CHAPTER III

INDIA'S OPPOSITION TO S.E.A.T.O.
In Southeast Asia..., India and the United States had pursued the same basic goals: genuine independence and genuine peace, together with..., economic and social development. But in matters of concrete action the two governments have..., failed to see eye to eye and have in fact often pursued contrary and even contradictory policies. For India the future of Southeast Asia was of vital importance..., an area susceptible to the application of major Indian tenets of peace and war. In Indian eyes the theme of Asian resurgence—including Chinese Communist resurgence—continued to dominate India's attitude towards Southeast Asia. On the other hand the United States emphasis had since 1950 been placed on the danger inherent in the growth of Communist pressure on Southeast Asian nations. American policy had sought to deal with this pressure through a combination of political, economic and military measures. This difference in focus had created much tension in Indian-American relations..., 1

U.S. PROPOSAL FOR A DEFENCE ALLIANCE:

In the early 50's it was France and United Kingdom who were interested in a defence alliance to protect their colonial possessions in Southeast Asia as People's Republic of China (P.R.C.) was becoming a powerful force to be reckoned with. At that time United States was not keen on accepting the responsibility and even rejected Churchill's proposal, during his visit to U.S. in early 1953, of a Southeast Asian

1. S.L. Poplai and Phillips Talbot, India and America: A Study of their Relations (New Delhi, 1958), P. 126
defence pact on the model of the N.A.T.O. to defend Malaya, Hong Kong and Indo-China by joint efforts of U.S., U.K. and France. Though unwilling to form an alliance, U.S. nurtured fears about the growing power of the P.R.C. The Korean issue brought U.S. and the P.R.C. into direct conflict. It was then that U.S. entered into military pacts in Asia with Thailand, the Philippines, Australia, New Zealand, Japan and the Republic of Korea during 1950-1951. With the victory of Viet-Minh over half of Vietnam in 1953 and P.R.C.'s continued aid to Viet-Minh, the U.S. was convinced that a military alliance for the defence of Southeast Asia should be formed to avert expansion of Communism. U.S.'s warning of military action did not deter China's consistent support to the Viet-Minh. With the deteriorating situation in Dien Bien Phu and the precarious position of France, U.S. renewed the proposal for an alliance to curb the Communist intervention in Indo-China. John Foster Dulles, the U.S. Secretary of State, said:

Under the conditions of today, the imposition on Southeast Asia of the political system of Communist Russia and its Chinese Communist ally, by whatever means, would be a grave threat to the whole free community. The U.S. feels that possibility should not be passively accepted, but should be met

2. The Hindu, 28 January 1953
by united action. This might involve serious risks, but these risks are far less than those that will face us in a few years from now if we dare not be resolute."

At that juncture both France and Britain did not evince much interest as they felt it was not the appropriate time. Britain was not for antagonising the P.R.C. and secondly, wanted to await the outcome of the Geneva Conference, which was to be convened to settle the Indo-China crisis with the participation of Indo-Chinese states. Anthony Eden, the British Foreign Secretary, laid emphasis on avoiding a course of action that would be "repudiated by British public opinion and by the Asian neutrals and would turn both Russia and China against a political solution, while hope for such a solution still existed". Moreover Eden was particular that India should not be alienated in a part of the world which concerned her closely.

Both Eden and Dulles disagreed over the membership issue. While Eden emphasised that on no account should India and other Asian Commonwealth countries be deliberately excluded,\(^6\) Dulles insisted that "any indication of India being invited to join should be avoided".\(^7\) U.K. believed that India's influence in Asia and with the P.R.C. would go a long way in deciding the outcome of the Geneva Conference and hence was keen that India should be included in the security arrangement. Dulles argued that if security arrangement were to be extended westward to include India there would be a strong demand in the U.S. to extend it eastwards as well to include Nationalist China and Japan.\(^8\) On 13 April 1954 after Dulles and Eden had concluded their discussion of united action it was announced in London that they were prepared to take part, with the other countries principally concerned, "in an examination of the possibility of establishing a collective defence, within the framework of the Charter of the United Nations, to assure peace, security and freedom of Southeast Asia and the Western Pacific".\(^9\)

6. Ibid., p. 96
7. Ibid., p. 97
8. Ibid.
Britain kept India informed about its policy regarding the defence plans and on Indo-China. Anthony Eden suggested an 'Asian Locarno' on 23 June 1954 in order to bring India in its fold. It was collective security system in which countries with differing or conflicting interests came together and assured each other of non-aggression and desire for peaceful resolution of their disputes and differences. Though India was not opposed to the Asian Locarno she was not willing to join it as it was inappropriate in view of the just concluded cease-fire agreements in Indo-China as well as its own policy of non-alignment. Washington also was not in favour of such a pact since it might lead to China's admission into the United Nations. Britain's alternative suggestion was not well received by both U.S. and India and hence did not materialise.

Before Britain could take any further steps to conciliate India, Dulles invited the representatives in Washington of Britain, France, Australia, New Zealand, the Philippines, Thailand and the Associated States to meet with him on 20 April 1954 and establish


11. The Hindu, 23 July 1954

'an informal working group to study the collective defence of Southeast Asia'. When reported of this move, Eden was incensed over what he regarded as Dulles' unilateral effort to settle the still-debated membership question and felt that the timing was wrong. Eden was not willing to attend the meeting. Dulles felt that Britain was already backtracking on its commitment on 13 April 1954. Dulles was of the opinion that it was mainly because of India that Britain was refusing to attend the meeting.

Certain sections of the U.S. were for consideration of India's opinion and inclusion of India in Southeast Asia Treaty Organisation (S.E.A.T.O.). According to Walter Lippmann, the well-known American columnist, "it need not become the kind of military alliance to which Pandit Nehru and the Indian nation are very much opposed....For, if it were, the future would be desperate." Chester Boules, former U.S. Ambassador in India, expressed his doubts as to the usefulness of the S.E.A.T.O. without the participation of India and other 'neutralist' countries. Identical views were expressed by Lester B. Pearson, the Canadian Secretary of State for External Affairs, and

13. Colbert, n. 9, p. 294
14. Randle, n. 12, pp. 81, 84
15. The Hindu, 25 April 1954
Richard Casey, the External Affairs Minister of Australia. Various suggestions put forth led to Robert Murphy, the U.S. Assistant Secretary of State's meeting the Colombo Powers in Washington in May 1954, to clarify U.S. intentions in proposing a defence pact for Southeast Asia. In July 1954 Anthony Eden communicated with the Colombo Powers to consider the proposal of S.E.A.T.O. Except Pakistan, all the other countries (Burma, Ceylon, India, Indonesia) rejected it outright. Thus while Eden was trying to secure at least India's neutrality to their defence plan, Dulles was keen on disassociating India from S.E.A.T.O. and was even ready to "bypass British participation or even its symbolic association in a coalition".

**INDIA'S OPPOSITION:**

India had throughout expressed its disapproval of the formation of a defence alliance and especially at a time when Geneva Conference was to be held to settle the Indo-China conflict. Nehru, in his statement in Parliament, on 24 April 1954, said:

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17. Randle, n. 12, p. 218
18. Eden, n. 5, p. 109
19. Hundle, n. 12, p. 103
The Government of India regret deeply and are much concerned that a conference of such momentous character, which was called together obviously because negotiation were considered both feasible and necessary, should be preceded by a proclamation of what amounts to lack of faith in it, and of alternatives involving threats of sanctions. 20

He further added that "the present developments, however, cast a deep shadow on our hopes, they impinge on our basic policies and they seek to contain us in alignments". 21 The factor that caused great concern were the statements that preceded the proposal to set up the S.E.A.T.O. "which came near to assuming protection, or declaring unilaterally a kind of Monroe's Doctrine over the countries of Southeast Asia". 22

There was no question of India participating in the Manila Conference. As Nehru had put it,

Apart from every other reason, big or small, it is obvious that our participation in the Manila Conference would have meant our giving up our basic policy of non-alignment... Secondly, our going there would obviously have affected our position as Chairman of the three Commissions in Indo-China. We were chosen for these responsible posts because we were thought to follow a certain policy.


21. Ibid.

22. Jawaharlal Nehru, India's Foreign Policy: Selected Speeches, September 1946-April 1961 (New Delhi, 1983), Reprint, p. 398
If we had changed that policy and gone back upon it, our whole position in Indo-China would have changed. That would have been a very improper thing to do. 23

With the conclusion of the Geneva Conference in July 1954 the Manila pact was signed on 8 September 1954. On the eve of the opening of the Manila Conference, Dulles said the reason for the establishment of the pact was the danger that stemmed from international communism. He declared that the pact to be signed was in consonance with the purposes and principles of the U.N. Charter, which endorsed the inherent right of collective self-defence. 24 The pact was signed by Australia, France, New Zealand, Pakistan, the Philippines, Thailand, United Kingdom and United States. The Manila Conference adopted a Charter, now known as the Pacific Charter, which proclaimed the principles of "self-determination, self-Government and independence." 25 The pact provided that each party recognised that aggression by means of armed attack in the treaty area against any of the parties or against any state or territory which the parties by unanimous agreement may hereafter designate, would endanger its own peace and safety, and agreed that it would in that event act to meet

23. Ibid., p. 87


25. Ibid., p. 473
the common danger in accordance with its constitutional processes.26 The "treaty area" was defined as "the general area of Southeast Asia, including also the entire territories of the Asian parties, and the general area of the Southeast Pacific".27

India raised serious objections for including the territories of Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia in the 'treaty area' as it went against the decisions reached at Geneva. India feared that the organisation was likely to change the whole trend towards peace that the Geneva Conference had created and give a 'new and wrong' direction to that trend. The Indo-China settlement was based on the fundamental assumption that the new born states would remain neutral. If anything was done which affected that basic assumption, "the whole conception of the Geneva Conference decisions would be shaken....not only psychologically but practically".28

In a London meeting, Krishna Menon observed that "the Indo-China Armistice agreement was the outcome of the discussions


27. Ibid.

of two parties. A S.E.A.T.O. agreement, on the other hand, would be the result of the discussions of one group of those nations to the exclusion of another. It would be sectional, and such sectional agreements in so far as they related to Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia, were excluded by the Indo-China agreement. Grant of protection by S.E.A.T.O. to the states of Indo-China would amount to sacrificing their sovereignty. 29

Krishna Menon expressed the same opinion at the beginning of the Ninth Session of the General Assembly, wherein he stated S.E.A.T.O. as "having diminished the value of the climate of peace that was generated by the Indo-China settlement". He remarked: "it so much cuts into the whole idea of collective security and the principle of the Charter or, at any rate its objectives; that is to say, it is a proclamation of the doctrine of balance of power and of power groupings". 30

Indian opinion firmly believed as Krishna Menon pointed out, that a military organisation such as S.E.A.T.O. could not "by any stretch of interpretation of the U.N.'s Charter come under the United Nations Charter, because United Nations Charter provides for regional organisation. This is an organisation of some people to protect a region. It is a modern version of a

29. The Hindu, 8 September 1954
Yet another objection raised by Nehru was with regard to China. Nehru was of the opinion that if China was admitted to the United Nations much of the problems would be solved across the table. He stressed the point that, there would be no settlement in the Far East or Southeast Asia till this major fact of the Peoples' Government of China is recognised. I say one of the biggest factors towards ensuring security in Southeast Asia and in the Far East is the recognition of China by these countries and China coming into the United Nations. There would be far greater assurance of security that way than through this S.E.A.T.O. and the rest.

As stated by Nehru,

Security could only be ensured by a friendly approach to each other. By an aggressive approach or by an approach which had an element of threat or fear either way, security was endangered....where an organised attempt was made apparently against another country or group, that immediately means the other group doing likewise.

32. Nehru, n. 22, p. 91
33. The Hindu, 20 November 1954
As a result Nehru felt that the whole approach was wrong and dangerous, from the point of view of any Asian country, irrespective of the motives which may be good. More so, because it applied to Southeast Asia, which according to India was one of the major 'areas of peace'. "The Manila Treaty" said Nehru, rather comes in the way of that area of peace. It takes up that very area....and converts it almost into an area of potential war. I find this development disturbing".34

Criticising the S.E.A.T.O. pact Nehru, who was speaking at a luncheon given in his honour by the Delhi Press Association, used the Orwellian expressions "double thinking" and "double talk" to describe the state of the world. He said "people talked about peace in warlike tones, nations took shelter in the name of the United Nations and did things which went contrary to the noble objectives of the Charter countries expressed sympathy for colonial people and then joined groups which put deliberate objections in their way, and similar discrepancies between profession and practice".35


35. The Hindu, 10 September 1954
The S.E.A.T.O. pact had certain odd features and for that matter had most military alliances. Not all members joined an alliance for the same objective. Each had its own reason for joining the pact. Sometimes their purposes were contradictory. Thus "countries get interlocked with each other, each pulling in different directions and in a crisis you are pulled away in a direction you never thought of going", said Nehru. Comparing international alliances to interlocking in business Nehru remarked: "Interlocking was bad enough in business, but it seemed to me infinitely worse in international affairs because you do not quite know where you are". India's experience with North Atlantic Treaty Organisation which started as a defence organisation and later covered colonial possessions affected India as the Portuguese colony came under its scope. Hence India wondered whether "Southeast Asia Treaty too would extend likewise for it was started at its door-step".

Asian problems, Asian security and Asian peace were not only discussed, but actions were taken and treaties made in regard to them chiefly by non-Asian countries. "No doubt they are interested" said Nehru "but I am just pointing out the oddity of all this". A few countries with common interest

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37. The Hindu, 10 September 1954
38. Nehru, n. 22, p. 90
39. The Hindu, 10 September 1954
joined together for defence military and other alliances which was a normal factor. The extraordinary thing was some countries join together to protect other countries which would not join them. Other countries do not want their protection. These things were rather very odd and it was an attempt to reverse certain inevitable historical processes at work, said Nehru.40 At least military alliance between the Great Powers had some meaning but an alliance between a huge giant of power and a little pigmy of a country was meaningless, in a military sense41 as "it was the big and powerful countries that would decide matters and not the two or three weak and small Asian countries that may be allied to them."42

The Indian Government and much of Indian private opinion had in very strong terms decried S.E.A.T.O. "as a dangerous development, one which brought Western Powers back into a region that had only recently thrown off Western domination, drained into military channels the resources that were badly needed for economic and social development, and encouraged regional rivalries and animosities".43

40. Ibid.
41. Rajan, n. 10, pp. 83-84
42. Nehru, n. 22, p. 89
43. Poplai and Tulbot, n. 1, p. 134
Yet another disturbing feature, as far as India was concerned, was that Pakistan was a member of S.E.A.T.O. As early as 1952 U.S. decided to give military aid to Pakistan and the Mutual Aid and Security Agreement was finally signed on 19 May 1954. India reacted strongly to this move as the proposed aid would bring cold war nearer to India, would upset the balance between India and Pakistan and would increase Western dominance in Asia. Nehru told parliament that U.S. military aid to Pakistan instead of creating security, created "insecurity, instability and uncertainty in South Asia and brought the war mentality and climate of war to this area, 'this area of peace'.

The Pakistan newspapers and statements made by responsible people in Pakistan clearly revealed that India was the cause for Pakistan joining S.E.A.T.O. Mohammed Ali, the Prime Minister of Pakistan, said: "We know that danger (from India) exists, that being so we think fit to strengthen our defences. Decision to receive military aid from America is one such step."

He had also said that the strength deriving from the American arms would enable his country to obtain Kashmir.

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46. The Hindu, 6 March 1954
47. Sardesai, n. 4, p. 57
While signing the Manila Treaty, the Pakistan Foreign Minister emphasised the point that it was aimed at 'aggression' from whichever quarter, that is, not merely from the Communist quarter it may proceed in a region where "aggression has unhappily been a common experience during the past many years". Nehru himself was aware of Pakistan's intentions was obvious from his statement in the Indian Parliament. He remarked:

Nobody here imagines that the Pakistan Government entered into this pact because it expected....aggression from the Soviet Union....Either they are apprehensive of India, or they want to develop strength and, ....speak from strength. Whatever it is, they have joined the....S.E.A.T.O. essentially because of their hostility to India.

In order to appease India's apprehensions, President Eisenhower in a letter to the Prime Minister of India said "if our aid to any country, including Pakistan, is misused and diverted against another in aggression, I will undertake immediately, in accordance with my constitutional authority, appropriate action both within and without the United Nations to thwart such aggression". In many quarters it came to be regarded that United States was the principal cause of India's sincerity in its relations with Pakistan and of Pakistani intransigence.

49. Nehru, n. 22, p. 94
50. Poplai and Talbot, n. 1, pp. 87-88
51. Ibid., pp. 88-89
S.E.A.T.O. was not a "regional agreement", even though it referred to the United Nations Charter. Certain important sovereign states who had nothing to do with the region culturally, racially or geographically, had entered into an agreement ultra vires of the United Nations Charter. Thailand and the Philippines were the only two countries of Southeast Asia which were members of S.E.A.T.O. Hence Nehru said that "many Asian countries have nothing to do with it. Therefore I refer to it as the Manila Treaty and not S.E.A.T.O." 53

Many political parties and newspapers in India criticised the defence treaty. The Central Committee of the Communist Party of India referring to S.E.A.T.O. in its resolution said that the S.E.A.T.O. pact sought to sabotage the Geneva Conference agreement hailed by all peace-loving and freedom-loving people. The resolution further pointed out:

Through this pact, to which Pakistan is also a signatory, the Anglo-Americans seek to intensify their pressure on the Government of India and bully them into a complete line-up with the war-bloc. The S.E.A.T.O. thus constitutes a threat to the peace, security and freedom of the entire people of Asia. 54

52. The Hindu, 9 September 1954
54. The Hindu, 14 September 1954
Deen Dayal Upadhyaya, General Secretary of Bharatiya Jan Sangh, considered the formation of S.E.A.T.O. as a violation of the letter and spirit of the United Nations Charter and also the Geneva Agreement. In a public meeting organised in Madras to observe the Asian solidarity months, Congress, Communist and trade union leaders disapproved the western defence plan for Southeast Asia. Newspapers maintained that S.E.A.T.O. had reversed the process of history, disrupted the Geneva Agreements, created new tensions in the area and posed a danger to peace.  

S.E.A.T.O. was formed at a time when Sino-India rapprochement was at its peak. Indian leaders believed that friendship of China was necessary to maintain and promote peace in Asia and the world. As a result India felt that S.E.A.T.O. accentuated tensions in Southeast Asia by acting directly against the trend of conciliation and co-existence demonstrated by the Communists at Geneva and in the Chinese agreement with India in 1954.  

Post-1954 period brought to the surface China's keen desire to play an active role in Southeast Asia and among newly independent Afro-Asian countries. The Sino-Indian friendship


developed and the two countries signed an agreement on trade on 29 April 1954. Under this agreement Tibet was recognised as a region of China. The noteworthy aspect of this agreement was the preamble. The preamble had five principles which came to be known as Panchsheel and became the guidelines of good international behaviour. These five principles were (i) mutual respect for each others territorial integrity and sovereignty, (ii) mutual non-aggression, (iii) mutual non-interference in each others internal affairs, (iv) equality and mutual benefit, and (v) peaceful co-existence. These principles were reiterated and a joint statement issued during the Chinese Prime Minister, Chou-En-Lai's visit to India in June 1954. India urged the neighbouring countries to adopt peaceful co-existence and to establish friendly relations with Communist China. At the end of Chou-En-lai's visit to Rangoon in June 1954, a joint communique was issued affirming Panchsheel.

An interesting development pointed out by Nehru was the reference made both by the Prime Minister of China, Chou-En-lai and the Chairman of the Republic, Mao Tse-tung. They said that Chinese communities living outside should choose either to become nationals of the country they were living in,


or to retain Chinese nationality. In the latter event, they must not interfere in the internal affairs of the other country. "That I think" said Nehru "was a helpful move which would remove some of the difficulties and apprehensions in these Southeast Asian countries".

India firmly believed that peace and security could be preserved by non-intervention and peaceful co-existence and, therefore, from the very beginning was opposed to the formation of S.E.A.T.O. Moreover S.E.A.T.O. ran counter to Indian thinking of peaceful co-existence with China. Nehru said:

Collective security can only come by resolving world tension and developing a pattern of collective peace. He was apprehensive that the proposed collective organisation would do more harm in the present than any good in the distant future. In the five principles governing Sino-Indian relations, saw the nucleus of a pattern of collective peace which was the only alternative to war preparedness and the only substantial approach to real security.

Most of the Asian countries followed India’s lead in staunchly opposing S.E.A.T.O. Among the Colombo Powers only Pakistan joined the alliance as a result of estranged relations with India whereas Burma, Indonesia and Ceylon were opposed to S.E.A.T.O. Ceylon, though anti-Communist, agreed with Nehru

59. Nehru, n. 22, p. 92
60. The Hindu, 26 August 1954
that S.E.A.T.O. would create more tension than reduce them. Thailand and the Philippines were the only two Southeast Asian countries which became members of S.E.A.T.O. It was partly due to Indian efforts that Cambodia and Laos were kept out of the alliance.

**REACTION OF BURMA, INDONESIA, CAMBODIA AND LAOS:**

Burma's main opposition to S.E.A.T.O. consisted in it being detrimental to the cause of world peace and as compromising its policy of positive neutrality. Speaking on 13 September 1954 at Maymyo the Burmese Prime Minister U Nu stated:

> In foreign relations, we refuse to align ourselves with any power bloc and at the same time we are friendly with both.

Ali Sastroamidjojo, Prime Minister of the Republic of Indonesia, who was on a visit to India, while addressing the Indian Parliament gave a categorical reaction to the S.E.A.T.O. pact in these words:

> In our way of thinking and keeping in mind the principles of Panchsheel peace in our part of the world cannot be assured by military pacts such as recently concluded in Manila... There is a better way to the preservation of peace-I mean cooperation and co-existence.


1955 - in all the places Nehru stressed that non-alignment was the best policy which resulted in Cambodia opting for non-alignment in its foreign policy. Norodom Sihanouk who headed the Cambodian delegation to the Afro-Asian Conference said:

I am proud of having had the privilege of leading my people in their struggle for independence and to have, after the Geneva Conference, determinedly steered our national policy towards the Panchshila, towards the community of neutral nations- among them: India and Burma.  66

The Royal Laotian Government under Premier Katay O. Sasarith was pro-West and American aid was given. India discouraged Laos from joining any military pact. Laos was also recognised on 31 December 1954 and Nehru stressed on peaceful settlement of issues when he visited Vientiane in October 1954. The Laos delegation which participated in the Bandung Conference accepted the view expressed by Nehru and stressed the importance of peace. Katay Sasarith said that "if the five principles were observed - and in particular the principles of non-aggression and non-interference - many difficulties which assail us would disappear by themselves.  67


67. Ibid., p. 94
Even China took efforts to assuage the fears of Laos and Cambodia. In the open session of the Afro-Asian Conference Chou-En-lai stated:

This time again we make our assurances to the delegation of Cambodia and Laos. We earnestly hope that these countries will become peace-loving countries like India and Burma. We can have no intention whatsoever to interfere or intervene in the internal affairs of these two neighbouring states of ours. This is our policy towards all countries. We are merely mentioning these two countries as example.\(^{68}\)

Nehru also arranged a number of meetings to bring China closer to other delegates especially Cambodia and Laos, in order to remove their apprehensions regarding China.\(^{69}\) Nehru succeeded in keeping away both Cambodia and Laos from S.E.A.T.O.

**INDIA'S RELATION WITH THE PHILIPPINES:**

The formation of S.E.A.T.O. unfortunately led to deterioration of India's relations with Thailand and the Philippines. Even before the formation of S.E.A.T.O. both countries had defence pact, with the United States. It was Thailand's and the Philippine's policy of alignment as opposed to India's policy of non-alignment, that was responsible for

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68. Sardesai, n. 4, p. 72

69. For a detailed account see: George McTurnan Kahin, The Asian-African Conference (Ithaca, 1956)
not very close India-Thailand and India-Phillipine relations. At this juncture it would not be out of place to consider in brief India's relations with these two pro-West countries during the period under review.

In July 1952, K.M.Panikkar, who spoke on India's relations with Thailand and the Philippines, said that India's approach arose out of her policy of non-alignmant made the area of cooperation with these countries to some extent limited, but "we fully realise each other's position and take into consideration our different lines of approach". Though the Philippines though geographically a Southeast Asian country was closely linked with United States. Philippines which became independent in 1946 was only nominally independent owing to economic and military ties with the U.S. There was not much of Indian influence in the Philippines.

The Philippines was an enthusiastic participant of the Asian Relations Conference of 1947 and the Conference on Indonesia held in 1949. It was during this Conference that the Philippines was planning for another Conference to set up an Asian organisation against communism, as its foreign policy was shaped by anti-communism. The Filipino President, Elpidio Quirino, called for a Conference at Baguio in May 1950. Nehru disassociated

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70. Ton That Thien, n. 58, p. 251
himself from this Conference as India's policy was against military pacts. The Philippine Government, keen on India's participation, eliminated political and military matters from the agenda. India's delegate Ramaswami Mudaliar told the delegates that any political or military alliance was "utterly foreign to our conception of how we can bring about peace in the world".\textsuperscript{71} The final recommendations agreed for cultural and economic cooperation and joint action in the U.N.\textsuperscript{72} The Philippine Government was highly disappointed with the outcome.

In July 1952 a friendship treaty was signed between India and the Philippines. This treaty became operative with the exchange of instruments of ratification in April 1954.\textsuperscript{73} Legations that were established in December 1951 was raised to the level of Embassies in January 1958 to strengthen the friendly relation existing between India and the Philippines.\textsuperscript{74} A Retail Trade Nationalisation Bill passed by the Government of Philippine disqualified foreigners from entering into any retail trade in that country affected 400 Indians. The Indian Minister at Manila

\textsuperscript{71} Charles H. Heimsath and Surjit Mansingh, \textit{A Diplomatic History of Modern India} (Bombay, 1971), p. 264

\textsuperscript{72} \textit{The Hindu}, 31 May 1950

\textsuperscript{73} India, Ministry of External Affairs, \textit{Report 1953-1954} (New Delhi, n.d.), p. 18

\textsuperscript{74} India, Ministry of External Affairs, \textit{Report 1957-1958} (New Delhi, n.d.), p. 20
took up the matter with the government. The President agreed to examine appropriate amendments to the Act through a committee and asked the Indian Minister "to suggest amendments concerning the interests of Indian nationals".  

It was with the formation of S.E.A.T.O. that India and the Philippines parted ways. India criticised the Asian countries that joined S.E.A.T.O. and made public its views during the Bandung Conference of 1955. Philippines, who was a participant of the Conference, defended its stand as a member of the S.E.A.T.O. General Romulo said that it was "not fair" for Nehru to have said that "it was humiliating for them (small nations) to join regional organisations".

Nehru declared that S.E.A.T.O. diminished the "climate of peace" that was generated by the Geneva Settlement on Indo-China; it was contrary to the spirit of the agreements and understanding on non-aggression and non-interference; it violated the Charter of the United Nations, contributed to the international tension and it was a plan to perpetuate colonialism and suppress the national liberation movement in Southeast Asia.  

75. India, Lok Sabha Debates, vol. IV, session 7, 13 September 1954, cols. 987-8
Romulo in reply said that the Manila Pact was aimed at the exact opposite of all these things. It was intended to halt the build up of tension in Southeast Asia resulting from the Communist moves in the Indo-Chinese states and thus ensure 'climate of peace'.

The Manila treaty did not affect the rights and obligations of any of the parties under the Charter of the United Nations or the responsibility of the United Nations for the maintenance of international peace and security. To quote Romulo:

The Manila Pact was a treaty of collective defence. No aggressive purpose was written in it... This was a treaty on which we all can stand together, without vanity or invidiousness, but united in the determination to preserve the peace and freedom of Asia.78

By the end of 1950 India's criticism of S.E.A.T.O. had mellowed and Philippines too was keen on developing its friendship with Asian countries. In April-May 1960 Vice President Diosdado Macapagal, paid a goodwill visit to India. He took efforts to clarify the general opinion that the Philippines was under the influence of the U.S. as a total 'misconception'. Expressing his desire for closer relations with India he said:

Of the three big Asian countries - India, China, Japan - India alone was capable to capture the imagination of the Philippines. Therefore, it was psychologically opportune for India to pay attention to the Philippines where people want to have closer ties with her.79

78. Carlos P. Romulo, n. 76, pp. 89-91
79. Ton That Thien, n. 58, p. 273
When China attacked India in October 1962 the Philippines supported India. It was not surprising as a change was coming over its foreign policy and Manila was anxious to strengthen its relations with Asian countries. Philippines prompt condemnation could not be attributed to its anti-China policy alone, as she was genuinely concerned over China's ambitious drive towards South and particularly its attack against India. The Philippines Government lifted its one year old ban on the entry quota of Indian immigrants into the country from March 1963 as a measure of goodwill to India.

Carlos Romulo visited India in February 1964. He remarked:

At this moment of her history India had too many problems internal to her borders, and many more relating to her neighbours. Nevertheless... India, I feel, had much to offer the region of South Asia and Southeast Asia.

He was interested in effecting closer cooperation among the Universities of Asia. Thanking the Government for having invited him to visit the Universities in India he said:

80. S. Krishnamurthy, "India, China and Southeast Asia", United Asia, vol. 15, no. 11, November 1963, p. 757

81. The Hindu, 1 March 1963

82. Carlos P. Romulo, Mission to Asia: The Dialogue Begins. (Quezon City, 1964), p. 44
I come this time as University President and also as Head of the Philippines Academy of Sciences and Humanities... I hope that my visit will strengthen the educational and cultural cooperation between my country and yours.... In this intellectual effort to trace the Asian roots of our identity, we found it imperative to reinforce the Philippines Studies aspect.... In so doing we find it necessary to carry our tracings far afield, toward an understanding of our Asian neighbours, from which we sprang and with whom we have maintained relations except during the colonial interregnum. 83

Towards the end of Nehru era India-Philippine relations had improved to some extent.

**INDIA-THAILAND RELATIONS:**

India-Thailand relations too, which was formal soon after independence developed into cordial relations by the end of Nehru era. Their foreign policies, though diametrically opposite, relationship was based on understanding. Indian influence was evident in the culture, society, religion and government of Thailand. Trade contacts were existing from early times. Indian minorities in Thailand were given good treatment by the government.

Two irksome issues in early 1954 brought difference of opinion between India and Thailand. One was with regard to Thailand's decision to request the United Nations to send

83. Ibid., pp. 4-5
observers to study the possible danger to Thailand's security due to war in Indo-China. India objected to this move as it would lead to U.S. intervention in Indo-China. India felt it was deliberately timed to "undo the good work done at Geneva". Second was the formation of S.E.A.T.O. India went all out to oppose its formation whereas Thailand was an enthusiastic supporter and a member of S.E.A.T.O. Thailand considered S.E.A.T.O. "as an instrument of peace". Even in the Bandung Conference Thailand defended its stand. Prince Wan Wathayakan chief delegate of Thailand, said:

...Thailand has had to clearly face a threat of infiltration and subversion ...Truly in self-defence, therefore, and not for any aggressive or even provocative purposes whatsoever, Thailand has had to join...the Manila Pact.86

India was not critical of Thailand's pro-West policy. In fact after the Bandung Conference Thailand's Foreign Minister expressed desire to strengthen and develop closer ties with India and other Asian nations. The Foreign Minister also confirmed a statement made by Thailand's Prime Minister

84. Virginia Thompson and Richard Adloff, Minority Problems in Southeast Asia (Stanford, 1955), p. 128
86. Asia-Africa Speaks from Bandung, n. 66, p. 132
Pibul Songram that India was helping Thailand in finding a solution to the problem of the Vietnamese refugees in this country. 87

Tensions developed in India-Thailand relations when Thailand protested against the U.S. decision to send 100,000 tons of rice to India. On 12 May 1960 the Thai Foreign Minister, Thanat Khoman, resigned in view of his failure to look after his country's interests. It was before the Indo-U.S. deal was announced that Thailand had been negotiating with India the sale of 100,000 to 200,000 tons of rice. He held this deal responsible for the decline in the price of Thai rice. However the Government of India and the U.S. Embassy in India refuted the Thai charge. Thailand was not a regular supplier of rice to India and for the preceding eight years India had not imported any rice from Thailand. The fall in the price of Thai rice was attributed to increased production of rice in Burma, Japan and South Vietnam. 88

Negotiations were held in New Delhi between Thai Embassy and Indian authorities. India wanted a barter deal instead of cash payment for Thai rice due to shortage of foreign exchange.

87. The Hindu, 31 May 1955
88. Ganganath Jha, Foreign Policy of Thailand (New Delhi, 1979), pp. 135-6
On the Thai side they wanted outright purchases to remedy the state of inequilibrium in the Indo-Thai trade balance. As against India's proposals for the purchase of 25,000 tons of Thai rice on normal trade account and the purchase of a like quantity on barter basis the Thai Government had given consent to the former proposal but not to the latter. The Thai Government's counter-proposals was under study in the Ministry of Food and Agriculture. 89 Prime Minister Sarit Thanat told the Indian Food and Agriculture Minister, Patil, who visited Bangkok:

Rice transactions between India and Thailand are unimportant compared to the maintenance of good relations between the two countries. 90

That was the spirit in which the discussions on the rice-deal was taken. Finally in 1964 India entered into an agreement with Thailand for the purchase of 25,000 tons of rice.

Sino-Indian conflict brought forth Thailand's support for India. Prime Minister Field Marshal Sarit Thanarat said that the Thai Government would fully support India in its fight against Communist China. 91 The Deputy Prime Minister and Defence Minister General Thanom Kittikachorn also said that

89. The Hindu, 17 September 1960
90. Bangkok World (Bangkok), 2 June 1960
91. Guardian (Rangoon), 30 October 1962
"his country would always be with India in fighting 'the common enemy' - China - now knocking at India's northern border". 92

The Thai Foreign Minister, Thanat Khoman, strongly condemned the Chinese aggression on India. Thanat Khoman stressed the need for the countries of Asia to come together. He said:

If we forget our past or present differences and concentrate more on common points, we will serve the cause of our respective countries. If your country and mine and some others joined hands and worked for solidarity, unity and cooperation in Asia, we would do a great service to our people and the whole of Asia. 93

He expressed the hope for better Indo-Thai relations which consciously or unconsciously, instead of being drawn closer had drifted apart though there were no issues between the two countries. He hoped the new trends, the new realisation brought about by new circumstances would bring them closer than they had been in the past. 94

The Foreign Minister of Thailand, Thanat Khoman, was on a goodwill visit to India in April 1963. A joint communique was issued, wherein it was noted:

92. The Hindu, 31 July 1963
93. Statesman (New Delhi), 2 August 1963
94. Ibid.
the desire of both Thailand, and the Republic of India to consolidate and strengthen, still further, the bonds of amity and to widen the areas of cooperation between the two countries. They believed that friendly cooperation between their two countries would not only contribute to the stability, progress and territorial integrity of their respective countries but also contribute towards stability, peace and prosperity of this region.... consultations between the Governments of Thailand and India on matters affecting the mutual interest of their countries would be held whenever desirable. They further agreed that their Governments would continue to make every effort to increase and strengthen the economic and cultural cooperation between the two countries.95

The Philippines and Thailand's pro-West policies were a deterrent to the development of very close relations with India, but not to the extent of impairing their relations. During the period under review though India-Philippines and India-Thailand relations started off on an unhappy note owing to the formation of S.E.A.T.O. by the end of the Nehru era both Thailand and the Philippines were keen on strengthening their friendship with India.

THE DECLINE OF S.E.A.T.O.'S INFLUENCE:

India played an effective role in curtailing the membership of S.E.A.T.O. to two countries in Southeast Asia. Over a period of time the members themselves were disillusioned with the organisation and the U.S. position in Southeast Asia was on the wane. S.E.A.T.O.'s non-committal stand on the Kashmir question and Bangladesh led to Pakistan's withdrawal from S.E.A.T.O. in November 1973. France though a member did not take part in any of the activities and did not approve of U.S. intervention in Vietnam. From mid-1961 to mid-1962 Thailand was the most vociferously critical member of S.E.A.T.O. as S.E.A.T.O. refused to intervene in the Laotian civil war even when it was certain that the pro-communist Pathet Lao would win the battle. 96 Whereas the Americans previously had enjoyed the unqualified endorsement of the Philippines for its cold war containment of communism, the course of developments in Vietnam stirred up increasing resentment and skepticism in the Philippines. U.S. was blamed, by President Marcos, for doing little to assist the small nations in their struggle to overcome the conditions in which communist insurgency flourished. 97

In the U.S. itself there were differences of opinion on S.E.A.T.O. The Senate hearings on S.E.A.T.O. published on 6 March 1974, revealed the intensity of anti-S.E.A.T.O. feeling in the U.S. and the strongest argument was its effect on Philippine-American relations. The report read:

S.E.A.T.O. was criticised as a denial of the objective of a lower U.S. profile in Southeast Asia and an obstacle to better understanding with the People's Republic of China. It tended to encourage Thailand the Philippines to spend money on security that ought to be invested in development and served as a prop for reactionary Governments, diluting their efforts to come to terms with their own internal tensions.\textsuperscript{98}

The State Department did not agree to do away with S.E.A.T.O. entirely which pointed out that:

S.E.A.T.O. had provided a military shield behind which economic life had improved and that the American presence in S.E.A.T.O. had contributed to the growing self-confidence of former European colonies and to the growing sense of security in the Southeast Asian region.\textsuperscript{99}

\textsuperscript{98} Ibid., p. 106

\textsuperscript{99} Ibid.
The fall of the U.S-supported governments in Indo-China ultimately led the two Southeast Asian members of the alliance - Thailand and the Philippines - to recommend in May 1975 that S.E.A.T.O. be phased out in the light of the new realities of the region. Subsequently, the Council of Ministers of S.E.A.T.O. abolished the organisation on 23 September 1975, which had become in their view obsolete and unnecessary.

So long as India continued to criticise the American policy in Southeast Asia as increasing the danger of war and United States continued to dismiss the Panchshil as impractical, a common approach to the region by the two countries was not possible. Yet the objectives of both nations was freedom and security of Southeast Asia. At the same time, it must be pointed out that though Thailand and the Philippines were criticised for joining S.E.A.T.O., India was not always critical of the Southeast Asian countries which had defence alliance with the West, neither were all anti-Communist countries, members of S.E.A.T.O., as in the case of Malaya/Malaysia.

100. Tewari, n. 44, p. 85
Sae Alan Claude A, Buss, n. 97, p. 110