CHAPTER ONE
INTRODUCTION

Since the second world war, there had been a shift in the balance of power and a change in the formation of alliances. Old allies ceased to remain allies any more. The world was broadly divided into two camps, one led by the United States of America and the other by the Soviet Union. There were alliances before the war too, but 'permanent organisations of alliances are a comparatively recent innovation in international relations'. (1)

The previous alliances were not permanent in nature, nor did they have any elaborate organisation. The territorial expansion on the part of the Soviet Union during and after the conclusion of the second world war and its ideological domination, affected many of the East European countries. These led to the formation of military alliances of a permanent nature to safeguard the territorial integrity of the West European countries, viz., North Atlantic Treaty Organisation. In 1948-9 when NATO was formed in Europe, the need for an identical organisation for Asia and the Far East was not acutely felt.

The Japanese Treaty, the ANZUS Pact and the security Treaty with the Philippines followed soon. The Korean war and Chinese participation in it, proved that New China should have to be reckoned with as a formidable force. But the long-drawn out Indo-China war and the fall of Dien Bien Phu early in 1954

created a new political and military situation in South East Asia. Retreating British, French and Dutch hegemony over South and South East Asia created a power vacuum, which caused anxiety to the Western Powers. For, to them, the weakness of the new emerging countries appeared to be enough encouragement to a southward thrust of communism, aided and abetted by Red China and the newly-acquired Soviet might. The partition in effect of Indo-China, chalked out at the Geneva conference, gave hardly any assurance to the Western Powers. Half of Vietnam had fallen to the Communists; the security of the rest, together with Laos and Cambodia in imminent danger. According to Western observers, there was a threat posed to the Malayan peninsula and other parts of South East Asia also. (2) These developments greatly disturbed the Western Powers and their allies in Asia. A number of preparatory meetings were held in the middle of 1954, e.g., the military talks in Washington early in June between Britain, France, Australia, New Zealand and the USA; the discussions held between the American President and the British Prime Minister at the end of June; the meetings of the Anglo-American Study Group and the discussions at the ANZUS Council meetings etc. These were followed by a conference of eight nations at Manila on 6 September 1954 and after a great deal of deliberations; the South East Asia Collective Defence Treaty was signed on 8 September 1954. Those eight nations which attended the conference and were signatories to Treaty are: Australia, France, (2) See Ralph Braibanti, International Implications of Manila Pact (Monograph), (New York, 1957).
New Zealand, Pakistan, the Philippines, Thailand, United Kingdom and United States of America.

The Treaty recognises the sovereign equality of all the Parties and reiterates its faith in the principles and purposes of the United Nations' charter. The chief aim of the treaty is collective security against external aggression, as has been put in the Art. IV, Clause I of the Treaty:

Each party recognises 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 agrees that it will in that event act to meet the common danger in accordance with its constitutional processes. Measures taken under this paragraph shall be immediately reported to the Security Council of the United Nations.

The most striking feature of the Treaty is the provision for meeting subversive activities against the territorial integrity and political stability of the party nations. "This attention to the problem of subversion adds to the South East Asia Treaty a new dimension not found in NATO. The reason for this innovation is found in the change in Soviet tactics from the Berlin blockade to the infiltration of Indo-China where covert aggression in its most subtle form startled the West into an awareness of the new threat to the security of all South East Asia". (3) The Treaty proposes to deal with subversion in two ways. One is preventive, in which 'separately and jointly by means of continuous and effective self-help and mutual aid',

(3) Ibid., 12.
the parties will 'prevent and counter subversive activities'.
The other is, by 'consulting immediately in order to agree on
the measures which should be taken for the common defence'.
There could be a possibility of the second method of dealing
with subversion being used to keep in power an unpopular govern-
ment in any country of the treaty area. (4) For, even an indi-
genous insurrection may be termed as communist subversion. It
may even lead to interference in the internal affairs of a member
or non-member nation of the treaty area. The treaty area has
been defined very vaguely and ambiguously. Only the area north
of 21 degrees 30 minutes north latitude has been excluded. Thus
the treaty takes upon itself the responsibility of defending
areas which are outside the territories of the member countries
and which do not wish to be defended by the treaty powers.

"The organization receives three main types of resource
input: 1. human resources (SEATO staff and other personnel
associated with the organization); 2. financial and other
material resources at the disposal; and 3. official, political
and diplomatic support from member countries and from elsewhere
in the treaty area". (5) The SEATO organizational set up has
not been moulded on the pattern of North Atlantic Treaty Organi-
zation. It has a very modest system of organization. According

(4) See the Australian Labour Party's criticism in 1957
of SEATO support to the 'reactionary regime in Thailand',
Official report of Proceedings of the 22nd Commonwealth Conference
Australian Labour Party, 53, as quoted in George Modelski's
SEATO: six studies, (Sydney, 1962) 72.

(5) Modelski, n. 1, 25.
to Article V of the Treaty, a Council consisting of representatives of each of the member countries has been constituted to consider matters concerning the implementation of this Treaty. From the Canberra meeting of 1957, a small organization of permanent administrative character has emerged, with Bangkok as its headquarters. The Council representatives meet frequently in Bangkok and have under their general direction three Committees, the Committee of Security Experts, the Committee of Economic experts, and the Committee on Information, Cultural Educational and Labour activities. The Military advisers who meet at intervals to chalk out plans to meet aggression in the treaty area, are assisted by a body of staff planners and a variety of sub-committees.

Although Article III of the Manila Treaty makes a mention of 'economic measures including technical assistance, designed both to promote economic progress and social well-being and to further the individual and collective efforts of Governments toward these ends', the treaty members were very anxious to avoid any duplication of, or interference with, the work undertaken by the Colombo Plan or the United Nations. In this respect, the experiences of NATO, where attempts to convert a regional security organization to a multi-purpose agency were greatly discouraged by the UJA, have been taken note of and JEATC has remained primarily an organization for security and defence purposes.

The colonial territories of the United Kingdom and France and the metropolitan territories of Pakistan, Thailand, Laos,
Cambodia and Vietnam (last three with qualifications as mentioned in the Protocol added to the Treaty) are the additional territories which were brought under the jurisdiction of collective security arrangement; for, Australia and New Zealand by the ANZUS treaty and the Philippines by a bi-lateral defense pact with the USA, were already protected from aggression. No reservation regarding 'aggression' was made by the United States of America in the ANZUS pact, as has been made in the Manila Treaty. At the Manila conference, the USA made this reservation in spite of the Pakistani representative's insistence that the conference should be concerned with every type of aggression. (6) On the other hand, no provision exists to meet subversion in the ANZUS treaty. Thus, SEATO was an improvement over other treaties in the region. But the reason for this seems to be the vulnerability of the South East Asian countries to communist infiltration and subversion. At the instance of the Philippines Government, the conference issued a declaration called the "Pacific Charter", (though not organically part of the Treaty) which upheld "the principle of equal rights and self-determination of peoples".

There were only three Asian countries, which participated in the South East Asia Treaty Organization. Of these, Pakistan was prompted more by its distrust of Indian intentions than by

the avowed aim of containing communism. On the other hand, SEATO met with opposition from important countries of Asia, namely India, Burma and Indonesia. Ceylon also decided not to participate in the conference. The definition of the 'treaty area' created doubts about the intentions of the Western Powers, for there were still some areas left under colonial domination. There was a notable decline of interest in France in the area after the Geneva conference, although France continued to associate herself with SEATO. Britain's specific interest remained largely confined to Malaya and other adjacent territories. It was left to the United States of America alone to make the most substantial material contribution. The USA is the most important member of the alliance. Australia and New Zealand are the only two other enthusiastic members. Among the Asian members, the Philippines and Thailand are quite active. Although SEATO promotes the interest of its member countries by providing military security against aggression, the Treaty fits in with the broad strategy of the USA to build defense centres around communist countries with a view to checking the further advancement of communism.

The formation of the South East Asia Treaty Organization (generally known as SEATO) on 8 September 1954 in Manila, created varied reactions in different parts of the world. Besides the two blocs, the 'free world', led by the USA and the Communist bloc, led by the U.S.S.R., there was a third group of nations too mainly from Asia and Africa, which though not knit into a bloc, chose to remain non-involved in their respective foreign
policies, so far as the two blocs were concerned. /The reactions of the various countries to SEATO provided a spectrum of these three main strands./

The Commonwealth of Nations, which is a unique international association, includes some important segments of two of the three main groups - the first and the third. Association with the Commonwealth does not in the least restrict any member country's actions or mould its policies. Member countries can and do pursue different and at times opposite foreign policies. Policies pursued in respect to SEATO by certain Commonwealth countries (selected for study in the thesis), namely, Australia, Canada, India, Malaya, Pakistan and the United Kingdom, bear ample testimony to this fact. Of these six Commonwealth countries, three are members of SEATO and three are non-members. Of the three SEATO-members two countries, Australia and the United Kingdom took part in the formation of SEATO. But while Australia was an enthusiastic partner of SEATO, the United Kingdom's attitude was bordering on hesitancy and disinterestedness.

/Following the second world war, Australian reliance on British naval strength in the Pacific almost dwindled and she started looking forward to the United States for security./ Australia directed her diplomatic efforts to get the United States firmly committed in the defence of this part against possible aggressions. Australian experience in the second world war was a grim reminder against following any policy which left gaps in the defence preparations of the nation. With
the meagre resources at her command Australia was not in a posi-
tion to undertake this task of her own. Moreover, the emergence
of the erstwhile dependencies as independent units introduced a
new realisation to the Australian foreign policy makers that
complete reliance on the western military power, in the absence
of close relationship with Asian neighbours, would mean meeting
the problem of security only partially. This meant, in effect,
for Australia, to enlist in the defence efforts as many Asian
countries as possible. India being the foremost amongst them
drew maximum attention. By associating with SEATO Australia
intended to fight any future battle as far north as possible.

Britain, bereft of her power as it existed before the
second world war, could not have evinced as much interest in
the region as she would have liked to. Yet she had some vital
interests left in the area to safeguard against possible
encroachments. Britain being the chief partner of the United
States in NATO and one of the prime movers of the idea of a
global alliance against communism, could not have escaped invol-
vement in any scheme of military alignment that the United
States could draw for South East Asia. However hard it
might have been for Britain, by so doing, to let the region pass
under the influence of the United States, she could not have
either entertained the prospect of the area being drawn into the
orbit of red influence, supported by the sino-soviet combination.
The Geneva negotiations in 1954 opened up new possibilities for
Britain to manoeuvre. Despite the unsuccessful bids that she
made to associate some Asian countries with the SEATO
negotiations, she could not help acquiescing finally in the provision of effective sanctions to buttress the Geneva settlement by participating in the organization of a defence treaty for the area. From the British point of view, there was need to make good the loss that her exclusion from ANZUS entailed.

But Canada struck a different note by not prescribing the European model for an Asian situation, although she fully subscribed to the concept of regional defence. As a Pacific Power she could have had legitimate interests in the region. As a neighbour of the United States, and as a member of the Atlantic alliance, she shared the Western anxiety to limit the boundaries of communism to the existing frontiers. Nevertheless, Canada held a view, quite unfamiliar in the West in those days, that put more emphasis on the non-military aspects of the whole problem. Canadian opinion, therefore, began to receive favourable hearings in the Asian quarters. Canada grew more conscious of preserving this image when she decided to accept the membership of the Indo-China Commissions.

On the other hand, America’s new-found ally, Pakistan, hardly shared any of the Western motivations behind the formation of regional alliances. An independent Asian country, Pakistan sought security not against communism, but against India. Pakistan faced no threat from either of her communist neighbours. On the contrary, she tried to build the best of relations with them. As an ex-colonial country, she could not have kept herself completely aloof from the Asian mainstream of anti-colonialism. Therefore, Pakistan’s response to her demands
for security against India (real or imaginary) posed a dilemma for Pakistan's foreign policy. A meaningful study of Pakistan's attitude towards SEATO would be possible only in the context of Indo-Pakistan relations.

India's vehement opposition to SEATO originated from her general opposition to military alliances. But it was also much influenced by the considerations of a hostile neighbour's participation in it. India was perhaps, the most representative spokesman of the non-aligned group both within the Commonwealth and outside in South and South East Asia. India's non-participation in SEATO had to a great extent rendered SEATO a weaker and less-effective instrument for security arrangement in the area. SEATO provided a challenge to the concept of the extension of the 'peace area', as advocated so often by India. The Geneva settlement, the Panchsheel agreement between India and China, the Afro-Asian conference at Bandung, together and separately, were attempts made by India to achieve peace and settle issues of conflicts outside the context of the 'cold war'. India's deep commitment to this role in international affairs was in conformity with the promotion of her legitimate interests in the region.

Malaya, on the other hand, was trying hard to achieve a balance between alignment and non-alignment. Embroiled in an operation against communist guerrillas when Malaya was not yet a free nation, and which continued even after, Malaya could not forsake her defence agreement with the United Kingdom. As a member of the community of independent Asian nations, Malaya
became quite sensitive to any charge of her being in alliance with SEATO. Malaya's security needs were more than satisfied by the Mutual Assistance Agreement with Britain. Malaya claims to have followed an independent policy, yet it was not a non-aligned policy of the Indian variety or an aligned policy of the type of Pakistan.

This thesis is a study of the above mentioned six countries' attitudes towards SEATO between 1954-60. The selection of the countries was motivated by the considerations of presenting a representative cross-section of the main strands in the Commonwealth and in the region. The limiting of the period of study between the time of its creation and 1960 is rather arbitrary, though the purpose had been to prevent any straying into a discussion of the Laotian crisis. In the case of Malaya, an exception has been made with regard to the time-limit since the study of the attitude of the independent Malaya begins from 1957. In the case of Australia reference to the crisis in Laos, has been made simply to emphasise that it was a watershed between the two different attitudes that Australia had towards SEATO. Attempt has been made in this study to find out whether those who chose to join the SEATO, were guided by the same reasons, or those who opted out were influenced by the same considerations; whether anti-communism was the most determining factor for those who joined or loyalty to the concept of non-alignment was the cause for abstaining; or in each case, the decision was prompted by the demands of national interests. Though the common denominator between the countries chosen for study is their membership of the Commonwealth, the
object of the study was not to find out a Commonwealth attitude. As each of the chapters is a self-contained analysis of the attitudes of individual countries, a comparison of the various attitudes has been made in the conclusion. Subsequent chapters, dealing with the attitudes of the respective countries, have been arranged country-wise in alphabetical order.