhi's condition and on the Viceroy's continued deafness to any appeals to free Gandhi unconditionally and thereby put an end to his fast.<sup>18</sup> Concerning the Indians, he observed:

For, rightly or wrongly, there is one fixed idea in the minds of Indians--that Great Britain has no intention of 'quitting India' and that the post-war period will find the country in the same relative

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<sup>15</sup> Foreign Relations, 1943, IV, 196-197.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid., pp. 199-200.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid., pp. 201-202.



position. In the circumstances, they turn to us to give them<sup>19</sup> help because of our historic stand for liberty.

Increased pressure at home and abroad for United States interference led Secretary Hull to reaffirm his nation's policy as set forth on August 12, 1942. This policy emphasized United States' intention of remaining out of Indian internal affairs and reminded the world that American troops in India were there only to protect India from Japan.<sup>20</sup>

During this time, Roosevelt was not as unsympathetic to Gandhi's plight as many Indians believed. For example, in a meeting with Lord Halifax, the President rhetorically asked the ambassador whether the British would consider the situation more effectively handled with Gandhi alive or with him martyred.<sup>21</sup> At the same time, as the British clung to their traditional attitude on colonialism, the personal relationship between the President and the Prime Minister reached low ebb. Thus Roosevelt was willing to make his views known to the British, but realized that there were obvious limitations on how far he could go in pressuring them.

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<sup>19</sup>Ibid., p. 203.

<sup>20</sup>Ibid., p. 204.

<sup>21</sup>Hull, Memoirs, II, 1493

When Churchill defined India as the heart of the British Empire and declared England's intention to preserve it, Roosevelt reluctantly went along, for he did not want to embarrass the grand alliance.<sup>22</sup> Nonetheless, he wanted the historical record clear that the United States had tried to help in the matter and had expressed concern over the possibility of Gandhi's death.<sup>23</sup> Being realistic, Roosevelt also knew that if he allowed Phillips to take an active part in the India problem or if he himself interfered, the British government would resent this action and "we could not alienate them in the Orient and expect to work with them in Europe."<sup>24</sup> As a result, the only course left open to the President was to seek "fellowship freely and in a thoroughly friendly way with both British and Indian peoples, especially their leaders, without making ourselves partisans in our acts and utterances to the extent of generating friction and ill feeling."<sup>25</sup>

Fears that Gandhi's death would cause future disturbances were allayed on March 3, 1943, when Gandhi ended his fast.

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<sup>22</sup>Ibid.

<sup>23</sup>Ibid.

<sup>24</sup>Ibid., p. 1599.

<sup>25</sup>Ibid., p. 1491.

Phillips wired a summation of the effect the fast had on the Indian people. The fast had united all Indians, even those who were not Gandhi's supporters. The Indians, according to Phillips, viewed the imprisonment and fast as persecution of an old man who had suffered much for the freedom of India.<sup>26</sup> Phillips attributed part of the spirit of Indian nationalism to Roosevelt who had offered words of encouragement to the Indians in the ideals of the Atlantic Charter. He had observed frequent reference to these ideas during his stay in India. He also hoped that Roosevelt would someday play an important role in settling the Indian problem.<sup>27</sup> In this same vein, Phillips suggested that, with the approval of the British government, leaders of all the political groups be invited on behalf of the President of the United States to meet and discuss future problems. The meeting would be presided over by an American who would use his influence to harmonize castes, races, religions and politics. This meeting would be held under the patronage of the King of England, the President of the United States, President of the Soviet Union, and Chiang Kai-shek.<sup>28</sup> Phillips believed

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<sup>26</sup>Foreign Relations, 1943, IV, 205.

<sup>27</sup>Ibid., pp. 205-206.

<sup>28</sup>Phillips, Ventures, p. 377.

that his recommendation would answer the British position that they intended to grant independence after the war but that the Indians were unable to agree on a suitable type of provisional government. The government that would be created from Phillips' meeting would hold the British to their word, and the United States would see to it that the British kept their promise.<sup>29</sup> In conclusion, he stated, "It may not be successful, but, at least, America will have taken a step in furthering the ideals of the Atlantic Charter."<sup>30</sup> These recommendations went unheeded by Roosevelt, for the President wished to maintain the position of non-interference with British affairs.

During his stay in India, Phillips took advantage of travelling throughout India to observe the workings of British colonialism. While touring the Punjab province, he saw much misery and poverty. Although the province had been praised as an example of a progressive local government of Hindus and Moslems working together, he observed that there was no enthusiasm among the people and no progressive approach to the solution of India's problems. He also noted

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<sup>29</sup> Ibid., p. 378.

<sup>30</sup> Foreign Relations, 1943, IV, 207.

that any accomplishment of this joint government was not due to the desire of the people, as the British claimed, but as the result of the province's political strong man.<sup>31</sup>

Phillips embodied his observations in a letter to Roosevelt. He noted that even in the more prosperous provinces, the people still remained anti-British.<sup>32</sup> During these travels, he had received much advice from interested Indian leaders who expressed faith and hope in Roosevelt and in his role as a possible mediator.<sup>33</sup>

In an interview with various editors of Indian newspapers, Phillips came into direct contact with prevalent Indian attitudes. While emphasizing the limitations of his country in dealing with the Indian situation, Phillips listened to their complaints. The editors expressed the futility of reaching any possible settlement without Gandhi's guiding influence. No one was able to confer with him during his internment. During this interview, the editors pointed out that the people of India were not interested in helping promote aims of the United Nations, because they felt that India, as long as she remained under British control, would

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<sup>31</sup>Phillips, Ventures, pp. 358-359.

<sup>32</sup>Ibid., p. 372.

<sup>33</sup>Ibid., p. 375.

not benefit from them. As a result, the Indian people refused to fight for a cause that did not affect them. Stressing the role they thought that the United States should take in breaking the deadlock, the editors emphasized that if the Viceroy would not let Phillips see Gandhi, then Indians would lose faith in the United States.<sup>34</sup> After this meeting, Phillips wired Roosevelt describing the feeling of discouragement and helplessness that the people of India displayed.<sup>35</sup> "I see only one remedy to this disturbing situation, and that is, to try with every means in our power to make Indians feel that America is with them and in a position to go beyond mere public assurances of friendship."<sup>36</sup>

On April 28, 1943, Phillips returned to the United States for consultation and temporary re-assignment to the staff of General Dwight Eisenhower in London. The Indian people viewed his reassignment with disappointment, for any hope of United States intervention now appeared lost. "The once almost unanimous Indian view that the United States would exercise its immense power for the practical application of liberal views now and after the war is definitely diminishing,"

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<sup>34</sup>Foreign Relations, 1943, IV, 216, 217.

<sup>35</sup>Ibid., p. 217.

<sup>36</sup>Ibid., p. 219.

reported an American official in New Delhi.<sup>37</sup> Equally discouraging was a message sent by George Merrell, an American observer in New Delhi to Secretary of State Hull. Merrell observed that anti-British feeling was at a new high and American prestige had suffered as a result of Phillips' recall to Washington. The Indian people were now convinced that they were fighting solely for the preservation of white domination.<sup>38</sup>

Franklin Roosevelt was deeply concerned about the deterioration of Indian sentiment towards the United States. Roosevelt desired Asiatic groups to look to him and to his nation for leadership after the war. Although he wanted the United States to assume a position of importance in Asia, he did not want to risk losing the good will of Great Britain, whose co-operation was needed in the pursuit of the war effort.

Phillips, now in London, offered a slight glimmer of hope toward settlement of the Indian problem in a wire to the State Department on July 22, 1944. In this message, Phillips related that he had been informed of possible

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<sup>37</sup>Ibid., p. 230.

<sup>38</sup>Ibid., p. 231.

action between Moslems and Hindus over the creation of a separate Moslem nation.<sup>39</sup> He also noted that Parliament was reviewing its position in India and that a debate over the situation was imminent. In recommending that pressure be brought on the British to settle the Indian problem, Phillips believed British sincerity might be evident in the debate, which in turn, would offer encouragement and hope to the Moslems and Hindus to settle their problems and speed up the process for independence.<sup>40</sup>

Any chance that Phillips could influence the British during the proposed debate in Parliament came to a standstill on July 25, 1944, when columnist Drew Pearson printed in his column of the Washington Post the contents of a letter Phillips had sent Roosevelt on May 14, 1943, containing his impressions of the British situation.<sup>41</sup> Although the publication was made without knowledge of the State Department, Pearson quoted many lines from Phillips' letter:

If we do nothing and merely accept the British point of view that conditions in India are none of our business then we must be prepared for various serious consequences in the internal situation in India which may develop as a result of despair and misery and

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<sup>39</sup>Foreign Relations of the United States, 1944 (Washington, D.C., 1965), V, 238.

<sup>40</sup>Ibid.

<sup>41</sup>Ibid., p. 239.



anti-white sentiments of hundred of millions of subject people.<sup>42</sup>

Phillips had gone even further in expressing his criticism by stating, "the peoples of Asia--and I am supported in this by other diplomatic and military observers--cynically regard this war as one between the fascists and imperialist powers."<sup>43</sup> He attributed the Indian belief that the Atlantic Charter was intended only to benefit the white races to Churchill's statements that the charter did not apply to India. Phillips went on to remark that he had not found much proof that the British intended to give more than token resistance to the Japanese in India.<sup>44</sup>

The disclosure in Pearson's column caused deep resentment in British circles, for here was direct American criticism of the British policy in India. Especially irritating to many British officials, including Churchill, was the assumption, probably ill-founded, that the British planned to give only minor resistance in the event of a Japanese invasion. Churchill wasted little time in summoning Phillips to his office in London. According to Phillips, the Prime Minister vented his anger and concluded:

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<sup>42</sup>Phillips, Ventures, p. 388.

<sup>43</sup>Ibid., p. 389.

<sup>44</sup>Foreign Relations, 1943, IV, 221.

'My answer to you is: Take India if that is what you want! Take it by all means! But I warn you that if I open the door a crack there will be the greatest blood-bath in all history; yes, blood-bath in all history. Mark my words,' he concluded shaking a finger at me, 'I prophesied the present war, and I prophesy the blood-bath.'<sup>45</sup>

Phillips informed Roosevelt of his encounter with Churchill. In the discussion that followed, Roosevelt, who had not yet accepted Phillips' resignation from his post in India, revealed his intention of returning Phillips to India. Upon learning of this, Phillips reminded Roosevelt that the people of India looked to the President for hope and that returning to India would be fruitless unless the present Indian deadlock were broken.<sup>46</sup>

Due to the ill effect the disclosure of Phillips' letter had caused, the State Department abandoned plans to influence the British on Indian independence.<sup>47</sup> Although apologizing for the publication of the letter, the State Department made clear that the United States still believed that a satisfactory solution of the Indian problem would be beneficial to the war effort in Asia.<sup>48</sup>

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<sup>45</sup>Phillips, Ventures, p. 390.

<sup>46</sup>Ibid., p. 391.

<sup>47</sup>Foreign Relations, 1944, V, 240.

<sup>48</sup>Ibid.

The British were not satisfied with the informal apology offered by the State Department. Pointing out Indian intention to publish a copy of Pearson's column alongside an appeal for immediate independence, they urged the President and the State Department to disassociate themselves from Phillips' letter for the sake of British-United States relations.<sup>49</sup>

After considering the British request, the State Department advised Roosevelt to follow the same line of thought offered by Phillips:

it would be impossible to issue a statement satisfactory to the British inasmuch as we share in general the views expressed . . . . Unless you feel that we should comply with the British request, I would appreciate having your permission to tell the British that we consider it preferable to make no public statement on the subject.<sup>50</sup>

Roosevelt agreed with this and refused to disassociate himself from Phillips' letter.

The British attitude towards Phillips was further expressed in a cable sent by Sir Olaf Caroe, head of the Department of External Affairs in India.<sup>51</sup> This cable denounced Phillips and asserted that the British would never

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<sup>49</sup> Ibid., pp. 241, 242.

<sup>50</sup> Ibid., p. 242.

<sup>51</sup> Ibid., p. 246.

again receive Phillips even if he were sent back to India. The cable went on to state that the views expressed by Phillips were not those that were expected from a professional, friendly envoy.<sup>52</sup> When questioned about his cable, Caroe replied that it represented not only his views but those of many leaders in the British government.<sup>53</sup> The hostile attitude taken by the British towards Phillips made it impossible for Roosevelt to send Phillips back to India. Roosevelt had only assigned Phillips to a position in London with the hope that should something of a positive nature develop in India, Phillips would be sent back. The Phillips mission to India ended on a sour note when Roosevelt quietly accepted Phillips' resignation from the position as the President's personal representative on March 14, 1945.<sup>54</sup> This also gave President Roosevelt a temporary setback to his plans of securing India's freedom. Any further discussion would be brought up at the conferences and in his plans for the post-war world.

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<sup>52</sup>Ibid., p. 246.

<sup>53</sup>Ibid., p. 247.

<sup>54</sup>Ibid.

## CHAPTER IV

### ROOSEVELT AND THE FRENCH EMPIRE

During the early part of the war, Franklin Roosevelt vented his dislike of colonialism on Winston Churchill and the British Empire, while pursuing a paradoxically different course on matters concerning France and her colonies. This position taken by Roosevelt was one of necessity rather than preference.

During the battle for France, the French attempted to elicit aid from the United States.<sup>1</sup> However, in concurrence with his nation's policy of neutrality, Roosevelt informed the French that any such action would compromise his country's neutral status.<sup>2</sup> When this first request for help was denied, French President of the Council of Ministers, Paul Reynaud, wired Roosevelt asking for military concessions. He concluded that without aid, "you will see France go under like a drowning man and disappear, after having cast a last look towards the land of liberty from which she awaited salvation."<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Foreign Relations of the United States, 1940 (Washington, D.C., 1959), I, 218.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 219.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 253.

In reply to this appeal, Roosevelt reassured the premier that the United States would not recognize the results of any military aggression and would not "consider as valid any attempts to infringe by force the independence and territorial integrity of France."<sup>4</sup>

With the fall of France in June, 1940, Roosevelt and the State Department had an opportunity to reappraise the situation. France in the hands of Axis powers brought up a question of deep concern: What was to be the status of the French colonies?

Believing it imperative to maintain communications with the French government, Roosevelt instructed Ambassador Anthony Biddle (in France) to remain on as a temporary representative of the United States for as long as possible.<sup>5</sup> During this period, Biddle was the main source of information regarding the situation in France, for the other major diplomatic missions had already fled.<sup>6</sup> Desiring to make United States views apparent before an armistice could be concluded with the Germans, Roosevelt urged Biddle to meet

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<sup>4</sup>Ibid., pp. 255-256.

<sup>5</sup>Foreign Relations of the United States, 1940 (Washington, D.C., 1957), II, 440-441.

<sup>6</sup>Ibid., p. 438.

with representatives of the French government. Biddle received instructions to emphasize that should the French government cooperate with the Germans they would stand a chance to lose their colonies after the war.<sup>7</sup>

Roosevelt's foreign policy towards the German-controlled Vichy government differed greatly from that of Great Britain. Whereas the British refused to recognize this government, Roosevelt endeavored to keep on good terms with Vichy. Moreover, he appointed William Leahy as United States ambassador to Vichy. Roosevelt believed that communications must be kept open in order to prevent Germany and the other Axis powers from gaining control over French colonies. These colonies in enemy hands could threaten United States security. With this in mind, Roosevelt outlined his views on the status of the French empire in a letter to Marshall Pétain. Emphasizing his nation's desire to see that the empire remain under French control, Roosevelt entreated the French leader to prevent attempts to take over French possessions.<sup>8</sup>

By not granting the use of naval and air bases in French North Africa to the Germans, the Vichy government, in spite

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<sup>7</sup> Ibid., p. 456.

<sup>8</sup> Foreign Relations of the United States, 1941 (Washington, D.C., 1959), II, 417.

of great pressure, refused to concede the status of their empire. French determination to keep their empire was echoed in orders that the French colonies were to resist any attack or attempted take-over no matter from what country, even Germany.<sup>9</sup>

On the question of French Indo-China, the French government was in no position to bargain with the Japanese. French Indo-China, consisting of Tonkin, Annam, and Cochin China, composed an area of 287,000 square miles and a population of twenty-three million people. The Japanese placed Indo-China high on their list of priorities mainly because of that area's rice production and strategic location. French Indo-China was within striking distance of the Philippines, Dutch East Indies, Malaya, Burma, and the southern border of China.<sup>10</sup> The French had kept their colony weak and dependent upon France economically and militarily. This proved to be a grave error, for after the fall of France, Indo-China was left virtually defenseless against any aggressor.<sup>11</sup> The colony came under pressure from Japan which

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<sup>9</sup>Ibid., p. 453.

<sup>10</sup>Ellen J. Hammer, The Struggle for Indochina (Stanford, California, 1954), pp. 13-14.

<sup>11</sup>Ibid., p. 16.



demanded the end of all French support to China, with whom the Japanese were at war. These demands included closing of the railroad that led from Indo-China into China as well as a ban on all exports to that country.<sup>12</sup>

The French governor of the colony had requested aid from Britain and the United States. Both nations turned down the plea for help. The United States, which advocated maintenance of the status quo in Asia, had taken the position that the Vichy government had war supplies throughout their colonies which could be used in Indo-China.<sup>13</sup> In spite of Vichy's desire to keep its empire intact, there was little the Vichy government could do but yield to demands for Japanese military occupation of northern Indo-China for it appeared that with the decline of French prestige in the Far East, the loss of that colony was imminent.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>12</sup>Foreign Relations of the United States, 1940 (Washington, D.C., 1955), IV, 30, 32.

<sup>13</sup>Ibid., II, 536.

<sup>14</sup>William L. Langer, Our Vichy Gamble (New York, 1947), p. 78.

<sup>15</sup>Foreign Relations of the United States, 1941 (Washington, D.C., 1956), V, 299, 313.

Charles De Gaulle and the Free French under the title of French National Committee also had plans for Indo-China. The committee's purpose was to unite French citizens and territories in their struggle against the Axis powers as well as to liberate France and regain sovereignty over French colonies. The Free French refused to recognize the terms of the armistice and laid claim to all French territories.<sup>16</sup> Dedicated to the restoration of the French Empire, De Gaulle was prepared to fight in Indo-China when that colony proved unable to withstand Japanese aggression without outside help.<sup>17</sup>

Although Great Britain had recognized the French National Committee, the United States had failed to do so. Roosevelt believed recognition of the Free French would negate his relations with the Vichy government, which served an important function.<sup>18</sup> Roosevelt was also suspicious of De Gaulle's intentions. In a letter to Churchill, the President voiced his criticism of the French leader. "I am fed up with De Gaulle, and the secret personal and political machinations of

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<sup>16</sup>Foreign Relations, 1940, II, 504-505.

<sup>17</sup>Ibid., p. 503.

<sup>18</sup>Charles De Gaulle, The Call to Honour 1940--1942, Vol. I of War Memoirs, translated by John Griffen, 3 vols. (New York, 1955), p. 357.

that Committee . . . indicates that there is no possibility of our working with De Gaulle."<sup>19</sup> He believed that the general was a major threat to his plans for a better world, because De Gaulle hoped to impose himself on France as its leader after the war. Roosevelt believed that such action would violate the principles of the Atlantic Charter which provided that the people of a country choose their own form of government.<sup>20</sup> As the war progressed, Roosevelt's attitude toward the French people also became increasingly bitter. Disappointed in her relatively easy fall to the Germans, he believed that France should not resume her former place as one of the great nations of Europe after the war.<sup>21</sup>

In spite of Roosevelt's personal feelings toward De Gaulle, the United States was forced to co-operate with the Free French, especially in the Pacific.<sup>22</sup> The National Committee of the Free French agreed to let the United States use French colonies in the Pacific for military bases as

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<sup>19</sup>Foreign Relations of the United States, 1943 (Washington, D.C., 1964), II, 155.

<sup>20</sup>Elliott Roosevelt, editor, F.D.R.: His Personal Letters, 1928-1945 (New York, 1950), IV, 1372.

<sup>21</sup>Elliott Roosevelt, As He Saw It, pp. 76-77.

<sup>22</sup>De Gaulle, War Memoirs, I, 220.

long as there was respect for French sovereignty and authority.<sup>23</sup> On January 5, 1942, the State Department released an agreement concerning the colonies in the Pacific in which the United States recognized the colonies to be the property of France.<sup>24</sup> Although the United States recognized the Free French as administering the French overseas territories, the State Department emphasized that this action did not constitute recognition of that committee as the government of France or of the French Empire. The Department added that it recognized the National Committee government as a temporary one until the French people could choose their own government.<sup>25</sup>

By 1943, Roosevelt's opinion on the status of the French Empire had changed from the previous year when he had upheld the integrity of the French Empire. In 1943, while talking with his son Elliott, he remarked, "The native Indo-Chinese have been so flagrantly downtrodden that they thought to themselves: Anything must be better than to live under the French colonial rule!"<sup>26</sup> He then added a general denunciation of colonialism, "Don't think for a moment, Elliott, that Americans

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<sup>23</sup>Ibid., p. 222.

<sup>24</sup>Ibid., p. 224.

<sup>25</sup>Foreign Relations, 1943, II, 185.

<sup>26</sup>Elliott Roosevelt, As He Saw It, p. 115.

would be dying in the Pacific tonight, if it hadn't been for the short-sighted greed of the French and the British and the Dutch."<sup>27</sup> This change in attitude had resulted from his trip to Casablanca and his conference with Churchill and De Gaulle. During this trip, he had toured both British and French North African colonies where he had observed for himself the exploitation of one country by another.<sup>28</sup> The impressions of colonialism were fresh in his mind when he met De Gaulle. During this meeting, the French leader emphasized his position that the allies should return the French colonies to French control immediately after liberation.<sup>29</sup> Roosevelt, who was in the process of formulating his own plans for the French Empire, later expressed his doubts on De Gaulle's ideas to his son Elliott:

I'm by no means sure in my own mind that we'd be right to return France her colonies at all, ever, without first obtaining in the case of each individual colony some sort of pledge, some sort of statement of just exactly what <sup>30</sup> was planned, in terms of each colony's administration.

Moreover, Roosevelt elaborated on the status of France in the future in which a trusteeship system would play a major

<sup>27</sup> Ibid.

<sup>28</sup> Eleanor Roosevelt, This I Remember (New York, 1949), p. 281.

<sup>29</sup> Elliott Roosevelt, As He Saw It, p. 114.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid.

role. Under such a system, France would be restored as a world power and be entrusted with her former colonies as a trustee, but she would be required to report on the progress of nations under her tutelage, until they were ready for independence.<sup>31</sup>

Upon returning to the United States after the conference, Roosevelt disclosed his intentions on the future status of the French Empire in a conversation with British Ambassador Halifax. In the discussion the President placed special emphasis on Indo-China. Roosevelt regarded Indo-China as an ideal colony for the tutelage period similar to that used in the Philippines in which the people are educated toward independence.<sup>32</sup> He did not think that this colony should be given back to France after the war. In addition, he pointed out that colonialism had not helped subject peoples by noting, "France has had the country--thirty million inhabitants for nearly one hundred years, and the people are worse off than they were in the beginning."<sup>33</sup> Believing that colonialism would provide the cause of future war, Roosevelt saw in the colony a lesson for all the world. He believed that, as

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<sup>31</sup>Ibid., p. 76.

<sup>32</sup>Hull, Memoirs, II, 1595.

<sup>33</sup>Elliott Roosevelt, Personal Letters, IV, 1489.

a result of French exploitation, Indo-China had been the springboard for the Japanese attack on the Philippines, Malaya and the Dutch East Indies.<sup>34</sup> Roosevelt informed Halifax that he did not stand alone in his opinion on the future status of Indo-China, but that Chiang Kai-shek and Russian Premier Joseph Stalin also agreed with him. He then added his personal thought that there was no reason to discuss the matter with the British for they would only oppose it out of fear of its effect on their possessions.<sup>35</sup>

During the years of Japanese occupation, nationalism became an important factor in Indo-China. The French government, under the supervision of Vice Admiral Jean Decoux, Commander in Chief in the Far East, tried to maintain vestiges of the French Empire.<sup>36</sup> He worked closely with the Vietnamese people and tried to counter Japanese propaganda for a "Greater Asia," under the supervision of Japan, with plans for an Indo-Chinese federation.<sup>37</sup> Decoux's regime was in a battle with the Japanese, and the stakes were the Vietnamese people. As a result, he encouraged egalitarian relations

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<sup>34</sup>Hull, Memoirs, II, 1595.

<sup>35</sup>Elliott Roosevelt, Personal Letters, IV, 1489.

<sup>36</sup>Hammer, Struggle for Indochina, p. 30.

<sup>37</sup>Ibid., p. 31.

between the French and the Vietnamese elite, as well as the teaching of the Vietnamese language.<sup>38</sup> When the Japanese brought a cultural mission to Indo-China, Decoux countered with the creation of schools for technological and vocational training.<sup>39</sup> Working closely with the people, Decoux proved that Indo-China could stand on its own feet economically. In so doing, he inadvertently encouraged the colonial people in their convictions of ability and ethnic importance. In spite of his severe repression of nationalist elements in Vietnamese society, Decoux's actions did more to nurture the spirit of nationalism than did the Japanese and proved to be a potent threat to the French rule over Indo-China.<sup>40</sup>

As the tide turned against the Axis powers, Decoux entered into relations with the Free French.<sup>41</sup> Roosevelt, desiring a trusteeship for that country, did not welcome the use of French forces in the liberation of their colony. He did however, recognize as early as 1944 the advantages of using some French nationals in Indo-China because of their intimate knowledge of the country, but he insisted that the

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<sup>38</sup>Ibid.

<sup>39</sup>Ibid.

<sup>40</sup>Ibid., p. 33.

<sup>41</sup>Ibid., p. 34.



people chosen be interested only in military operations and not prejudice the future status of Indo-China.<sup>42</sup>

By 1945, the new French Provisional Government was anxious to reassert its claim to Indo-China. The French viewed the occupation of their colony by Japan as a "war incident" and refused to recognize any change in the status of the colony.

The activity of the underground movement, the formation of the expeditionary forces . . . reveal the energy with which France intends to take part in the liberation of those of her territories that have been momentarily torn away from her by the enemy.<sup>43</sup>

When the question of the use of French troops in Indo-China was brought up, Roosevelt refused to make any decision saying that, "From both the military and civil point of view, action at this time is premature."<sup>44</sup>

At least two factors encouraged Roosevelt in his stand against colonialism in Asia. He felt the liberation of the colonies could not be accomplished without United States help, and he felt colonialism was not compatible with lasting peace in the Pacific area. He now saw a chance of insisting

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<sup>42</sup>Foreign Relations of the United States, 1944 (Washington, D.C., 1965), III, 744.

<sup>43</sup>Foreign Relations of the United States, 1945 (Washington, D.C., 1969), VI, 295.

<sup>44</sup>Ibid., p. 293.

that these colonies not be returned to their original owners unless guarantees of self-government and eventual complete independence were made.<sup>45</sup> He was determined that after the war was won, his country would not be wheedled into a position of accepting any plan that would help French or British imperial ambitions.<sup>46</sup> The establishment of trusteeships would provide a means of doing away with the old world order. Roosevelt had this in mind when he refused to send supplies to aid the French when the Japanese army, in a surprise move, took over all of Indo-China and announced, "The colonial status of French Indochina has ended."<sup>47</sup> This action had been prompted by Japanese fear of an Allied invasion. Questioning Roosevelt's position, De Gaulle stated, "We do not understand this policy. What are you driving at? . . . If the public here [France] comes to realize that you are against us in Indochina there will be a terrific disappointment and nobody knows to what that will lead."<sup>48</sup> On March 19, 1945, however, the United States yielded to French

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<sup>45</sup>Wilmot, Struggle for Europe, p. 634.

<sup>46</sup>Elliott Roosevelt, As He Saw It, p. 116.

<sup>47</sup>Hammer, Struggle for Indochina, p. 40.

<sup>48</sup>Foreign Relations, 1945, VI, 300.

demands for help. General Albert C. Wedemeyer, commanding general of United States forces in China, was authorized to give any assistance that could be spared without interfering with the war effort and the ultimate defeat of Japan.<sup>49</sup>

In his dealings with the French, Roosevelt did what he could to reduce their empire. He pushed aggressively toward this goal at the conferences held throughout the war. At these conferences, Roosevelt saw an opportunity to change the world and to further the cause of lasting peace.

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<sup>49</sup>Ibid., p. 302.

## CHAPTER V

### ROOSEVELT AT THE CONFERENCES

President Roosevelt was able to achieve some success against colonialism at the war conferences. He had studied history well and knew its lessons. World War I, "the war to end all wars," had not changed the world order of hate and discord. Believing that one of the major causes of war was exploitation of one country by another, Roosevelt set out to remedy this situation. He chose to cast aside the mandates established by the League of Nations and to create trusteeships. The new system would supervise colonies until they were able to govern themselves. "I am inclined to think that the mandate system is no longer the right approach, for the nation which is given the mandate soon comes to believe that it carries sovereignty with it."<sup>1</sup>

Believing in his nation's role as leader in the post-war world, Roosevelt deemed United States initiative essential to better standards of international morality and good will. Moreover, he saw himself in the unique position of being able

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<sup>1</sup>Elliott Roosevelt, Personal Letters, IV, 1372.

to manipulate the course of history and mankind. Roosevelt viewed trusteeships as a means to implement the pledges contained in the Atlantic Charter pertaining to the right of all people to choose the form of government under which they wished to live.<sup>2</sup> He had taken this idea of trusteeship from the Philippines, where he had seen it work. The system included two phases: a period of preparation involving education, plus a period of training for self-government starting at the local level.<sup>3</sup>

I like to think that the history of the Philippine Islands in the last forty-four years provides in a very real sense a pattern for the future of other small nations and peoples of the world. It is a pattern of what men of good will look forward to in the future.<sup>4</sup>

Realizing he must act swiftly in order to take advantage of his country's position in the world, Roosevelt announced on January 8, 1940, the creation of the Advisory Committee on Problems of Foreign Relations. The aim of the committee was to "strive with other nations to encourage the kind of

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<sup>2</sup>Hull, Memoirs, II, 1236.

<sup>3</sup>Samuel I. Rosenman, editor, Humanity on the Defensive, 1942, Vol. XI of The Public Papers and Addresses of Franklin D. Roosevelt, 13 vols. (New York, 1950), pp. 475-476.

<sup>4</sup>Samuel I. Rosenamn, Working With Roosevelt (New York, 1952), p. 483.

peace that will lighten the troubles of the world."<sup>5</sup> The function of the committee was to investigate causes of war and make recommendations on its avoidance in the future. The committee's findings became the basis for the Declaration of the United Nations on January 1, 1942, binding twenty-six nations together militarily to win the fight against the Axis and to support aims of the Atlantic Charter. The interim international organization, known as the United Nations Authority, would provide basic machinery for a post-war organization.<sup>6</sup>

Roosevelt realized that his plans to do away with colonialism would meet opposition. The system he proposed conflicted greatly with Churchill's, who upheld Britain's desire for its colonies to reach self-government within the commonwealth.<sup>7</sup> Charles De Gaulle, like Churchill, frowned on trusteeship, for his plans did not include supervision of French colonies by an international organization.

Despite certain disapproval by colonial powers, Roosevelt continued to broaden his ideas and privately to sound out his allies. This was one of the topics at a meeting held on

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<sup>5</sup>Hull, Memoirs, II, 1627.

<sup>6</sup>Ibid., p. 1637.

<sup>7</sup>Ibid., p. 1478.

June 1, 1942, with the Soviet Minister for Foreign Affairs Vyacheslav Molotov. At the meeting, Roosevelt brought up the question of trusteeship in relation to islands in the Pacific as well as to colonial possessions which, he thought should be taken away from weak nations for "our own safety."<sup>8</sup> Molotov agreed with the President and added that he thought the concept of trusteeship would be well received in Russia.<sup>9</sup> Going further, Roosevelt voiced the opinion that the trusteeship system would do away with mandates and that it could possibly be applied to the islands held by the British. Referring to Indo-China, Siam, Malay states, and the Dutch East Indies, Roosevelt stated in effect that each of the areas would require a different period of time before achieving readiness for self-government, but the movement toward independence was there just the same, and white nations could not hope to hold these areas as colonies in the long run.<sup>10</sup>

After the favorable reception by the Russians, Roosevelt felt more confident of his plans. He had not personally

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<sup>8</sup>Robert E. Sherwood, Roosevelt and Hopkins, An Intimate History (New York, 1948), p. 572.

<sup>9</sup>Ibid., p. 573.

<sup>10</sup>Ibid.

confronted the French and British with his thoughts, but his opportunity came in January, 1943, when he left for a trip through the poverty stricken French colonies of North Africa. While there he became more convinced of the righteousness of his position. This added new determination to his plans of not permitting governments to be re-imposed at the end of the war without approval of the people involved.<sup>11</sup>

During the Casablanca conference, Roosevelt met expected opposition to his ideas on the future of colonialism. When the discussion turned to the empire, De Gaulle made his position clear on the integrity of that empire. Roosevelt held a strong position, though, and even Churchill, who was sympathetic toward the French desire to maintain an empire, told De Gaulle, that while he did not agree with Roosevelt's plans, "Each time I must choose between you and Roosevelt, I shall always choose Roosevelt."<sup>12</sup>

Roosevelt's criticism, however, did not remain solely with the French. As pointed out in previous chapters, he also frowned on the British Empire. Believing that "the

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<sup>11</sup>William D. Leahy, I Was There; The Personal Story of the Chief of Staff to Presidents Roosevelt and Truman, Based on His Notes and Diaries Made at the Time (New York, 1950), pp. 46, 135, 136.

<sup>12</sup>Charles De Gaulle, Unity 1942-1944, Vol. II of War Memoirs, translated by Richard Howard, 3 vols. (New York, 1959), p. 253.



colonial system means war," he attacked the British position in India. "India should be made a commonwealth at once. After a certain number of years . . . she would be able to choose whether she wants to remain in the Empire or have complete independence."<sup>13</sup> Determined to make the most of his country's position, Roosevelt stated:

I hope they realize, they're not senior partner; that we're not going to sit by, after we've won, and watch their system stultify the growth of every country in Asia and half the countries in Europe to boot . . . .<sup>14</sup>

Understanding the intense desire of Churchill and De Gaulle to reinstate their governments over the colonial peoples after the war, Roosevelt maneuvered to outwit them in a series of meetings held with Anthony Eden during March, 1943. He emphasized that he did not want any commitment made without his knowledge regarding the future status of colonial peoples.<sup>15</sup> Roosevelt wanted the nations with colonies to announce their intentions of granting independence or self-government, giving specific dates and pledging economic autonomy for their colonies.<sup>16</sup> He then mentioned his intention to place Indo-China

<sup>13</sup> Elliott Roosevelt, As He Saw It, pp. 74-75.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid., p. 122.

<sup>15</sup> Sherwood, Roosevelt and Hopkins, p. 718.

<sup>16</sup> Hull, Memoirs, II, 1600.

under international trusteeship. According to Eden, "It seemed to me that Roosevelt wanted to hold the string of France's future in his own hands so that he could decide that country's fate." When reminded by Sumner Welles of his promise to uphold the restoration of the French Empire, Roosevelt countered that he was only referring to French colonies in North Africa.<sup>17</sup> He then turned aggressively to the topic of the British port of Hong Kong. Roosevelt urged the British to give up Hong Kong as a "good-will gesture." Eden opposed this idea but suggested in turn that the United States make a similar concession.<sup>18</sup>

Although Roosevelt did not press his ideas any further at the meeting, he did not lessen his interest in ending colonialism. This became evident at the First Quebec Conference when Eden was given a State Department draft memorandum which set forth United Nations cooperation with colonial people that they might become qualified for independence. The draft also contained five steps to raise standards of living, education, and economy in the colonies. Moreover, it proposed establishment of an International

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<sup>17</sup>Eden, The Memoirs of Anthony Eden, III, 431, 438.

<sup>18</sup>Sherwood, Roosevelt and Hopkins, pp. 718-719.

Trusteeship Administration to be composed of representatives of the United Nations for carrying out ideals of the Atlantic Charter relating to self-determination.<sup>19</sup>

During this meeting, Secretary of State Hull referred to the draft memorandum three times. After the third time, Eden stated that he did not like the use of the word "independence." This term conflicted with the basic principles of the British Empire which had been built on dominion and colonial status within a commonwealth of nations.<sup>20</sup>

Believing that the topic was important "for the long-range advancement of the world," Hull brought the topic up many times in the months that followed.<sup>21</sup> In taking this action, Hull had the concurrence of President Roosevelt who thought that the draft offered many possibilities "especially as concerned its inspection and publicity features" which would induce nations with colonies to develop their colonies for the good of the dependent peoples.<sup>22</sup>

At the Moscow Conference of Foreign Ministers held in October, 1943, Hull again confronted Eden about the United

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<sup>19</sup>Hull, Memoirs, II, 1235.

<sup>20</sup>Ibid., p. 1237.

<sup>21</sup>Ibid., p. 1238.

<sup>22</sup>Ibid., p. 1305.

States proposal. At that time, Eden was hesitant to discuss the matter and voiced his government's disagreement with the American ideas.<sup>23</sup> Although Roosevelt instructed Hull prior to the meeting to stress the possibility of trusteeships to apply to all areas of the world from the Baltic to the South Atlantic to Hong Kong, little progress was made in that direction.<sup>24</sup> Despite lack of progress, the discussions eventually led to establishment of a United Nations trusteeship system, which Hull referred to as "a material improvement over the old mandate system of the League of Nations."<sup>25</sup>

President Roosevelt believed that he had a right to end colonialism because, without the help of his country, the liberation of the colonies could not be accomplished. Roosevelt was also interested in maintaining a lasting peace in the Pacific area. Secretary of State Hull expressed Roosevelt's opinion:

And we could not help believing that the indefinite continuance of the British, Dutch and French possessions in the Orient in a state of dependence provided a number of foci for future trouble and perhaps war. Permanent peace would not be assured unless these

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<sup>23</sup>Ibid.

<sup>24</sup>Ibid.

<sup>25</sup>Ibid., p. 1238.

possessions were started on the road to independence, after the example of the Philippines.

Hull went on to point out that he and the President believed that, in the long run, a lasting peace in the Pacific would be more beneficial to European colonial nations than retention of their colonies would be.<sup>26</sup>

Although the President had sounded out the British and Russian ministers on his plans for a new world order, he had not yet discussed the matter with Chiang Kai-shek. "To American eyes he [Chiang Kai-shek] was one of the dominant forces in the world. He was the champion of 'the New Asia.'"<sup>27</sup> Roosevelt's opportunity to discuss his plans with the Chinese leader came during the Cairo talks in November, 1943. In the conversations, topics ranged from Hong Kong to Indo-China and to other colonial areas in the Far East.<sup>28</sup> The President and the Generalissimo agreed that independence should be the goal of the colonial areas, and they recognized rights of the people in the Far East to build their own forms of government.<sup>29</sup>

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<sup>26</sup> Ibid., p. 1601.

<sup>27</sup> Winston S. Churchill, Closing the Ring, Vol. V of The Second World War, 6 vols. (Boston, 1951), p. 328.

<sup>28</sup> Foreign Relations of the United States: The Conferences at Cairo and Teheran, 1943 (Washington, D.C., 1961), p. 325.

<sup>29</sup> Rosenamn, Public Papers, XII, 555-556.

From Cairo, the President proceeded to Teheran for his first meeting with Joseph Stalin. Roosevelt wasted little time in seeking out Stalin's views on colonialism. Roosevelt warned the Russian leader of Churchill's sensitivity on the topic of reform in India and added that Churchill's only solution to the problem in India was to defer it until after the war.<sup>30</sup> As the conversation widened to include another topic close to Roosevelt's heart--Indo-China--Stalin emphasized his belief that Indo-China should not be allowed to go back to France, for France should be punished for her "criminal collaboration with Germany."<sup>31</sup> The President agreed that France should pay a price for cooperation with Germany. Roosevelt went even farther in his views by stating that "no Frenchman over 40, and particularly no Frenchman who had ever taken part in the present French Government, should be allowed to return to position [of importance in the government] in the future."<sup>32</sup>

Although the British had not been brought in during Roosevelt's talks concerning Indo-China at Cairo or Teheran, the British government soon learned the contents of the

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<sup>30</sup>Foreign Relations: Cairo and Teheran, 1943, p. 486.

<sup>31</sup>Ibid., p. 485.

<sup>32</sup>Ibid., p. 484.

conversations. This knowledge did not prevent them from upholding colonialism. They asked to play a part in the liberation of the colonial empires in the Far East and emphasized this point at the second Quebec Conference held to discuss allied operations against Japan in Southeast Asia. The British, taking the position that "Japan was as much the bitter enemy of the British Empire as of the United States," insisted that they have a full and fair part in the war against Japan as soon as Germany was defeated.<sup>33</sup> Although reluctantly agreeing in principle that British forces were to be used in Asia, Roosevelt reflected fear that once British forces became entrenched in Asia, it would be hard to pry them loose. Roosevelt believed that "the British would take land anywhere in the world even if it were only rock or a sandbar."<sup>34</sup> Roosevelt was prompted to give in to British demands because, "we could not alienate them in the Orient and expect to work with them in Europe."<sup>35</sup> In spite of his agreement to let British forces participate in the struggle in Asia, Roosevelt hopefully believed that Russia's

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<sup>33</sup>Winston S. Churchill, Triumph and Tragedy, Vol. VI of The Second World War, 6 vols. (Boston, 1953), p. 152.

<sup>34</sup>Edward R. Stettinius, Jr., Roosevelt and the Russians; The Yalta Conference, edited by Walter Johnson (New York, 1949), p. 212.

<sup>35</sup>Hull, Memoirs, II, 1599.

proposed intervention in Asia would enable the United States to strike a decisive blow at Japan, compelling her to surrender before the British or the French had time to regain their colonies. If this were the case, Roosevelt would be in a position to demand that the colonies, once liberated from Japan, be liberated from colonial status.<sup>36</sup>

At Quebec, the British were also interested in maintaining France's stake in Asia. On this topic, De Gaulle gave the British his whole-hearted support. De Gaulle believed that France must maintain its Empire for, without it, his country would resemble a vanquished nation.<sup>37</sup> Moreover, he realized the importance of French military participation in the Far East, for "it was inconceivable that . . . the allies would countenance the restoration of French power on territories where we had taken no part in the world-wide struggle."<sup>38</sup> Although the United States did not agree on a French military mission under the control of the Southeast Asia Command headquarters, the British went ahead with this action. As a result, Roosevelt gave instructions that the United States

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<sup>36</sup>Wilmot, Struggle for Europe, p. 643.

<sup>37</sup>De Gaulle, War Memoirs, II, 270.

<sup>38</sup>Ibid., p. 321.



must approve any action taken by the French military mission under the Southeast Asia Command.<sup>39</sup>

Roosevelt's chances of changing the world order slowly dwindled. The last opportunity for him to influence his allies came at the Yalta Conference in February, 1945. There, Roosevelt, in failing health, met with Churchill and Stalin. This was the first meeting of the leaders of the allied powers since the Teheran Conference of 1943. Although the main consideration was Germany and Europe, the question of trusteeship was further pursued by the foreign ministers in the initial stages of planning for the United Nations conference at San Francisco. At these meetings, Eden, Molotov, and the new Secretary of State, Edward Stettinius, agreed that the five permanent members of the Security Council should consult one another prior to San Francisco regarding trusteeships and prepare suitable recommendations for discussion.<sup>40</sup> When results of this meeting were read on February 9, 1945, to the leaders of the allied nations, Prime Minister Churchill, always quick to defend the empire, reacted vehemently. Under no circumstances would he consent

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<sup>39</sup>Foreign Relations, 1944, III, 776, 780.

<sup>40</sup>Stettinius, Roosevelt and the Russians, p. 232.

to "forty or fifty nations thrusting interfering fingers into the life's existence of the British Empire." Moreover, as long as he was British Minister, "he would never yield one scrap of their heritage."<sup>41</sup> When an explanation was given to Churchill that the ministers were not referring to the British Empire, but only to Japanese-controlled islands in the Pacific, Churchill remarked that the distinction should be made clear. He then added that although his country did not desire any territorial aggrandizement, he did not mind the question of trusteeship in relation to enemy territory.<sup>42</sup> As startling as Churchill's outburst was, Roosevelt appeared unruffled, for he had witnessed a similar outburst on November 10, 1942, when Churchill had informed him, "I have not become the King's First Minister in order to preside over the liquidation of the British Empire."<sup>43</sup>

Many persons have criticized Yalta as a sacrifice of the ideals of the Atlantic Charter by Roosevelt. At this meeting, the President pursued a paradoxical policy. While

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<sup>41</sup>Foreign Relations of the United States: The Conferences at Malta and Yalta, 1945 (Washington, D.C., 1955), p. 844.

<sup>42</sup>Ibid.

<sup>43</sup>Stettinius, Roosevelt and the Russians, p. 237.

urging the British to give up Hong Kong and make it a free port, he was willing to agree to Russian territorial aggrandizement in return for Russian participation in the war against Japan. He viewed Britain as a colonial power with all its accompanying stigmas, whereas Russia was not. "That assessment of his allies was a decisive fact in Roosevelt's readiness to make concessions to the Soviet Union both in Europe and Asia in order to ensure Stalin's entry into the Pacific War."<sup>44</sup> Roosevelt reflected the ideas embodied in a document prepared by a high level United States military strategist which stated that Russia would be the decisive factor in the war in the Far East, and that her help was essential to the United States.<sup>45</sup> Roosevelt saw an opportunity of getting two vital matters accomplished: a speedy defeat of Japan, as well as a guarantee of Russian cooperation in his dreams of a united peaceful world.<sup>46</sup> Toward this goal he was willing to sacrifice territory to the Russians and thus endanger his bargaining position with the British who would regard Roosevelt's actions as a sell-out and demand similar concessions from him.

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<sup>44</sup>Wilmot, Struggle for Europe, p. 640.

<sup>45</sup>Sherwood, Roosevelt and Hopkins, p. 748.

<sup>46</sup>Wilmot, Struggle for Europe, p. 640.

On the last day of the conference, Churchill was somewhat belatedly informed about Roosevelt's agreement to give Russia land in China in return for her participation in the Far East.<sup>47</sup> In spite of Eden's insistence that he not sign a document which, among its many features, provided for Russian territorial expansion, Churchill signed the Yalta agreement. Churchill, believing that, "The whole position of the British Empire might be at stake," feared that if he did not sign the agreement, he would appear unwilling to work with Russia in the Far East and thus conceivably be left out of any military ventures or decisions concerning that theatre and possibly miss out on plans to liberate the British colonies.<sup>48</sup> Churchill believed that "Commonwealth and Empire should emerge from this ordeal as strong and influential as possible . . . ."<sup>49</sup> Although he did sign the agreement at Yalta, he clarified his personal thoughts in stating, "I must make it clear that though on behalf of Great Britain I joined in the agreement, neither I nor Eden took any part in making it. It was regarded as an American affair . . . ."<sup>50</sup>

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<sup>47</sup> Churchill, The Second World War, VI, 390.

<sup>48</sup> Wilmot, Struggle for Europe, p. 653.

<sup>49</sup> Churchill, The Second World War, VI, 213.

<sup>50</sup> Ibid., p. 390.

On April 12, 1945, news of Roosevelt's death swept through the nations of the world. The President had suffered from poor health and fatigue for the previous year. As the nation went into mourning, Harry S. Truman, Roosevelt's vice president, became leader of the United States. Although Truman pledged to continue Roosevelt's policies, much of the force and determination was lost. Although an anti-colonialist, Truman was more interested in maintaining national security and enhancing United States military position throughout the world than he was in helping other nations of the world obtain their potential.<sup>51</sup>

In June, 1945, leaders of the allied nations met in San Francisco to write the United Nations charter. Leaders of the allied powers were Secretary of State Stettinius, Anthony Eden, T.V. Soong of China, and Molotov. Although Roosevelt was not there, his ideals and handicraft permeated the conference and can be found in the charter of the organization he had striven so hard to create.

At the conference, the United States presented a draft which would divide the principle of trusteeship into three

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<sup>51</sup>William Hardy McNeill, America, Britain and Russia; Their Co-Operation and Conflict, 1941-1946, Vol. III of Survey of International Affairs (London, 1953), Footnote 1, p. 597.

categories: territories now under mandate, territories taken from the enemy as a result of war, and territories voluntarily placed under the system by nations responsible for their administration.<sup>52</sup> This system provided for maintenance of United States military and strategic rights necessary for the insurance of peace in the Pacific.<sup>53</sup> This statement of United States position was the culmination of a long-standing argument between the State Department and the Joint Chiefs of Staff. For this reason the question of trusteeship had not been discussed at the Dumbarton Oaks conference, precursor of San Francisco. The Joint Chiefs had felt that a discussion of trusteeships would encompass questions concerning who should be trustee over which territories and possibly prove to be a cause of dissension among the major allies.<sup>54</sup> In emphasizing this view, the Joint Chiefs also had an ulterior motive. They were interested in using the Japanese islands in the Pacific as military bases for national security. This goal could best be accomplished through annexation and not through trusteeship.<sup>55</sup>

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<sup>52</sup>Foreign Relations of the United States, 1945 (Washington, D.C., 1967), I, 351.

<sup>53</sup>Ibid.

<sup>54</sup>Hull, Memoirs, II, 1706.

<sup>55</sup>Ibid., pp. 1706-1707.

Although Roosevelt had been against this plan, President Truman agreed with the position taken by the Joint Chiefs of Staff.<sup>56</sup> As a result, the decision made on April 18, 1945, as to United States policy on trusteeships was a compromise.

Even before the meeting at San Francisco, colonial powers had gathered their forces. The Foreign Affairs Committee of the French Consultative Association refused to take part in the meeting unless it obtained "'satisfactory information about aims and the agenda.'"<sup>57</sup> The French were reassured that the meeting would only deal with the formulation of principles and that the question of specific territories to be placed under trusteeship would be dealt with later.<sup>58</sup>

At the meeting, the British presented a weaker trusteeship plan without a clear statement of objectives. Moreover, the British downgraded the importance of the trusteeship council and wanted to place the council under the supervision of the Economic and Social Council.<sup>59</sup>

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<sup>56</sup>Harry S. Truman, Year of Decisions, Vol. I of Memoirs, 2 vols. (New York, 1955), p. 274.

<sup>57</sup>Foreign Relations, 1945, I, 80.

<sup>58</sup>Ibid.

<sup>59</sup>Ibid., p. 597.

The debate ranged from major provisions concerning the right of investigation to minor problems over semantics.<sup>60</sup> The final agreement reached by the nations differed greatly from Roosevelt's plans. Believing that the United States should indicate to the people of Asia that his country was against colonialism, Roosevelt had stated that the United States should accept nothing short of independence at the conference. "To deny the objective of independence . . . would sow the seeds of the next world war."<sup>61</sup> In spite of this, the final document signed at San Francisco did not even mention the word independence, but used the phrase "progressive development toward self-government."<sup>62</sup>

No one can say for certain that Roosevelt, had he lived, would have been more successful than his successors in achieving his goals for a better world. Certainly his determination and leadership were sorely missed and perhaps his hope of ridding the world of colonialism was postponed. But Roosevelt was essentially a pragmatist despite his idealist goals. Faced with monumental wartime problems, Roosevelt did not push the colonial issue too far in India,

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<sup>60</sup>Ibid., p. 656.

<sup>61</sup>Ibid., p. 794.

<sup>62</sup>Ibid., p. 796.



and one may wonder whether the president would have been uncompromising on the issue in the post-war era. Although Roosevelt did not attain his desire of extending the trusteeship system to all colonial peoples, his struggle to alter the world order and rid it of seeds of conflict deserves merit. His plans for a brave new world ended dishearteningly at San Francisco, but his effect on the world and on the system of colonialism was far-reaching. Partially as a result of his prodding, the British agreed to end their empire in India in 1947 and, today little remains of the once mighty British Empire. It appears, moreover, that Franklin Roosevelt's view of history was correct, for colonialism did provide the causes of future war as can be evidenced in the struggle in Viet Nam. Ill will perpetuated by the colonialist nations still exists throughout Asia. Bitter memories of exploitation have caused the Western nations much anguish as the colonial peoples emerge on the world scene.

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