

Cold Warrior Abroad: The Foreign Missions of Vice President Richard Nixon

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Abstract

From 1953-1961, Richard Nixon served as Dwight Eisenhower's vice president. As vice president, Nixon represented the United States and the Eisenhower administration on several foreign missions. *Cold Warrior Abroad* studies four of these missions in order to discern Nixon's development as a statesman, and his understanding of, and impact on Eisenhower's foreign policies. Through careful examination of archival sources, this thesis will reveal the significant role Nixon came to play in the alteration, execution, and sometimes formation of Eisenhower's foreign policies in the regions the vice president visited.

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Table of Contents

| | |
|--|-------|
| Permission to Use | i |
| Abstract | ii |
| Acknowledgments | iii |
| Table of Contents | iv |
| Introduction | p.1 |
| Chapter One | |
| 1953: Asia and the Middle East: “Nixon and the New Look” | p.10 |
| Chapter Two | |
| 1957: Africa: “To strengthen yourself, strengthen your friends” | p.37 |
| Chapter Three | |
| 1958: Latin America: “...the Goodwill mission ended with the calling out of US Marines and army” | p.56 |
| Chapter Four | |
| 1959: The Soviet Union: “Bringing the Cold War Home” | p.75 |
| Conclusion | p.98 |
| Bibliography | p.103 |

Introduction

When he died in 1994, President Richard Nixon was known as a veteran of foreign affairs and an elder statesman. At the outset of his vice presidency in 1953, however, Nixon had very little diplomatic experience.¹ Although President Dwight D. Eisenhower worked to expand the role of the vice president in foreign affairs, a perception grew that Nixon had contributed little of substance to U.S. foreign policy.² Indeed, in 1960, when a journalist asked the president for a single example of Nixon's impact on American foreign policy, he responded impatiently, "If you give me a week, I might think of one."³

Despite Eisenhower's memory lapse, Vice President Nixon travelled to over 50 nations as a representative of the United States and played an important part in the development of U.S. foreign relations during the period from 1953 to 1961. Based mainly on newly declassified archival records, this thesis analyses Nixon's role in four international missions: to Asia and the Middle East, Africa, Latin America, and the Soviet Union. In 1953, Nixon visited several countries in Asia and the Middle East, acting as a diplomat and intelligence gatherer while promoting the administration's containment policies and its anti-Communist ideology. In 1957, the vice president toured nations in Africa north of the equator in order to gauge the alignment of those nations and to find ways in which America might increase its standing in the area. In 1958, Nixon travelled to several Latin American nations to gather information and demonstrate the Eisenhower administration's support of democratically elected governments. Finally, in 1959,

¹ Nixon had played a role in the 1947 Herter Committee's mission to Europe, essentially gauging the necessity of the Marshall Plan, but held little power or attention.

² Elliot L. Watson, "America in Asia: Vice President Nixon's Forgotten Trip to Ceylon," *Foreign Policy Journal* (May 1, 2009), <http://www.foreignpolicyjournal.com/2009/05/01/america-in-asia-vice-president-nixons-forgotten-trip-to-ceylon/> (Accessed April 25, 2012). Watson mentions how Eisenhower attempted to expand the role of the Vice President from its traditionally quite "insignificant" position.

³ President's News Conference, August 24, 1960, Box 21, WHO, Office of the Staff Secretary: Records 1952-1961, Subject Series, Alphabetical Subseries, Dwight D. Eisenhower Library, Abilene, Kansas (hereafter DDEL).

Nixon visited the U.S.S.R. on a mission with multiple objectives: intelligence gathering, psychological warfare, and diplomacy. During all of these missions, Nixon developed as a statesman and made significant contributions to the foreign policy goals of the Eisenhower administration.

The containment of Communism, typically of Soviet origin, was an integral element of the foreign policies of most American presidents during the Cold War. George F. Kennan's 1946 "Long Telegram," one of the earliest endorsements for containment, portrays the Soviet Union as "committed fanatically" to undermining, disrupting, or destroying, almost every conceivable element of American society.⁴ In a broad sense, containment was interpreted by American statesmen as being "a global American security mission" which "charged America with combating Soviet pressures for the indefinite future all around a vast periphery."⁵ Kennan's telegram allows for the extrapolation of some general points and advice for containing the Soviet Union: the United States needed to be able, and demonstrate willingness to, militarily overmatch the U.S.S.R. when necessary; the "Western World" had to remain strong and united; over time, the grip of the Soviet leadership on its people would likely start to wane, and thus only over the long-term would victory be possible; "intelligent and constructive" psychological warfare ought to be enacted by the Western world.⁶ While containment was first adopted under the Truman

⁴ Telegram, The Chargé in the Soviet Union (Kennan) to the Secretary of State, Moscow, February 22, 1946, *Foreign Relations of the United States 1946*, Volume VI, *Eastern Europe; The Soviet Union*, S. Everett Gleason, Rogers P. Churchill, William Slany, and Jerome H. Perlmutter eds. (Washington: United States Printing Office, 1969), 706, (FRUS hereafter). Kennan later adapted this telegram for his 1947 article in *Foreign Affairs*, in which he more directly, and publically (though anonymously) advocated containment with the warning that, "it is clear that the main element of any United States policy toward the Soviet Union must be that of a long-term, patient but firm and vigilant containment of Russian expansive tendencies." See, X, "The Sources of Soviet Conduct," *Foreign Affairs* 25, (July 1947), 575. Kennan's impact on the U.S.'s actions in the Cold War is still a topic of debate. See Scott Lewis and Kaeten Mistry, "Illusions of Coherence: George F. Kennan, U.S. Strategy and Political Warfare in the Early Cold War, 1946–1950," *Diplomatic History* 33, No. 1 (January 2009), 39-43.

⁵ Henry Kissinger, "Reflections on Containment," *Foreign Affairs* 73, No. 3 (May-June, 1994), 115, 121.

⁶ Kennan to Secretary of State, February 22, 1946, *FRUS 1946*, 707-708.

administration, its form and application was more clearly developed and expressed in the Eisenhower administration's "New Look" policy.

Integral to understanding a strong motivation for all of Nixon's missions is at least a basic overview of Eisenhower's "New Look," strategy/policy, laid out in NSC 162/2. As John Lewis Gaddis and Saki Dockrill explain, the New Look focused on alliances or mutual/collective security, the build-up of America's nuclear arsenal, psychological warfare, covert operations, and diplomacy, all in the hopes of undermining and eventually defeating the Soviet Union in the Cold War, while also maintaining a sound domestic economy.⁷ The New Look provides both the context for Nixon's missions and many of the actions he took and recommendations he made during and after them. The New Look was intended to help avoid open conflict with the Soviet Union even as it weakened international Communism, while simultaneously advancing American interests, (usually referred to in NSC 162 as the interests of the "Free World"), within a sound economic structure designed to allow for maximum defence rather than offence.⁸ Maintaining superiority in the realm of nuclear weapons was also a key element of the New Look.⁹ Finally, the New Look was a long term plan, in that it considered the slackening of "revolutionary zeal," the takeover of "managerial and bureaucratic interests," and "popular pressures for consumption goods" as the most likely factors which would cause the Soviet Union

⁷ James Callanan, *Covert Action in the Cold War: U.S. Policy, Intelligence, and CIA Operations* (New York: I.B. Tauris, 2010), 90; John Lewis Gaddis, *Strategies of Containment: A Critical Appraisal of American National Security Policy during the Cold War*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 145-147; Saki Dockrill, *Eisenhower's New-Look National Security Policy, 1953-1961* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1996) 189.

⁸ NSC 162 refers to a "sound economy," maintaining the "lowest feasible costs" for deterrence and retaliation but the document never refers to an open and initial offensive against the Soviets or Communist Chinese. See "NSC 162/2" in *FRUS, 1952-1954*. Volume II, Part One, *National Security Affairs*, William Z. Slany, Lisle A. Rose, and Neal H. Petersen eds. (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1984), 592.

⁹ "NSC 162/2," *FRUS: National Security Affairs*, 582. The emphasis on "massive retaliatory damage by offensive striking power" seems to be a clear indicator of the importance of nuclear weapons.

to collapse.¹⁰ By keeping in mind these basic elements of containment and the New Look, examinations of Nixon's missions and their place within Eisenhower's foreign policy result in interesting conclusions.

The current historiography on Richard Nixon, also known as "Nixonography," focuses mostly on his presidency. This historiography contains a wide variety of approaches, including biographies, psycho-personal analyses, Watergate centred works, foreign policy evaluations, and domestic studies.¹¹ Although some of these works touch on Nixon's vice presidency, few of them analyse his foreign missions in any depth or detail.¹² Thus, significant gaps exist in the current historiography on Nixon.

¹⁰ "NSC 162/2," *FRUS: National Security Affairs*, 581.

¹¹ C.L. Sulzberger claimed that until the time nearing Nixon's death, dislike of the former president had meant a lack of sufficient analysis in historical works. See *The World and Richard Nixon* (New York: Prentice Hall, 1987), xi-xiii, 192-194. Of biographies, see Conrad Black, *The Invincible Quest: The Life of Richard Milhous Nixon* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 2007), and Elizabeth Drew, *Richard M. Nixon: The American Presidents Series: The 37th President, 1969-1974* (New York: Times Books, 2007). For psycho-personal analyses see Anthony Summers, *The Arrogance of Power: The Secret World of Richard Nixon* (New York: Viking, 2000), Fawn M. Brodie, *Richard Nixon: The Shaping of His Character* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1983), and Vamik D. Volkan, Norman Itzkowitz, and Andrew W. Dod, *Richard Nixon: A Psychobiography* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1997), 73-74. As to Watergate centred works, please see Stanley Kutler, *The Wars of Watergate: The Last Crisis of Richard Nixon* (New York: Knopf, 1990), and Theodore H. White, *Breach of Faith: The Fall of Richard Nixon* (New York: Dell Publishing Company, 1976). With regard to foreign policy evaluations, see Asaf Siniver, *Nixon, Kissinger, and U.S. Foreign Policy Making: The Machinery of Crisis* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008); and Jussi M. Hanhimäki, "'Dr. Kissinger' or 'Mr. Henry'? Kissingerology, Thirty Years and Counting," *Diplomatic History* 27, No. 5 (November 2003): 638-645. See also Jeffrey Kimball, "H-Diplo Article Commentary: Kimball on Hanhimäki (historiographical)," <http://www.h-net.org/~diplo/reviews/PDF/Kimball-Hanhimaki.pdf> (Accessed July 17, 2011), 1-2, and his *Nixon's Vietnam War* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1998), and *The Vietnam War Files: Uncovering the Secret History of Nixon-Era Strategy* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2004). On domestic studies see Dean Kotlowski, *Nixon's Civil Rights: Politics, Principle, and Policy* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2001), and Frank Kusch, "Nixon's Loyalists: Inside the War for White House, 1972," (PhD diss., University of Saskatchewan, 2010).

¹² See, for example, Stephen Ambrose, *Nixon: The Education of a Politician, 1913-1962* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1987), and James H. Meriwether, "A Torrent Overrunning Everything: Africa and the Eisenhower Administration," *The Eisenhower Administration, the Third World, and the Globalization of the Cold War*, Kathryn C. Statler and Andrew L. Johns eds., (Oxford: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers Incorporated, 2006). For a notable exception to the criticism above, see Watson, "America in Asia: Vice President Nixon's Forgotten Trip to Ceylon." Watson's work accomplishes a similar goal to this thesis in that it sheds light on Nixon's experiences abroad as vice president. However, as the title makes clear, Watson's work is limited to one country during one mission.

Some doctoral dissertations have sought to address these gaps. Paul Kengor's thesis focuses on the role of the vice president and the office of the vice presidency in foreign policy through a number of case studies. Unfortunately, though, Kengor views Nixon backwards, examining his vice presidency in light of his later actions as president.¹³ Kengor does provide important perspectives and theories on how Nixon functioned as a kind of foreign policy tool and advisor while vice president.¹⁴ Yet, his focus is primarily on recounting events rather than analysing Vice President Nixon's role as a statesman or the implications of Nixon's role in the development of Eisenhower's foreign policies.¹⁵

Like Kengor, Anthony Maravillas views Nixon through a retrospective lens; indeed, he labels the vice presidency an "apprenticeship."¹⁶ Maravillas rarely portrays Nixon's actions as of immediate import, but rather only as contributions to the education of a future president.¹⁷ Although Maravillas recognizes that Vice President Nixon played an active role in influencing Eisenhower's foreign policy, he does not analyze the immediate effects or impact of this influence.¹⁸

Benjamin Goldberg's dissertation also focuses on Nixon's experience as vice president. One of the main objectives of Goldberg's dissertation is to establish and analyse the importance of the complex mentor-protégé relationship between Secretary of State John Foster Dulles and

¹³ Paul Kengor states that examining Nixon's vice presidency makes Nixon's transformation into a "foreign policy animal" and a president focused on foreign policy "abundantly clear." See "The Role of the Vice President in Foreign Policy: Lessons Learned and Policy Insights," (PhD diss., University of Pittsburgh, 1997), 61.

¹⁴ Kengor argues that Nixon would perform his duty as he believed was warranted, and then offer and push his opinions to the influential players in the administration. See "Role of the Vice President," 85-86.

¹⁵ Kengor, "Role of the Vice President," 90-95.

¹⁶ Anthony Rama Maravillas, "Nixon in the Fifties," (PhD diss., University of Illinois at Chicago, 2001), vi.

¹⁷ Maravillas argues that Nixon's foreign missions taught "very important lessons for the would-be president." See "Nixon in the Fifties," 202.

¹⁸ Maravillas, "Nixon in the Fifties," 166-167, 202.

Vice President Nixon.¹⁹ The essential strength of Goldberg's work is that his analysis is primarily focused on the development of Nixon's position and attitude within the Eisenhower administration.²⁰ But the weakness of the dissertation is that his main objectives do not allow for sufficient analysis of Nixon's foreign missions.

In contrast, this thesis will demonstrate Nixon's growth as a statesman and how his foreign missions contributed to the development of Eisenhower's foreign policies. Increasing scholarly attention has been given to the Eisenhower administration's Cold War policies in Europe, Asia, the Middle East, Latin America, and Africa.²¹ The Eisenhower administration often struggled with the complexities involved with this truly global challenge.²² The main contribution of this thesis with respect to the expanding literature on Eisenhower's foreign policies will be to display Nixon's role in the development of the Eisenhower administration's Cold War strategy. This thesis will also display Nixon's development as a statesman by arguing that Nixon's recommendations and his criticisms of Eisenhower's policies were indicative of his growing pragmatism and greater sophistication as a statesman.

¹⁹ Benjamin Goldberg, "The Vice Presidency of Richard Nixon: One Man's Quest for National Respect, an International Reputation, and the Presidency," (PhD diss., College of William and Mary in Virginia, 1998), 75-76.

²⁰ Goldberg details Nixon's reactions to certain figures on his 1953 mission and the impact these had on how he conducted himself within the administration. However, analysis of the mission and actual implications of some of the conversations is limited. See "One Man's Quest," 121-124, 126.

²¹ Robert Bowie and Richard Immerman focus primarily on Eisenhower's European policies, and while they acknowledge that Eisenhower paid an increasing amount of attention to Africa, Asia, and Latin America during his time as president, theirs is certainly a "Europe first" history. See Robert R. Bowie and Richard H. Immerman, *Waging Peace: How Eisenhower Shaped an Enduring Cold War Strategy* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), 252-254. It ought be acknowledged that Immerman has focused on Vietnam, with Fred I. Greenstein in "What Did Eisenhower Tell Kennedy about Indochina? The Politics of Misperception," *Journal of American History* 79, No. 2 (September 1992), 580-585; and with George C. Herring in "Eisenhower, Dulles, and Dienbienphu: "The Day We Didn't Go to War" Revisited," *Journal of American History* 71, No. 2 (September 1984), 349. Both articles mention Nixon but do not analyse his contributions. Nixon was sent on missions to Africa, Asia, and Latin America, and considerable resources were expended not only on the missions themselves but often later on aid to many of the nations therein. Therefore, examination of any correlation between Nixon's missions and subsequent increases in aid seems warranted. For Nixon's visits at least appearing to precede aid increases, see Dockrill, *Eisenhower's New-Look*, 175, 229.

²² David L. Anderson, "The Devil Is in the Details: Eisenhower, Dulles, and the Third World," *The Eisenhower Administration, the Third World, and the Globalization of the Cold War*, 272-275.

Careful analysis of Richard Nixon's role in these international missions reveals a man attempting to accomplish his task as best he could, taking into consideration his interpretation of the intent of Eisenhower's Cold War policies. While certainly ambitious, Nixon's actions abroad indicate that strong motivators for him were to assist, enhance, and otherwise attempt to support the administration's goals as he perceived them. Although the vice president was supportive of Eisenhower's New Look containment strategy, many of his actions, reports, and recommendations suggest that he understood that in order to be successful, the administration could not simply support anti-Communism regardless of the costs. Working within his understanding of the Eisenhower administration's foreign policy goals, Nixon became an integral player in the development of these policies, and grew into a shrewd and capable statesman during his various international missions.

The first chapter of this thesis examines Richard Nixon's 1953 mission to Asia and the Middle East. Of the nations which Nixon travelled to on this mission, Vietnam, Korea, India, Pakistan, and Iran are of special interest. Nixon's interactions with the leaders and representatives of these nations are important in that they reveal Nixon's initial abilities as a statesman. The vice president's actions during this mission also demonstrate the Eisenhower administration's strategy, namely anti-Communism, and how the New Look was to be implemented in the areas Nixon visited. The second chapter focuses on Nixon's 1957 trip to African nations such as Morocco, Ethiopia, Ghana, Tunisia, Liberia, and Libya. Nixon's recommendations after his African mission point to both a failure to implement the New Look in the region, and opportunities for containing Communism and expanding America's influence in Africa and the Middle East.²³ The third chapter centres on Nixon's 1958 trip to several South

²³ "NSC 162/2," *FRUS: National Security Affairs*, 581-587.

American nations, with emphasis on Peru and Venezuela. Through examination of Nixon's recommendations and the reaction of the Eisenhower administration to the attacks on Nixon in Latin America, Nixon's growing sophistication and pragmatism is made clear by means of contrasting those elements with the often heavy-handed and short-sighted policies of the Eisenhower administration in Latin America. The fourth chapter is concerned solely with Nixon's 1959 mission to the USSR. Like the other missions, the policy of anti-Communism, the Eisenhower administration's drive for influence and desire to prevail in the Cold War, are revealed in this chapter. In addition, Nixon's shrewdness as a Cold War statesman, displayed during his conversations with Khrushchev, is also made clear.

Given the paucity of works that focus on Vice President Nixon's foreign missions, this thesis will make an original contribution to the existing literature. The thesis is based largely on newly declassified documents, found in the Dwight Eisenhower Library in Abilene, Kansas, and the Richard Nixon Library in Yorba Linda, California. The Nixon Library's Pre-Presidential Collection and Vice Presidential Collection provide insights into Nixon's role, observations, and conclusions during these foreign missions. These collections include Nixon's handwritten notes, personal messages and communique's between Nixon, his staff, and others within the Eisenhower administration, as well as memoranda of conversations, reports, and briefing materials which reveal how Nixon went about preparing for, undertaking, and reporting on his missions. Many collections from the Eisenhower Library, including various White House Office collections, the White House Central Files, and the records of both Dwight Eisenhower and John Foster Dulles, were also very useful. These collections, which include transcripts of telephone conversations, internal memoranda, NSC reports, and records of meetings within the

administration, reveal important insights regarding the policies of the Eisenhower administration and the impact of Nixon's international missions.²⁴

²⁴ Irwin F. Gellman has also pointed out the lack of study conducted on Nixon's vice presidency, and his conclusions on the usefulness of such a study using the resources from the Nixon Library lines up well with my own. See, "The Richard Nixon Vice Presidency: Research without the Nixon Manuscripts," *A Companion to Richard Nixon*, Melvin Small ed. (Malden: Wiley Blackwell, 2011).

Chapter One: 1953 Asia and the Middle East

Nixon and the “New Look”

Richard Nixon’s first foreign mission as vice president commenced on October 5, 1953 and ended on December 14 of the same year, during which he visited nineteen nations. Nixon’s objectives during the mission were to investigate the developing situation in Indochina, reassure and engage American allies, court and engage neutral nations, and gauge Asian reactions and feelings towards Communist China.²⁵ The concerns of the Eisenhower administration were put more bluntly in the briefing book prepared for the Vice President ahead of his visit: “with the cessation of hostilities in Korea, the Communists find themselves in a strong position to expand their influence in the Far East.”²⁶ During this mission, the Vice President played an important part in developing the Eisenhower administration’s anti-Communist policies abroad. Close examinations of Nixon’s time in Korea, India, Pakistan, Vietnam, and Formosa, as well as Iran will help to explain his role towards that end.

Nixon’s first international mission as vice president served many purposes. In every nation he visited, the vice president warned against policies or actions which went against the Eisenhower administration’s plans for containing and defeating Communism. In Vietnam this meant arguing for the French to alter their tactics, in Korea and Formosa it meant espousing restraint on the parts of Syngman Rhee and Chiang Kai-Shek, and in India and Iran it meant recommending patience and loyalty. With each visit Nixon’s perspectives on the United States and the Eisenhower administration’s policies were made more apparent. In 1953, Nixon viewed the anti-Communist Eisenhower administration’s policies uncritically despite their hegemonic

²⁵ Richard Nixon, *The Memoirs of Richard Nixon* (New York: Warner Books, 1978), 146.

²⁶ CIA Briefing Book for the Vice President, 28 September, 1953, 1, Box 19, Executive Secretary’s Subject File Series, White House Office (hereafter WHO), National Security Council Staff: Papers, 1948-1961, DDEL.

elements.²⁷ Connected to this, Nixon's enthusiasm for the New Look policies and Eisenhower and Dulles's endorsement of Nixon's conclusions based on his experiences during the mission are important for what they reveal about both Nixon and the administration in 1953. At the time of his first mission, Richard Nixon's mindset was one of almost unquestioning loyalty and adherence to the containment policies and actions of his administration. Both the strong anti-Communist tendencies of the Eisenhower administration and Nixon's confidence in that administration's superiority were evident during Nixon's mission to Vietnam.

Nixon's mission to Vietnam was of great significance to the Eisenhower administration. The focal point of much of the historiography vis-à-vis the Eisenhower administration and the Vietnam War has been the French defeat at Dien Bien Phu and the American actions which followed.²⁸ This is problematic in that American involvement in, and concern with Indochina, had been escalating since Eisenhower took office.²⁹ While there was certainly not a "clean slate" for the Eisenhower administration in 1954, there was clearly a turning point in regards to the level of America's commitment.³⁰ As David L. Anderson has shown, Eisenhower had placed a high priority on supporting actions against Vietnam falling to Communism while the Korean

²⁷ The New Look's logic flows from the premise that only the United States could hold back Communist domination, and in order to accomplish this, the New Look states that the U.S. requires overseas bases in Europe and Asia. Such bases depended on the cooperation of the country they were to be maintained only in "most cases." Thus, the New Look Policy advocated that the U.S. actively work to maintain a military presence in both allied, and when necessary, non-allied nations, as the "leader" of the free world. See "NSC 162/2," *FRUS: National Security Affairs*, 583-584.

²⁸ I take as good examples Gareth Porter's *Perils of Dominance: Imbalance of Power and the Road to War in Vietnam* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005), 70-74 and Lloyd Gardner's "America's War in Vietnam: The End of Exceptionalism?" *The Legacy: The Vietnam War in the American Imagination*, ed. D. Michael Shafer, (Boston: Beacon Press, 1990), 12-17.

²⁹ Scott A. Silverstone, *Preventive War and American Democracy* (New York: Routledge, 2007) 86-87.

³⁰ For the clean slate hypothesis see Edward Cuddy, "Vietnam: Mr. Johnson's War. Or Mr. Eisenhower's?," *The Review of Politics* 65, No. 4 (Autumn, 2003), 353-354. For the hypothesis of a turning point in which the US had to either increase their commitment levels or risk perceived embarrassment and failure see Pierre Asselin, "The Democratic Republic of Vietnam and the 1954 Geneva Conference: A revisionist critique," *Cold War History*, 11, No. 2 (May 2011), 160-162.

War still raged.³¹ In 1953 the administration and its departments had the opportunity to re-examine American involvement in Indochina and appraise both flaws in France's approach to the situation and likely outcomes should the French fail to stabilise Vietnam. A significant part of this re-examination was undertaken by Richard Nixon during his stop there in 1953.

Nixon's mission to Vietnam and the preparations made for the mission reveal that American officials were well aware of the many challenges that they would likely face in the future, and had already committed to American involvement in Vietnam. It is important to note that in 1953, French forces in Indochina still numbered almost two hundred thousand and that while the United States was not interested in supplying American troops, a significant amount of money, prestige, and credibility had already been invested.³² Nixon was visiting at a time when American involvement stood on a precipice. Certainly America was deeply involved in the Vietnam situation, but at this point a willful false hope existed that the French might be able to stabilise the area, and thus negate the necessity for further American involvement.³³ Indeed, the United States was attempting to exert more and more control over the French, going so far as to demand a timeline for French withdrawal.³⁴ The main reason that American policy indicated that further involvement would be necessary should the French efforts fail was not at this point

³¹ David L. Anderson, *Trapped by Success: The Eisenhower Administration and Vietnam, 1953-1961* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1991), 17-18.

³² For the French troop (182,000), and American investment (at least \$385 million in 1953 alone) figures see CIA Briefing Book for the Vice President, 28 September, 1953, 15-16, DDEL; Report to the NSC by the NSC Planning Board on the United States Objectives and Courses of Action with Respect to Southeast Asia, December 30, 1953, 5, Box 8, Policy Paper Subseries, NSC Series, WHO, Office of the Special Assistant for National Security Affairs (hereafter OSANSA): Records, DDEL.

³³ Nixon noted that unless the French's planned spring offensive saw real success "we are in deep trouble." See Handwritten Note, RN [Trip File 1953, Far East] Indochina, Box 2, Series 325 Executive Branch File, Richard Nixon Vice Presidential Collection (hereafter RNVPC), Richard Nixon Library and Birthplace Foundation, Yorba Linda, California (hereafter RNL). The false hope can be found in the CIA's briefing for the vice president, in which several failings with France's strategy in Vietnam are pointed out, yet the appraisal is given that the "French probably hold the key to the Indochina situation." See CIA Briefing Book for the Vice President, 28 September, 1953, 17, DDEL.

³⁴ Justin Wintle, *The Vietnam Wars* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1991), 78-79.

neocolonialism so much as a genuine fear of growing Communist influence in the area.³⁵ In 1953 the central concern was keeping a “domino” from falling to Communism, and this was expressed clearly to and by Nixon. The term “domino” here refers to the “domino theory,” which held that if any single nation fell to Communism, especially in Asia, it would create, much like a line of dominoes, a chain reaction in which all others would fall.³⁶ President Eisenhower argued that the non-Communist world could “not afford” to allow such a chain reaction to occur.³⁷

The fear of Communist influence spreading and overtaking Vietnam was at the very least perceived to be a legitimate threat by American officials, including Nixon. During a meeting with Emperor Bao Dai, Nixon was told that without military support Vietnam would “be an immediate prey to the Communist enemy.”³⁸ Whether this was simply an example of the emperor attempting to ensure American aid continued to come to Vietnam, the fact remains that Nixon’s briefings were in line with Bao Dai’s assessments, with the addendum that “all of Southeast Asia” would fall with Vietnam.³⁹ This growing anxiety over Communist China’s perceived machinations for total dominance in Asia and “hegemony in the Western Pacific,”

³⁵ For the neocolonialism judgment as concerns the Eisenhower administration’s actions from 1954 onward see Kathryn C. Statler, “Building a Colony: South Vietnam and the Eisenhower Administration, 1953-1961,” *The Eisenhower Administration, the Third World, and the Globalization of the Cold War*, 102-103. For one example of the many fears the U.S. had of Communist takeover in case of Vietnam’s fall to Communism see Report to the NSC by the NSC Planning Board on the United States Objectives and Courses of Action with Respect to Southeast Asia, 2-4.

³⁶ Sheldon Anderson, *Condemned to Repeat It: “Lessons of History” and the Making of U.S. Cold War Containment Policy* (Plymouth: Lexington Books 2008), 75.

³⁷ Martin Thornton, *Times of Heroism, Times of Terror: American Presidents and the Cold War* (Westport: Praeger Books, 2005), 46-47.

³⁸ Conversations of Vice President Nixon with Bao Dai, November 1, 1953, Indo-China, Box 2, Series 366, Subseries A: 1953 Trip to Asia and the Far East, Richard Nixon Pre-Presidential Materials Laguna Niguel (hereafter RNPPM), RNL.

³⁹ Confidential Security Information Report, 9, Indo-China 3, Box 3, Series 364, Subseries A: 1953 Trip to Asia and the Far East, RNPPM, RNL.

elicited a panicked response from many in the administration.⁴⁰ Secretary of State John Foster Dulles went so far as to envision a Chinese invasion possibly setting off another world war.⁴¹ The fear of a Communist takeover, and what such a takeover signified to the Eisenhower administration, guaranteed the situation in Vietnam would be difficult to resolve.

Complicating matters was the very problematic position within the Eisenhower administration that held that any concessions to Communists in Vietnam would inevitably lead to eventual Communist takeover of Vietnam, and thus no concessions were to be made.⁴² Given the New Look's emphasis on collective security, and the accompanying problem that essentially any single threat to an ally became a global threat meant that the Vietnam situation was one which would require more rather than less involvement for the Eisenhower administration.⁴³ In promoting collective security in Vietnam, Nixon claimed that Vietnam's struggle was one of global proportions which involved "all the free nations of the world" and promised that in resisting Communist aggression Vietnam would be aided by America.⁴⁴ Neither Nixon nor Eisenhower or Dulles made unequivocal statements which pointed to the Eisenhower administration's willingness to increase American commitments in Vietnam, yet many of Nixon's actions during and after his time there hint at such a disposition.

Although there is no definitive link between Nixon's preparation for and report on his mission, and the later increase in American involvement, there are indications that both the Eisenhower administration and Nixon assumed American involvement would not diminish in the

⁴⁰ Silverstone, *Preventative War*, 88.

⁴¹ Melanie Billings-Yun, *Decision Against War: Eisenhower and Dien Bien Phu, 1954* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1988), 22-23.

⁴² Confidential Security Information Report, 9, Indo-China 3, Box 3, Series 364, RNL.

⁴³ Dockrill, *Eisenhower's New-Look*, 97.

⁴⁴ Speech of Vice President Nixon at Dinner Given by Governor Tri, November 3, Remarks by RN – Indo-China, Box 1, Series 370, Subseries A: 1953 Trip to Asia and the Far East, RNPPM, RNL.

near future. The “highlight” of Nixon’s time in Vietnam, as described by Ambassador Donald Heath, was an event which saw Nixon inspecting French and Vietnamese troops during combat a “few miles” from the front line at Lai Cac.⁴⁵ While Nixon made note, both at the time and in his memoirs, of the many problems with the French treatment of their Vietnamese allies, he also recorded that problems with training and a lack of intelligence gathering plagued anti-Communist efforts.⁴⁶ Nixon was not a military or intelligence expert, and as such these criticisms may or may not have been valid, but the fact that he brought them up with General Navarre, the commander of French Union forces in Vietnam, suggests Nixon felt strongly enough about them to offend an ally.⁴⁷ In addition to the military matters, the vice president also attempted to address other factors he viewed as detrimental to Vietnam’s long term survival as an American ally.

Nixon had an acute interest in “solving” the problems in Vietnam, and his proposed solutions are important for what they signify. Despite the fact that his solutions, such as his proposal to begin training anti-Communist agents out of a select group of the Chinese population in Vietnam in order to subvert pro-Communist agents, were often impractical, the fact that he devoted such time, and argued the resources required by such programs to be reasonable, demonstrates the level of commitment he felt the Eisenhower administration had in Vietnam.⁴⁸ Nixon also called for a totally revamped propaganda program for Vietnam as he posited that the existing program was “completely inadequate” in terms of communicating facts or in convincing

⁴⁵ Telegram, Donald R. Heath to Department of State, November 7, 1953, Indo-China, Box 2, Series 366, Subseries A: 1953 Trip to Asia and the Far East, RNPPM, RNL.

⁴⁶ Nixon, *Memoirs*, 150-153; Handwritten Note, RN [Trip File 1953, Far East] Indochina, RNL.

⁴⁷ Navarre apparently dismissed Nixon’s suggestions. See Telegram, Korean Embassy to Secretary of State, RN [Trip File 1953, Far East] Correspondence, 1953 November 10-18, Box 1, Series 325 Executive Branch File, RNVPC, RNL.

⁴⁸ Status, Influence, and Political Potentialities of Chinese in Cambodia, Laos, and Vietnam, Indo-China 3, Box 3, Series 364, RNPPM, RNL.

the Vietnamese of the benefits of working with non-Communist forces.⁴⁹ If these plans and assessments were only Nixon's, and had they only been agreed with by Ambassador Heath, it would be fair to dismiss such evidence as not indicating a trend towards continued or increased American involvement in Vietnam.⁵⁰ However, Nixon's evaluations were approved of by the Eisenhower administration.

In his confidential report after the completion of his mission, Nixon made several points about U.S. involvement in Vietnam which intimated that the American presence there was not going to subside in the near future. It is reasonable to conclude that since Dulles gathered a group of State, Defense, and Central Intelligence Agency (C.I.A.) officials on January 8, 1954, in order to have Nixon impart his findings to them, findings which Dulles characterised as "wisdom," that Dulles was convinced Nixon's views were credible. When discussing Vietnam in particular, Nixon noted to those gathered that "we have got our money in this pot; we have got to stick with it," reflecting the vice president's view that the administration should not spend hundreds of millions of dollars and allow events to play out without American input.⁵¹

Nixon's recommendations to officials from multiple departments hint at but do not recognise the kinds of power and influence he thought were necessary for their implementation. Nixon stated that the necessary input would require the administration to push for France to, among other things, take genuine steps toward Vietnam's legitimate independence, support a pro-Western leader the Vietnamese people would rally behind, implement a better and more

⁴⁹ Vice President Nixon's Report to Department Officers on his Trip to the Near and Far East, January 8, 1954, 10, Box 69, Operations Coordinating Board Central File Series, WHO, National Security Council Staff: Papers, 1948-1961, DDEL.

⁵⁰ Ambassador Heath spoke with Nixon, and Heath stated that Nixon held a "comprehensive" grasp of the problems in Vietnam. See Telegram, Donald R. Heath to Department of State, November 7, 1953, Indo-China, Box 2, Series 366, RNL.

⁵¹ Vice President Nixon's Report to Department Officers on his Trip to the Near and Far East, January 8, 1954, 10, DDEL.

realistic training program for troops in Vietnam, and oppose negotiations with Communist forces.⁵² Most telling was Nixon's conclusion that as long as Communist China continued to try to exert influence in Vietnam the United States would support actions there for "many, many years to come."⁵³ Thus Nixon's recommendations argued for either exerting greater influence on France or becoming more involved in Vietnam in some other form. These included attempting to revamp Western propaganda programs in Vietnam, which were "completely inadequate," and placing pressure on the Viet Minh to negotiate a settlement which favoured Western interests while working to "oppress negotiation" or the desire for it on the part of the French.⁵⁴ Like other members of the Eisenhower administration, Nixon concluded that a higher level of American involvement or intervention was needed in order to bring Vietnam in line with the non-Communist world, and while no mention was made of American troops, it was clear that Nixon was convinced that the French needed more input and control from the Americans if the situation in Vietnam was to improve.

Whereas in Vietnam Nixon had been essentially an intelligence gatherer who gave advice based on the information he had gained, when he travelled to Formosa (modern Taiwan), his job description included more diplomatic aspects. In Formosa Nixon was met with the challenge of explaining the limitations of American support against Communism in tandem with gathering information. Chiang Kai-Shek's main focus was the reunification of Formosa with mainland China, as he saw the control of Communists in China as a temporary problem with a military solution. When meeting with Formosa's President Chiang Kai-Shek, Nixon was dealing with a

⁵² In regards to the pro-West leader, Nixon did not outright advocate replacing Bao Dai, but he did believe Bao Dai needed to either step up to the challenge or step out of the way. See Vice President Nixon's Report to Department Officers on his Trip to the Near and Far East, January 8, 1954, 11-13, DDEL.

⁵³ Vice President Nixon's Report to Department Officers on his Trip to the Near and Far East, 10, DDEL.

⁵⁴ Vice President Nixon's Report to Department Officers on his Trip to the Near and Far East, 13 DDEL.

man whom his briefing described as believing that a third World War was “inevitable.”⁵⁵

Chiang’s tendency to make bold predictions was often focused squarely on issues involving mainland China. In their first meeting, on November 9, 1953, President Chiang argued vociferously that the Soviet Union was using Communist China to advance aggressive actions in Asia in order to both expand Communist influence and to leave Communist China focused on foreign conflicts rather than domestic development.⁵⁶ Chiang also maintained that while the Soviet Union was “clear” in its manipulation of Communist regimes toward a policy of global domination, the United States had no “purpose and direction” in its policies in Asia, and this frustrated U.S. allies.⁵⁷ While Nixon agreed with this assessment, he also worked to dampen Chiang’s enthusiasm for invading China.

Nixon’s efforts to keep Chiang’s machinations for invasion in check stemmed from the Eisenhower administration’s desire for peace, its current policy, and Nixon’s own appraisal of Formosa’s chances of success. That the Eisenhower administration desired that Formosa should avoid instigating conflict with Communist China was made clear in NSC 146/2, which called for a build-up of Formosa’s military, economy, and government, as well as utilising the nation for psychological operations against Communist China.⁵⁸ Nixon attempted to show Chiang through Chiang’s own plans how the preparations for war would be infeasible for many different reasons. Nixon was able to garner an admission from Chiang that his two plans for retaking China, either the crash training of 300,000 new troops over one and a half years, or a three year build-up of his

⁵⁵ Confidential Security Information, 2, Formosa, Box 2, Series 364, Subseries A: 1953 Trip to Asia and the Far East, RNPPM, RNL.

⁵⁶ Record of the First Interview between President Chiang Kai-Shek and United States Vice President Richard Nixon, November 9, 1953, 2-3, RN [Trip File 1953, Far East] Conversations with Chiang Kai-Shek, November 9-11, 1953, Box 1, Series 325 Executive Branch File, RNVPC, RNL.

⁵⁷ First Interview between Chiang Kai-Shek and Richard Nixon, November 9, 1953, 6, RNL.

⁵⁸ *FRUS, 1952-1954*, Volume XIV, Part One, *China and Japan*, John P. Glennon, David W. Mabon and Harriet Schwar eds. (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1986), 307-311.

entire armed forces, were both dependent on significant U.S. resources, materiel, and training.⁵⁹ Nixon proposed that Chiang's plans would take longer than three years to prepare, and that the kind of aid Chiang needed would take an equivalent amount of time to arrive and be utilised. The vice president pushed Chiang to consider the probability of success for an invasion in five years or later; Chiang admitted success was much less likely at such a time.⁶⁰ Further proof that Nixon did not feel Chiang's plans were feasible came at the end of their final interview, when Nixon stated that while he currently had no direct power over American actions vis-à-vis Chiang's concerns, the only point he agreed with Chiang on was that the U.S. needed to clarify and stand by its policies in Asia.⁶¹ Nixon was convinced that clarification of the U.S. position would at least make clear to the U.S.'s allies the limits of American support.

In Formosa Nixon was reassured by the fact that Chiang Kai-Shek knew Formosa could not hope to win a war with China unaided and without careful preparation; in Korea Nixon was tasked with dealing with Syngman Rhee, a leader who at least appeared to be enthusiastic for war in Korea and beyond, regardless of the risk. Ongoing changes both within the policy of the Eisenhower administration as well as on the international stage meant that Nixon's mission in South Korea was one of great importance. With the recent conclusion of hostilities in the Korean War, South Korea's Rhee was in a similar mindset to that of Formosa's Chiang Kai-Shek in that he too foresaw a military solution to the problem of his divided nation. The complex nature of the relationship between the United States and the Republic of Korea (ROK) belies a simple explanation, but it is fair to state that late in 1953 the Eisenhower administration viewed

⁵⁹ Record of the Third Interview between President Chiang Kai-Shek and United States Vice President Richard Nixon, November 9, 1953, 19-20, RN [Trip File 1953, Far East] Conversations with Chiang Kai-Shek, November 9-11, 1953, Box 1, Series 325 Executive Branch File, RNVPC, RNL.

⁶⁰ Third Interview between Chiang Kai-Shek and Richard Nixon, November 9, 1953, 21, RNL.

⁶¹ Third Interview between Chiang Kai-Shek and Richard Nixon, November 9, 1953, 28-29, RNL.

the ROK as at best a “rogue ally” and was convinced that the ROK required a greater deal of direct control than its European allies.⁶²

When considering opposing arguments on the Eisenhower administration’s standpoint on Korea, the importance of Nixon’s mission both to the administration and to the historiography becomes evident. The standard interpretation of American-Korean relations just prior to and following the armistice holds that while the Eisenhower administration was keen to avoid further armed conflict in the area, Syngman Rhee appeared to desire continued fighting.⁶³ However, Michael Gordon Jackson has proposed that in the event the ROK was attacked, the Eisenhower administration was willing to use atomic weapons in conjunction with a massive attack on Communist China, and thus a bellicose Rhee possibly instigating a Chinese attack would not have been an immediate and pressing concern.⁶⁴ While Jackson’s proposals vis-à-vis Eisenhower’s willingness to fight a nuclear war over Korea are interesting, there are several significant flaws in his work. For example, Jackson limits his portrayal of a nuclear trigger-happy Eisenhower to the period just after the Korean Armistice, thus ignoring evidence such as Eisenhower’s 1954 blunt castigation of Rhee over his enthusiasm for a war of unification.⁶⁵

Nixon’s mission to the ROK, and events and communications which occurred during his mission but before he actually met Rhee, suggest that the Eisenhower administration was much more concerned with maintaining peace than it was enthusiastic for a nuclear war. Nixon’s

⁶² Victor D. Cha, “Powerplay,” *International Security* 34, No. 3 (Winter 2009/2010), 163-164.

⁶³ As an example see Henry W. Brands Jr., “The Dwight D. Eisenhower Administration, Syngman Rhee, and the ‘Other’ Geneva Conference of 1954,” *Pacific Historical Review* 56, No. 1 (February 1987), 60-63.

⁶⁴ The proposal that Eisenhower was fully prepared to use atomic bombs, but only if it meant crippling the Communist Chinese *in toto* has been put forward by Michael Gordon Jackson, in “Beyond Brinkmanship: Eisenhower, Nuclear War Fighting, and Korea, 1953-1968,” *Presidential Studies Quarterly* 35, No. 1 (March 2005), 55-60

⁶⁵ For the castigation see Hagerty Diary Entry, July 27, 1954, *FRUS, 1952-1954*, Volume XV, Part Two, *Korea*, John P. Glennon and Edward C. Keefer eds. (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1984), 1840-1841.

briefing materials noted that a Communist attack on the ROK was unlikely, but there was reason to be concerned that Rhee would order an attack on North Korea, and that this order would be followed by his forces.⁶⁶ Demonstrating the pressing nature of this concern is that while Nixon was conducting his mission, the policies of the Eisenhower administration towards the situations in Communist China and the Koreas were altered. John Foster Dulles had sent a message to Nixon on November 4, 1953, instructing the vice president to gain an “explicit...assurance” from Rhee that the South Korean leader would not start, and attempt to drag the U.S. into, a war.⁶⁷ Dulles also mentioned to Nixon that he ought to communicate to Rhee that the U.S. would fully cooperate with Rhee to unify Korea by peaceful means, but that Rhee’s interests would be better served if he accepted America’s aid to rebuild Korea’s “devastated” economy.⁶⁸ Further, on November 6, 1953, Nixon was advised by Everett Gleason, the Deputy Executive Secretary of the National Security Council, to deal with Rhee according to the new, less aggressive stance, advocated in Eisenhower’s new position for dealing with China.⁶⁹ Gleason explained the new position as “a realistic view of our limited capabilities, short of war” to contain China in the event Rhee attacked North Korea.⁷⁰ Thus, Nixon was to attempt to restrain Rhee. These messages offer a preview of future developments in the Eisenhower administration but also display the administration’s focus on maintaining peace in Korea and the hopes that Richard Nixon could play a role in assuring it.

Nixon’s modified orders reveal that the Eisenhower administration wanted to be certain that Syngman Rhee understood America’s position against renewed violence. Together, the

⁶⁶ CIA Briefing Book for the Vice President, 28 September, 1953, 31-33, DDEL.

⁶⁷ Secretary of State to the Vice President, November 4, 1953, *FRUS, Korea*, 1590.

⁶⁸ Telegram, Dulles to Nixon, November 4, 1953, Box 5, JFD Chronological Series, John Foster Dulles: Papers, 1951-1959, DDEL.

⁶⁹ Top Secret Message for the Vice President, November 6, 1953, Box 19, Executive Secretary’s Subject File Series, White House Office, National Security Council Staff: Papers, 1948-1961, DDEL.

⁷⁰ Top Secret Message for the Vice President, November 6, 1953, DDEL.

messages to Nixon hint at the Eisenhower administration's strategy of containment which would be much more developed by early 1955.⁷¹ Rather than planning on actively attacking Communist forces, the Eisenhower administration sought to strengthen existing allies against a fall to Communism. The administration also aimed to contain and subvert Communism to such an extent that it crumbled from within. In the hopes of pursuing this anti-Communist policy and avoiding the renewal of war in Korea a significant goal for Nixon's mission was to restrain Syngman Rhee, and in this he was at least partially successful.

Nixon was not able to gain explicit assurances that Rhee would not attack North Korea, but he exacted a concession from the ROK's leader. During Nixon's first meeting with Rhee, Nixon was able to garner from Rhee a promise not to act unilaterally without first informing Eisenhower.⁷² This was not the explicit assurance that Dulles and Eisenhower had asked for, but Nixon explained that while Rhee would continue to speak publically in such a manner as to convey himself as an uncompromising anti-Communist, he understood the need to work with the United States.⁷³ Nixon also argued that since Rhee specifically requested that the Eisenhower administration secretly use Korea as a tool in a similar manner to the Soviet Union's use of its satellites, it was unlikely Rhee would go so far as to instigate a war without clear permission from America.⁷⁴ As none of the members of the National Security Council (NSC) called the veracity of Nixon's views into question, and since several members voiced enthusiasm for the

⁷¹ Bowie and Immerman, *Waging Peace*, 175-177.

⁷² Draft Telegram from the Vice President to the Secretary of State, Seoul, November 13, 1953, *FRUS, Korea*, 1609-1610.

⁷³ Vice President Nixon's Report to Department Officers on his Trip to the Near and Far East, January 8, 1954, 18, DDEL.

⁷⁴ Memo, Richard Nixon to John Foster Dulles, Tokyo, November 19, 1953, 3, RN [Trip File 1953, Far East] RN's Notes on Meeting with Rhee, Box 1, Series 325 Executive Branch File, RNVPC, RNL.

idea of using Rhee as a proxy, it is fair to conclude that the NSC (including Eisenhower and Dulles) considered Nixon's conclusions and work to be acceptable.⁷⁵

While Nixon's work in Korea and Vietnam involved diplomatic manoeuvring in order to avoid war, his objectives in India were to attempt to mollify resentment, gain support, and educate the neutralist nation. It would be an understatement to claim that India's neutralism perplexed both Nixon and the Eisenhower administration. This being the case, the disdain Nixon and many in the Eisenhower administration felt towards Prime Minister Nehru and his non-alignment policies meant that Nixon headed into India with perceptions which were decidedly not conducive to improving diplomatic relations. By analysing Nixon's briefing information, notes, speeches, and reports, one can better understand how Nixon viewed India's neutralism, and compare this perspective to Nixon's views on Communism. The struggle to understand India, or rather the struggle to make India understand the global situation as the Eisenhower administration saw it, was one which confused and irritated Nixon. Nixon's visit to India and the tensions attached to it offer a glance at the growing complexities of the Cold War.

Not only did Nehru's decision to attempt to keep India "out" of the Cold War lead to problems with Nixon and the Eisenhower administration, but it also forced Eisenhower to seek alternatives to ensure containment of Communism. Nehru's attempt to adhere to neutralism was a tactic utilised by India and other nations to remain politically active and place a priority on maintaining peace while avoiding alignment to both Soviet and American allies; the perceived dangers of neutralism were brought up by American officials as early as 1949 under President

⁷⁵ Memorandum of Discussion at the 175th Meeting of the National Security Council, Tuesday, December 15, 1953, *FRUS, Korea*, 1659-1662.

Truman.⁷⁶ This led American and British strategists at the time and thereafter to believe the entire region was more vulnerable to Communist advances due to Nehru's non-alignment, but it also caused the Eisenhower administration to look to Pakistan for an Asian anti-Communist bulwark to protect the Middle East.⁷⁷ Nixon and the Eisenhower administration clearly had a negative view of neutralism, and this and other factors made Nixon's mission to India difficult.

Confusion, preceding events, and preconceived notions complicated Nixon's mission in India from the outset. Depending on one's perspective, Nixon's visit to India was either poorly or masterfully timed. Nixon arrived in India at a time when the Indian government and public were anxious over American talks with Pakistan on military aid, resentful over the U.S.'s attitude concerning POWs in light of the Korean situation, and aggravated over India's treatment at the United Nations.⁷⁸ Although President Eisenhower recognised the important role India played in world affairs, he complained that "emotion, rather than reason" dictated policy in Nehru's India.⁷⁹ In his memoirs Nixon described his two meetings with Nehru in terms which portrayed the leader as overly emotional and "obsessive."⁸⁰ The Americans' uncertainty in how to deal with India and Nehru is displayed clearly by contrasting Eisenhower's opinions and Nixon's retrospection, with the notes Nixon took during his meetings with Nehru and other Indian

⁷⁶ For Nehru's understanding of neutralism see H.W. Brands, *The Specter of Neutralism: the United States and the Emergence of the Third World, 1947-1960* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1989), 105-106. For officials in the Truman administration showing concern over the dangers of neutralism see Harold A. Gould, "Anticommunism and Anticolonialism: The Domestic Determinants of Developing U.S.-Indian Relations during the Truman Era," *Asian Affairs*, 15, No. 4, Symposium: India and America: Toward a Realistic Relationship? (Winter, 1988/1989), 197.

⁷⁷ Dennis Kux, *The United States and Pakistan, 1947-2000, Disenchanted Allies* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2001), 45.

⁷⁸ Telegram, American Embassy in New Delhi to State Department, December 8, 1953, India, Box 2, Series 366, Subseries A: 1953 Trip to Asia and the Far East, RNPPM, RNL.

⁷⁹ Memo, Dwight Eisenhower to John Foster Dulles, November 16, 1953, Box 5, JFD Chronological Series, John Foster Dulles: Papers, 1951-1959, DDEL.

⁸⁰ Nixon, *Memoirs*, 161-162.

officials. This uncertainty led to frustration which in turn led to a problematic relationship between the nations.

The confusion and lack of understanding present in the Eisenhower administration in regards to Jawaharlal Nehru were made evident during Nixon's mission to India. Nixon's first priority, and thus the first note he took, was to determine whether, in his "heart of hearts" Nehru was "pro-American."⁸¹ That a primary part of Nixon's mission was to determine whether Nehru was a friend or foe is indicative of the level of confusion within the administration. The subsequent notes Nixon took from his conversations with Nehru and his ministers demonstrate a clear concern about Indians not doing enough to halt the advance of Communism in India. Not knowing whether India was more loyal to the United States or the U.S.S.R. meant that suspicion of Indian actions continued to grow in the Eisenhower administration. While it is arguable whether or not Nixon and the Eisenhower administration genuinely understood what Nehru meant by neutralism, it is clear that the American officials were convinced that adherence to neutralism was a naïve and problematic strategy.

Nixon and other members and agencies of the Eisenhower administration viewed Nehru and his administration as naïve for Nehru's belief that India could deal with all sides of the Cold War but not suffer consequences either domestically or internationally. Previous to Nixon's departure, the C.I.A. noted that while India had taken some steps against the "Communist menace," such as accepting U.S. aid, it was Nehru's commitment to non-alignment which was problematic.⁸² Recording his interpretation of meetings with Indian government officials,

⁸¹ Nixon wrote that Nehru was pro-American, placing this information above matters which would have been more important to Nehru. See Handwritten Note, RN [Trip File 1953, Far East] India, Box 2, Series 325 Executive Branch File, RNVPC, RNL.

⁸² CIA Briefing Book for the Vice President, 28 September, 1953, 49, DDEL.

Nixon's notes convey a concern with the domestic influence of Communism. Nixon inquired about the power of Communism in India and wrote notes on Indian students' participation in communist activities turning against the government, the Indian belief that Communism could never succeed "in the long run," and, connected to this, that India was characteristically "cursed" by division.⁸³ Whether or not at this time Nixon shared the perspective of Nehru which John Foster Dulles held, that Nehru was an intransigent and troublesome leader for the United States to have to deal with in the region, is unclear.⁸⁴ It is clear, however, that Nixon viewed Nehru as foolish for not recognising and going along with something the Eisenhower administration often took as commonplace: Communist infiltration of Asia had begun with China, and without strong alignment to the United States, other nations were vulnerable to it as well.⁸⁵ Again, Nixon's adherence to containment and the domino theory was displayed.

Nehru's decision to maintain a neutralist India was also one which Nixon and American officials thought endangered India's safety, and thus it was viewed as a foolhardy strategy. American estimates of the strength of India's military argued that while sufficient to maintain internal security, and defend itself against Pakistan, India would be unable to resist an incursion by a major power such as the Soviet Union or Communist China.⁸⁶ The inability to defend itself from Communist aggression alone meant neutralism appeared foolhardy to the Eisenhower

⁸³ Handwritten Note, RN [Trip File 1953, Far East] India, RNVPC, RNL.

⁸⁴ For various and longstanding arguments of Dulles respecting Nehru but voicing his frustrations with him as an international leader see Yi Sun, "Militant Diplomacy: The Taiwan Strait Crises and Sino-American Relations, 1954-1958," in *The Eisenhower Administration, the Third World, and the Globalization of the Cold War*, 136-137; George C. Herring, "'A Good Stout Effort': John Foster Dulles and the Indochina Crisis, 1954-1955," *John Foster Dulles and the Diplomacy of the Cold War*, ed. Richard H. Immerman, (Princeton: Princeton University Press: 1990), 227; Andrew H. Berding, *Dulles on Diplomacy* (Princeton: D. Van Nostrand and Company, 1965), 98-99.

⁸⁵ Jacqueline Dix, "The United States and India: The Challenge of Neutralism and Bipolarity," *Deconstructing and Reconstructing the Cold War*, ed. Alan P. Dobson, (Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing, 1999) 160-161. For Nixon's negative analysis of Nehru, which he conducted both during his visit to India, and whilst in Iran, see Handwritten Note, RN [Trip File 1953, Far East] India, RNVPC, RNL; RN [Trip File 1953, Far East] Iran, Box 2, Series 325 Executive Branch Series, RNVPC, RNL.

⁸⁶ CIA Briefing Book for the Vice President, 28 September, 1953, 50, DDEL.

administration, but India's fear of "Western imperialism," along with its active ignorance of the "new and far more aggressive Communist imperialism" caused American officials to view Nehru's government as unsophisticated.⁸⁷ To American officials who had embraced the perspective of a bipolar world in which the non-Communist world was constantly under threat, be it political, economic, or military, from the Communist world, India's insistence on dealing with both worlds created confusion and frustration.⁸⁸ Part of this stemmed from the opposing beliefs each side held: American officials believed the Cold War was inherently global, while Indian officials believed that it was regional, and that only by America's involvement with Pakistan would the Cold War be brought to the subcontinent.⁸⁹ American officials held that India would not have been "shocked" by China's conquest of Tibet had the Indians accepted that such actions would always be a part of Communist aggression.⁹⁰

Nixon's appraisal of Nehru reveals much about his mindset regarding Communism at the time, as well as how he was suspicious of the motives behind Nehru's professed neutralism. After meeting with Nehru, Nixon came to the conclusion that India's leader wished to be "the leader of Asia."⁹¹ Nixon also concluded that Nehru's narcissism and patriotism were the main motivations behind Nehru's apparent dislike for the United States, Great Britain, China, and the Soviet Union.⁹² When he presented his report to State Department and other officials, Nixon argued that the reason Nehru objected to U.S.-Pakistan military agreements was because Nehru desired that no country in the surrounding area, which included East Africa, should be able to

⁸⁷ Confidential Security Information, 6, India [2 of 4], Box 4, Series 364, Subseries A: 1953 Trip to Asia and the Far East RNPPM, RNL.

⁸⁸ Dix, "The Challenge of Neutralism," 156-157.

⁸⁹ Telegram, John Foster Dulles to Richard Nixon, RN [Trip File 1953, Far East] Correspondence October 21-November 11, Box 1, Series 325 Executive Branch File, RNVPC, RNL.

⁹⁰ Confidential Security Information, 13-14, India [2 of 4], RNL.

⁹¹ Handwritten Note, RN [Trip File 1953, Far East] India, RNVPC, RNL.

⁹² Vice President Nixon's Report to Department Officers on his Trip to the Near and Far East, January 8, 1954, 22, DDEL.

resist Indian dominance, and the United States' agreements with Pakistan complicated such a desire.⁹³

The Eisenhower administration had been contemplating, and was coming ever closer to granting significant military aid to Pakistan for its defence, the containment of Communism, and the defence of the Middle East. While the original impetus for aiding Pakistan militarily had come from British officials, by 1953 both Pakistani and American officials had concluded that at least some military and economic aid, granted covertly or not, in exchange for closer cooperation containing Communism would be of substantial benefit.⁹⁴ Whether the benefits would outweigh the costs, such as alienating India, was a contentious issue. Indian officials became aware at least by November 16, 1953 of the possibility of an arms deal and military pact between America and Pakistan, less than a month before Nixon arrived.⁹⁵ Thus, those members of the Eisenhower administration on the NSC were aware of the friction America's military pacts with Pakistan created with India. That the Eisenhower administration proceeded with such agreements was at least in part due to the contention that any nation which accepted American aid would be more able to resist Communist aggression.

Nixon's notes and report on India, in which he defended military aid to Pakistan, contain an interesting perspective on how the Eisenhower administration viewed itself, its aid, and its enemies. Nixon gave a speech in India which argued that American leadership and ideologies were peaceful and freedom loving, stating that "peoples everywhere long for peace...and for an

⁹³ Ibid, 22, DDEL.

⁹⁴ Behçet K. Yeşilbursa, "The American Concept of the 'Northern Tier' Defence Project and the Signing of the Turco-Pakistani Agreement, 1953-54" *Middle Eastern Studies*, 37, No. 3 (July, 2001) 73-74, 75-77.

⁹⁵ Kux, *Disenchanted Allies*, 58-60.

end to the fear of men who try to impose their own way of life on others.”⁹⁶ Beyond the implicit criticism of Communism was the characterisation of American values as those of peace and freedom. The vice president also noted that the United States gave aid to nations in the belief that “strong free nations...will never start war.”⁹⁷

The vice president also argued forcefully that such recipients should fall in line with the American desires, as he indicated when he later compared Indian and Pakistani reactions to U.S. programs. Nixon’s impressions of Pakistan and the officials he met while there in 1953 indicate he had a much more positive view of Pakistan’s relationship with the U.S. In his report on the trip, Nixon often made a point of contrasting Indian and Pakistani attitudes. In one instance, the vice president explained the relief he felt when several Pakistani officials told him Pakistan’s position bluntly: that a failure to secure military support from the U.S. would certainly damage Pakistan’s relationship with America, but Pakistan’s continued support was assured.⁹⁸ Nixon compared this to the confusion and anxiety he felt while dealing with Indian officials who maintained the position of neutralism.⁹⁹ According to the vice president, the Pakistanis demonstrated a sufficient amount of gratitude and friendship since those he spoke to openly supported American policies, were grateful for American aid, and appeared to accept the difficult diplomatic position America was in with regard to India and Pakistan.¹⁰⁰ In contrast, Nixon argued that Indians both in government and at the civilian level, were not only ungrateful but

⁹⁶ Richard Nixon Speech, Remarks by RN – India 1953, Box 1, Series 370, Subseries A: 1953 Trip to Asia and the Far East RNPPM, RNL.

⁹⁷ Handwritten Note, India [4 of 4], Box 4, Series 364, Subseries A: 1953 Trip to Asia and the Far East RNPPM, RNL.

⁹⁸ Vice President Nixon’s Report to Department Officers on his Trip to the Near and Far East, January 8, 1954, 24, DDEL.

⁹⁹ Vice President Nixon’s Report to Department Officers on his Trip to the Near and Far East, January 8, 1954, 24, DDEL.

¹⁰⁰ Vice President Nixon’s Report to Department Officers on his Trip to the Near and Far East, January 8, 1954, 23, DDEL.

denied receiving aid.¹⁰¹ Nixon found this troubling, but was not surprised by such denials. Indeed, Nixon's frustrations with India's and Nehru's attitude towards American policies were shared by many in the Eisenhower administration, and this contributed to foreign policies which sought to bring the Indian government's attention to the benefits of cooperating with American endeavours, and the dangers of intransigence.

Nehru's staunch neutralism led to American officials being more likely to make decisions which would irritate or worry Indians, such as giving more aid to Pakistan. In a telegram message sent to Nixon before he met with Nehru, Dulles asked Nixon to attempt to discern if the advantages of finalising the military pact with Pakistan could be outweighed by the disadvantages of alienating India.¹⁰² The advantages Dulles listed reveal much about the State Department's view of India. If the pact with Pakistan was successfully finalised, the U.S. could: increase defensive capabilities of pro-Western Pakistan, overcome neutralist tendencies in parts of the Pakistani government, "pave the way for...defense arrangements [in] Iraq, Iran and Turkey, and eventually other ME [Middle Eastern] states...as well as eventual U.S. base rights," and finally demonstrate to Nehru that the U.S. did not "dance to his tune."¹⁰³

Aside from the clear ambitions for American military expansion in the Middle East and Asia, it should be noted that if the State Department considered it advantageous to weaken neutralism and demonstrate to Nehru that America was willing to ignore India's concerns, then Nixon was not alone in his disdain for neutralism. The trip to India displays the Eisenhower administration's discomfort with a nation striving to avoid the bipolar world which the

¹⁰¹ Vice President Nixon's Report to Department Officers on his Trip to the Near and Far East, January 8, 1954, 23, DDEL.

¹⁰² Telegram, John Foster Dulles to Richard Nixon, November 27, 1953, RN [Trip File 1953, Far East] Correspondence, November 20-December 3, Box 1, Series 325 Executive Branch File, RNVPC, RNL.

¹⁰³ Telegram, Dulles to Nixon, November 27, 1953, RNL.

administration saw as a *de facto* reality. Nixon's role there was to gauge whether Nehru was friend or foe, and the depth to which this goodwill or enmity flowed. Finding Nehru to be only a nominal ally, Nixon and the administration proceeded on the most expedient path towards Eisenhower's goal of securing the region from Communism.

Nixon's time in Iran shows that when the Eisenhower administration dealt with friendly nations which were believed to have strategic value, the administration placed a priority on the ability of that nation's government and economy to resist Communist influence. This visit granted Nixon yet another opportunity to practice international diplomacy, but he was also careful to investigate matters of great strategic importance to the Eisenhower administration. During his time in Iran, Nixon enquired at length about Iran's oil resources. Iran's oil was viewed as "the only long term hope" for Iran to improve its economic problems.¹⁰⁴ The matter of Iran's oil was a complex one.

The coup in August of 1953 did not translate into an immediate resolution of Iranian-British disagreement over oil rights, and when Nixon visited it had still not been resolved. The CIA-led coup in Iran has a complex history; however, some context is necessary to understand its significance to Nixon's mission. While actual preparations for the coup may have begun as early as 1952, it was not until 1953, when John Foster Dulles conceived of an allied and stable Iran as a "pivotal" piece of the plan for collective security in the Middle East, that preparations became actions.¹⁰⁵ The "actions" in question included some involvement from Britain's MI6, a great deal of propaganda, the bribery of both Iranian citizens and military officers, no small amount of luck, and the overthrow of the democratically elected Mohammad Mossadegh due to

¹⁰⁴ CIA Briefing Book for the Vice President, 28 September, 1953, 55, DDEL.

¹⁰⁵ Callanan, *Covert Action in the Cold War*, 112.

the suspicion he might have Communist sympathies.¹⁰⁶ The coup was designed to remove an unknown and uncontrollable factor in Mossadegh with the much more compliant Mohammad Rezā Shāh Pahlavi, or, more simply, the Shah.¹⁰⁷ While the coup was successful in this regard, it could not solve all of Iran's international dilemmas, and Richard Nixon's mission to Iran was intended to examine and help ameliorate some of these.

During his talks with Iranian officials, the vice president argued for a hastened resolution to the oil settlement as he proposed that the more quickly an agreement was made, the better Iran's chances of "keeping the Commies from taking over."¹⁰⁸ Although the Eisenhower administration's fear of domestic Communist takeover in Iran was diminished after General-turned-Prime-Minister Zahedi "crippled" the main Communist movement in Iran, its fear of the U.S.S.R.'s influence or actions remained, and Nixon voiced this fear.¹⁰⁹ Defence of Iran's oil resources was viewed by the Eisenhower administration not only as a strategic necessity, but also as a matter of international prestige, and global security.¹¹⁰ Nixon and the Eisenhower administration made known and constantly trumpeted the link between Iran's oil and the threat of Communist aggression.

Nixon's notes, questions, and subsequent report suggest that the Eisenhower administration was intent on making certain that the new, pro-American Iranian government would survive, and that impediments to its survival were a global threat. In Nixon's report and in his notes, the most referenced subject in relation to both Prime Minister Zahedi and the Shah was "oil." Iran's ability to access and profit from its oil resources was believed by the

¹⁰⁶ Callanan, *Covert Action in the Cold War*, 112-113; William Blum, *Killing Hope: U.S. Military and CIA Interventions Since World War II* (London: Zed Books, 2004), 68-70.

¹⁰⁷ Blum, *Military and CIA Interventions*, 70-71.

¹⁰⁸ Handwritten Note, RN [Trip File 1953, Far East] Iran, RNL.

¹⁰⁹ CIA Briefing Book for the Vice President, 28 September, 1953, 56, DDEL.

¹¹⁰ NSC 175 Draft, 1, Box 8, Policy Paper Subseries, NSC Series, WHO, OSANSA, DDEL.

Eisenhower administration to be the key to the Shah and Zahedi maintaining control over the country.¹¹¹ When he gave his report, Nixon argued that, as concerned the oil settlement, the Iranians were acting far more in the interest of global stability than were the British; he accused the British of intransigency and also of being willing to allow the Soviet Union to settle the dispute if the terms were not to Great Britain's liking.¹¹² The accuracy of this criticism is not as significant as the fact that Nixon was attempting to drive home to American officials the importance of a speedy conclusion for the oil settlement, and the risks involved if this did not occur. Nixon's criticism echoed the concerns Special Envoy Herbert Hoover Jr. and Ambassador Winthrop Aldrich had raised less than a month before: British reluctance to negotiate was frustrating American efforts.¹¹³ The driving factor behind Nixon's (and the administration's) fear of Communist control of Iran's oil was that such control would mean that the Soviet Union would become significantly more powerful and aggressive.

Nixon was not alone in his fear of the Soviet Union gaining control over Iran's oil, and this meant that both Nixon and the administration thought it necessary to argue for measures meant to diminish Communist influence in Iran. If the Soviets gained control over Iran's oil, Pakistan and Turkey would likely be the only countries in the region that would be able to resist the ensuing Communist pressure and power.¹¹⁴ Thus domestic or foreign Communist activity in Iran was viewed by the Eisenhower administration as both a regional and international threat. This fear was not isolated to the Eisenhower administration: Iranian press coverage following Nixon's visit also made note of the need for Iran to finalise an oil settlement and take control of

¹¹¹ NSC 175 Draft, 4-5, 7-8, DDEL.

¹¹² Vice President Nixon's Report to Department Officers on his Trip to the Near and Far East, January 8, 1954, 25, DDEL.

¹¹³ Ambassador in the United Kingdom to State Department, London, November 30, 1953, *FRUS Volume X, Iran: 1951-1954*, John P. Glennon, Carl N. Raether, and Charles S. Sampson eds. (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1989), 844-846.

¹¹⁴ NSC 175 Draft, 1-2, DDEL.

its resources so that Iran could contribute to world peace and “check the spread of Communism.”¹¹⁵ Whether such articles were government-mandated propaganda, which they likely were, does not alter the fact that the Eisenhower administration clearly pushed the idea to Iranians that Communist control over Iranian resources would threaten peace on a global level.

In many of his meetings with Iranian officials, and at other occasions during his time in the country, Nixon expressed the Eisenhower administration’s goal to protect Iran’s economy from Communist threats. During a meeting on December 10, 1953, with officials from Iran’s Labour Ministry and Trade Unions, the only topic of discussion was that of combating Communism in Iran’s workforce. In the course of this meeting the trade unionists noted that Communism in Iran was known to be controlled by the Soviets, and thus Communism’s success had been limited; Nixon noted aloud that it was smart of the Iranians to resist Communism since “free” labour leaders would fight for their labourers while Communist labour leaders would fight for whatever would most benefit the Soviet Union.¹¹⁶ At another meeting, this time with Iranian businessmen, Nixon again linked Iran’s economic development with a successful defence against Communism. The vice president argued that Iran ought to diversify its economy beyond simply exporting oil, and then immediately launched into questions concerning areas of Communist growth within the country.¹¹⁷ At almost every opportunity during his time in Iran, Nixon warned Iranians about the dangers of Communism.

¹¹⁵ Telegram, Press Coverage of Vice President Nixon’s Visit to Tehran, U.S. Embassy in Tehran to State Department, December 21, 1953, Iran I, Box 2, Series 366, Subseries A: 1953 Trip to Asia and the Far East, RNPPM, RNL.

¹¹⁶ Memorandum of Conversation [Memcon hereafter], Meeting of Vice President Nixon with Iranian Labor Ministry and Trade Union Officials, December 10, 1953, 2, Iran I, Box 2, Series 366, Subseries A: 1953 Trip to Asia and the Far East, RNPPM, RNL.

¹¹⁷ A Detailed Account of the Meeting of Vice President Nixon with a group of Iranian Businessmen and the Minister of National Economy, 3, Iran I, Box 2, Series 366, Subseries A: 1953 Trip to Asia and the Far East, RNPPM, RNL.

The dangers of perceived Communist aggression towards Iran led Nixon to attempt to bolster anti-Communism in Iran. Nixon was committed to the idea that Communist infiltration of university students would pose a great threat to Iran's future, as he requested clarification as to why Communist influence as a whole in Iran was waning, but seemed to be growing in the student community.¹¹⁸ Indeed, when he accepted an honorary doctorate at the University of Tehran, Nixon contended that a desire among Iranians to preserve their "independence and integrity" would not be possible if Iran was lost to Communism.¹¹⁹ Implicit here was that the Iranians' independence and integrity would be supported by the United States if Iran maintained close ties to the U.S., a point Nixon made more explicitly to Americans living in Iran.¹²⁰ Nixon and the Shah agreed that Iran's military ought to be expanded beyond its limited function of maintaining internal security to the point that Iran could at least temporarily defend against foreign aggression, a buildup that would be significantly supported by U.S. aid.¹²¹ In his notes, the vice president theorised that if built up militarily, Iran, in concert with Pakistan and Turkey, could fend off a Soviet attack.¹²² Though such a scenario appeared unlikely, it is significant that such time and effort was put into planning counters to possible Soviet actions, and displays the importance placed on containment.

Richard Nixon's first foreign mission as Vice President was beneficial to both the Eisenhower administration's anti-Communist containment policies and Nixon's experience as a statesman. That the mission was considered a great success by both Nixon and the Eisenhower

¹¹⁸ Meeting of Vice President Nixon with a group of Iranian Businessmen and the Minister of National Economy, 3-4, RNL.

¹¹⁹ Speech by Richard Nixon at the University of Tehran, December 11, 1953, 2, Iran I, Box 2, Series 366, Subseries A: 1953 Trip to Asia and the Far East, RNPPM, RNL.

¹²⁰ Remarks by Nixon to Americans in a Tehran College Auditorium, Remarks by RN – Iran 1953, Series 370, Subseries A: 1953 Trip to Asia and the Far East, RNPPM, RNL.

¹²¹ Ambassador in Iran to State Department, December 17, 1953, *FRUS, Iran*, 850-852.

¹²² Handwritten Note, RN [Trip File 1953, Far East] Iran, RNL.

administration is not of central importance.¹²³ Of greater importance is that Nixon travelled to Asian and Middle Eastern nations warning against the ever-present dangers of Communism in all its forms, yet did so while advocating an avoidance of overt hostilities. From his notes, telegrams, and report it is clear that in 1953 Nixon did not question the dangers of Communism, nor did he have a problem attributing anti-American sentiment to either Communist subversion or, in Nehru's case, naïve stubborn ingratitude. At the end of 1953 the Eisenhower administration was taking action with its New Look policy, and its allies played a significant role in this. Formosa and Korea were being stabilised and built up militarily in the hopes of containing Communist China and North Korea, and the attention paid to Vietnam was very much in the same vein. Pakistan and Iran were also significant for the place the Americans envisioned for them towards containing Communism, and for how they represented the benefits of cooperating with American endeavours. Thus Richard Nixon's diplomatic role in each of these nations is significant as well. In 1953 the New Look was emerging on the international stage, and Nixon with it. Neither had yet to have a great effect but in 1953 both were focused on containing Communism in all its forms.

By 1957, the New Look had had time to be put into effect and Richard Nixon had developed as a statesman. Nixon's mission to several nations in Africa, north of the equator, was initially designed as little more than a goodwill mission. However, Nixon transformed this duty into a diplomatic tour which enabled him to gauge the impact the New Look had had on those nations he visited, investigate the concerns of those nations, and recommend where and how changes might be made in Eisenhower's policies in Africa.

¹²³ Nixon, *Memoirs*, 164.

Chapter Two: 1957 Africa

“To strengthen yourself, strengthen your friends”¹²⁴

At the time of Nixon’s mission to Africa, the Eisenhower administration’s policies’ main objective for the continent was the containment of Communism. The vice president’s mission to Africa was at least partially meant to gauge and predict the success of Communist manoeuvres and infiltration of the newly emerging independent nations of Africa, as well as the impact of Nasserism, though this was a less significant concern. Indeed, a report compiled by the Operations Coordinating Board (OCB) after Nixon’s mission listed “The Communist Threat” as the foremost problem “facing the United States” in Africa.¹²⁵ Still, while it is clear that the Eisenhower administration’s anti-Communist policies influenced Nixon’s mission, it is equally apparent that Nixon took a more sophisticated and nuanced approach than simple anti-Communism during his trip to Africa. Nixon’s recommendations resulted in the creation of the Bureau of African Affairs, and the writing of the first comprehensive policy paper on African affairs. This mission demonstrated the vice president’s pragmatism, and his ability to recognize weaknesses in the Eisenhower administration’s current policies and the opportunities which existed for America in Africa.

During Eisenhower’s time as president, several African nations under colonial rule were seeking, and gaining, their independence. This move to independence complicated the Eisenhower administration’s position, as made clear by the New Look’s complaint that “the colonial issue...has not only weakened our European allies but has left those areas in a

¹²⁴ Handwritten Note, Unmarked Folder, Box 1, Series 351, Subseries E: 1957 Africa Trip, RNPPM, RNL.

¹²⁵ Operations Coordinating Board Report on Africa South of the Sahara (NSC 5719/1), March 21, 1958, 2, Box 21, Policy Paper Subseries, NSC Series, WHO, OSANSA, DDEL.

state...which weakens the whole free world.”¹²⁶ The New Look voiced further frustration at the problems caused by emerging African nations by warning that anti-colonialism, “racial-feelings,” nationalism, and other factors led to resentment of the West, and thus made combating the influence of Communism all the more important yet all the more difficult.¹²⁷ At the outset of his presidency, Eisenhower faced complicated situations in newly emerging or independent African nations such as Morocco, the Gold Coast (Ghana), Tunisia, Sudan, and Libya. Challenges in Ethiopia and Liberia were less immediate but no less important. While the New Look spelled out goals, such as bringing African nations from an “undeveloped” to “developed” status, it did not prescribe a method of achieving them in Africa.¹²⁸ The Eisenhower administration struggled to address this lack of direction into its second term.

The Eisenhower administration’s attempt to address its previously unsophisticated policies towards Africa was at least part of the reason for Nixon’s 1957 mission. The Eisenhower administration was, for the greater part of its first term, far more focused on Europe, Asia, and the Middle East, than on Africa.¹²⁹ Indeed, a combination of Eisenhower’s personal disinterest in ever-complicating African affairs, and a general policy to attempt to maintain the status quo in Africa and continue Truman-era policies of “slow evolution” towards African decolonization dictated little active involvement.¹³⁰ Despite an increasingly clear need to revamp its African policies, the Eisenhower administration took relatively little action until 1955,

¹²⁶ “NSC 162/2,” *FRUS: National Security Affairs*, 589.

¹²⁷ “NSC 162/2,” *FRUS: National Security Affairs*, 587.

¹²⁸ “NSC 162/2,” *FRUS: National Security Affairs*, 587.

¹²⁹ Egya N. Sangmuah, “Eisenhower and Containment in North Africa, 1956-1960,” *Middle East Journal* Volume 44, No. 1 (Winter 1990), 77-79; Ebere Nwaubani, “The United States and the Liquidation of European Colonial Rule in Tropical Africa, 1941-1963,” *Cahiers d'Études Africaines* 43, Cahier 171 (2003), 525-529. Much of Nwaubani’s argument hinges on selective use of sources, but it also appears demonstrative of conclusions an historian might reach without the more fleshed out perspective Nixon’s arguments bring to Eisenhower’s policies in Africa.

¹³⁰ Meriwether, “A Torrent Overrunning Everything,” 178; Nwaubani, “The United States and the Liquidation of European Colonial Rule in Tropical Africa,” 525.

when economic aid was increased.¹³¹ Still, it was not until after Richard Nixon's 1957 "fact-finding" mission that true reassessment and an actual revamping of policies occurred.¹³²

Historians have often criticised the Eisenhower administration for a lack of sophistication in its attitude towards the "third world."¹³³ John Lewis Gaddis argues that although Eisenhower and Dulles attempted to foster a positive relationship between the U.S. and various African nations, confusion, frustration, fear of Communist subversion, and simple arrogance on the part of the Americans frustrated those attempts.¹³⁴ John Prados contends that while the president accepted the C.I.A.'s evaluation that decolonisation was inevitable, Eisenhower "routinely bungled" his attempts to take advantage of this from a policy standpoint, meaning successfully working with emerging African nations to keep them in the "free world".¹³⁵ Randall Bennett Woods argues that the Eisenhower administration was "oblivious" to local rivalries in the third world, and that it viewed all nationalistic revolutions as "part of the international communist conspiracy."¹³⁶ Steven Metz maintains that Africa was simply not a high priority region for the majority of the time Eisenhower was in office, pointing out that until 1958, the Bureau of Near

¹³¹ Sangmuah, "Eisenhower and Containment in North Africa," 77.

¹³² Herman J. Cohen, "A Perspective on Fifty Years of U.S. Africa Policy: The Nixon Legacy," *American Foreign Policy Interests* 32 (2010), 209.

¹³³ Gordon Barrass labels Eisenhower's endeavours towards the Third World merely as "frustrated" before moving on to analyse the Cuban situation. See Gordon S. Barrass, *The Great Cold War: A Journey Through the Hall of Mirrors*, (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2009), 126-127. Gaddis concludes that the Eisenhower administration was simply unable to "distinguish" which events in the Third World were "detractable" via nuclear threats and which had to be dealt with differently. See *Strategies of Containment*, 179.

¹³⁴ The arrogance, which Gaddis attributes to Eisenhower's militancy, was that Eisenhower believed a nation seeking independence from its colonial rulers ought to engage in a twenty five year process before being granted full independence, see *Strategies of Containment*, 175-178.

¹³⁵ John Prados, "The Central Intelligence Agency and the Face of Decolonization under the Eisenhower Administration," *The Eisenhower Administration, the Third World, and the Globalization of the Cold War*, Kathryn C. Statler and Andrew L. Johns eds. (Oxford: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers Incorporated, 2006) 42.

¹³⁶ Randall Bennett Woods, *Quest for Identity: America Since 1945* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 106.

Eastern, South Asian and African Affairs handled diplomatic matters concerning all of Africa, as well as the other regions under its purview.¹³⁷

The arguments and evidence of historians who have conducted more in-depth studies show the measured but clear development of the Eisenhower administration's policies in Africa. Egeya Sangmuah demonstrates that at least until the latter half of the 1950's, the Eisenhower administration was nearly incapable of taking advantage of nationalism in Africa due to its focus on containing Communism, and in the cases it did succeed, the success came at the price of alienating European allies.¹³⁸ Kenneth Osgood argues that Eisenhower's policies towards the third world became more sophisticated due to the perception in the administration that peaceful Soviet overtures from the mid-1950s onward necessitated a change in policies.¹³⁹ The rise of Egypt's Gamal Abdel Nasser, and his form of pan-Arab nationalism, also forced the Eisenhower administration to develop a more nuanced set of policies for the Africa-Middle East political region from 1957 onwards.¹⁴⁰

James Meriwether succinctly demonstrates that the Eisenhower administration, in at least some part due to Richard Nixon, had a slow but evolving perspective on its African policies.¹⁴¹ In Meriwether's view, Richard Nixon was the "father" of the African policy eventually

¹³⁷ Steven Metz, "American Attitudes Toward Decolonization in Africa," *Political Science Quarterly* 99, No. 3 (Autumn 1984), 520.

¹³⁸ Sangmuah, "Eisenhower and Containment in North Africa," 76, 91.

¹³⁹ Kenneth Osgood argues that the Eisenhower administration perceived the Soviet Union's post-Stalin overtures as a new kind of psychological warfare, and thus adapted their third world policies accordingly. See Kenneth Osgood, "The Perils of Coexistence: Peace and Propaganda in Eisenhower's Foreign Policy," *The Cold War After Stalin's Death: A Missed Opportunity for Peace?*, Klaus Larres and Kenneth Osgood eds. (Lanham: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, 2006), 39-42.

¹⁴⁰ Roland Popp, "Accommodating to a Working Relationship: Arab Nationalism and US Cold War Policies in the Middle East, 1958-60" *Cold War History* 10, No. 3, (August 2010), 399-400; Peter L. Hahn, "Securing the Middle East: The Eisenhower Doctrine of 1957," *Presidential Studies Quarterly* 36, No. 1, Presidential Doctrines, (March 2006), 39-40.

¹⁴¹ Meriwether, "A Torrent Overrunning Everything," 178-184.

implemented by the Eisenhower administration.¹⁴² Meriwether also argues that Nixon spent much of his Africa trip obsessing over possible Communist in-roads into the vulnerable nations of the continent.¹⁴³

However, Meriwether places too much emphasis on the vice president's concerns with communist infiltration in Africa. Rather than being overly concerned about Communist progress in the region, Nixon's notes actually convey a keen awareness of political gamesmanship on the part of the African nations. According to the vice president, some African leaders planned to play the Soviets off against the Americans in the hopes of gaining better deals.¹⁴⁴ Thus, Nixon had a much more sophisticated understanding of these African nations than Meriwether gives him credit for.

The initial impetus for the Africa mission, proposed first by John Foster Dulles, was limited to having Nixon visit only the Gold Coast (Ghana) for its independence ceremonies.¹⁴⁵ At the same time, Dulles suggested that Nixon should visit President William Tubman in Monrovia, Liberia, but did not insist on this.¹⁴⁶ In response to Dulles's request, Nixon demanded a presidential mandate, essentially a request from Eisenhower himself that the vice president undertake the mission. This mandate was given the next day, whereupon the vice president

¹⁴² Meriwether, "A Torrent Overrunning Everything," 175-176.

¹⁴³ Meriwether utilised a selective reading of Nixon's handwritten notes. See "A Torrent Overrunning Everything," 182-183.

¹⁴⁴ Meriwether, "A Torrent Overrunning Everything," 183. Nixon wrote that Ethiopia was well aware of "the danger" of genuinely close relations with the Soviets, but that Ethiopian officials would "play them [the Soviets] against us [the Americans]" in an attempt to gain better treatment by the Americans, despite never being "taken in" by Soviet overtures. See Handwritten Note, Unmarked Folder, Box 1, Series 351, Subseries E: 1957 Africa Trip, RNPPM, RNL.

¹⁴⁵ Memorandum for the Vice President, Dulles to Nixon, Department of State, January 24, 1957, Africa Trip – 1957, Administration, Box 1, Series 351, Subseries E: 1957 Africa Trip, RNPPM, RNL.

¹⁴⁶ Memorandum for the Vice President, Box 1, RNPPM, RNL.

accepted the mission to Ghana and Liberia.¹⁴⁷ According to Benjamin Goldberg, Nixon believed that without a presidential mandate and a clear message from Eisenhower that his mission was “vital” to the Eisenhower administration’s purposes, the trip to Africa was not worth the “displeasure” Nixon felt at being a “messenger boy.”¹⁴⁸ Indeed, between the time Nixon received the president’s mandate, on January 29, and the time the mission actually began, on February 28, Nixon managed to add Uganda, Ethiopia, Sudan, Morocco, Tunisia, Italy, and Libya to the list of nations he would visit.¹⁴⁹

That Nixon was able to garner a presidential mandate and expand the mission in 1957 is important for two key reasons in relation to the vice president’s development as a statesman.¹⁵⁰ The first is that Nixon’s ability and willingness to seek an expansion of the scope of the mission to Africa displays his growing confidence in his place within the Eisenhower administration. The second, and equally important reason, is that such a manoeuver on Nixon’s part displays his increased desire for exposure to foreign affairs.

Significantly, Nixon transformed a short, and relatively ceremonial, mission to two countries into a diplomatic expedition which included seven more nations than had been proposed originally. At this point Nixon was obviously influencing the Eisenhower administration’s foreign affairs, since the vice president was a diplomatic representative and he

¹⁴⁷ Nixon bluntly told Dulles to have the president ask him to take on the mission. See Telephone Call from the Vice President, Nixon to Dulles, 9:37AM, January 28, 1957, Box 6, Telephone Calls Series, John Foster Dulles, Papers, 1951-1959, DDEL.

¹⁴⁸ Goldberg, “One Man’s Quest,” 157-158.

¹⁴⁹ Secret Service Report on African Trip, June 13, 1957, 1, Secret Service Report – Africa Trip, Box 1, Series 351, Subseries E: 1957 Africa Trip, RNPPM, RNL. . The Ugandan portion of Nixon’s mission was limited to roughly twenty-seven hours, and outside of photo-opportunities and formal pleasantries, had little time for substantial talks with Governor Sir Frederick Crawford. See Secret Service Report on African Trip, June 13, 1957, 18-19, RNPPM, RNL.

¹⁵⁰ For the mandate see Memo, Eisenhower to Nixon, White House, January 29, 1957, Africa Trip – 1957, Administration, Box 1, Series 351, Subseries E: 1957 Africa Trip, RNPPM, RNL. For both Goldberg and Stephen Ambrose noting Nixon’s request for an expanded role see Goldberg, “One Man’s Quest,” 158, and Ambrose, *Education of a Politician*, 431.

manoeuvred for a chance to represent and gauge Eisenhower's foreign policies in more nations than Dulles or Eisenhower had intended. The fact that Nixon used the mission to attempt to bring substantial changes to the administration's policies towards Africa, and that he also demonstrated a great concern for expanding American influence rather than solely containing that of Communist powers, shows that Nixon was quite capable of adapting to the unique challenges and opportunities in Africa.

The conversations between Nixon and Sultan Mohamed V of Morocco, ruler of the first nation the vice president visited on his mission, are notable in that they display Nixon's development as a statesman, but they also demonstrate an interesting shift in convention. In 1953 it was usually the case that Nixon's first questions with representatives or leaders of other nations would focus in some way on Communism's influence in the area, and Nixon was often the one who brought up Communism in the first place.¹⁵¹ When the vice president met with Morocco's Sultan, however, it was the Sultan who first addressed the threat of Communism, and while the Sultan discounted its danger to Morocco he recognised the need to maintain "a common front" against Communist efforts.¹⁵² Interestingly, during the course of their conversation, Nixon neither acknowledged the Sultan's anti-Communist remarks, nor directly mentioned Communism at all.¹⁵³

¹⁵¹ As an example, directly after being welcomed by Iranian Labor officials Nixon launched into questions about Communism. See Meeting of Vice President Nixon with Iranian Labor Ministry and Trade Union Officials, 1, RNPPM, RNL. The willingness of Communism (implicitly the Soviet Union) to allow for peace in Asia was the first topic Nixon broached with Chiang Kai-Shek. See First Interview between Chiang Kai-Shek and Richard Nixon, November 9, 1953, 1, RNL.

¹⁵² Memcon, Mohamed V and Richard Nixon, March 2, 1957, 2, Africa Trip – 1957, Box 8, Series 325, Executive Branch File, RNVPC, RNL. The conversation actually occurred on March 1, the embassy apparently committed a typographical error. See Secret Service Report on African Trip, 3, RNPPM, RNL.

¹⁵³ Memcon, Mohamed V and Richard Nixon, 2-3, RNVPC, RNL.

Portions of Nixon's conversation with Sultan Mohamed V and his related notes display Nixon's intention to place more emphasis on America's presence in Morocco and the other nations he visited during his mission. When the topic of conversation moved to the American military bases in Morocco, Nixon was quick to concede that the United States might need to adjust aid figures or renegotiate the terms to be of greater benefit to Morocco, but he was just as quick to argue that the maintenance of those bases was "very definitely in the interest of Morocco and the free world in general."¹⁵⁴ Clearly, Nixon was making it known that the Eisenhower administration considered the amount and availability of American aid to be linked to Morocco's continued authorization of American military bases.¹⁵⁵ The vice president's notes also make no direct mention of Communism in relation to Morocco, but do mention U.S. bases and the hope that if the Sultan approved the American bases, the Eisenhower administration would double aid to Morocco.¹⁵⁶ Obviously, the purpose of these bases was not ornamental; their primary function was to support the administration's anti-Communist policies. Still, it is intriguing that Nixon did not mention this in his notes or conversations with the Sultan.

Nixon's briefing book on Africa specifically mentioned that the Soviets would attempt to exchange diplomatic representatives with Ghana as part of their greater strategy to "penetrate" Africa.¹⁵⁷ Significantly, however, the vice president also went to great lengths to avoid directly discussing Communism or the Soviet Union in his conversations in Ghana. When he spoke with Prime Minister Kwame Nkrumah, Nixon asked for clarification of Ghana's future position in foreign policy; more specifically, whether Nkrumah meant "nationalist" when he described

¹⁵⁴ Memcon, Mohamed V and Richard Nixon, 2, RNVPC, RNL.

¹⁵⁵ Memcon, Mohamed V and Richard Nixon, 2, RNVPC, RNL.

¹⁵⁶ Handwritten Note, Unmarked Folder, Box 1, Series 351, Subseries E: 1957 Africa Trip, RNPPM, RNL.

¹⁵⁷ Secret Briefing for the Vice President, I-3, Africa – RN Report and Other Papers, Box 8, Series 325, Executive Branch File, RNVPC, RNL.

Ghana's position as neutral.¹⁵⁸ When Nkrumah and his Secretary for External Affairs mentioned that Ghana might need to establish greater diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union, Nixon responded by making certain that the Ghanaian government would “vigorously support freedom of speech... and other democratic traditions.”¹⁵⁹ While the vice president was aware of the threat of Communism in the area, Nixon was convinced that there were other important issues that ought to be dealt with in order ensure close relations between the U.S. and Ghana.

In his talks with Ghanaian officials Nixon placed great emphasis on Ghana's economic future, and American influence on the new African nations which were becoming independent. Nixon talked at length about the former with Nkrumah, specifically the Volta River Project (VRP), a combination hydro-electric/aluminum production project which Nkrumah envisioned providing great wealth for Ghana and its international investors.¹⁶⁰ The vice president's recommendations on the VRP to Eisenhower bear out both the importance of the project and of having a higher-quality American presence in Ghana.¹⁶¹ Of course, American officials were already aware of the importance Nkrumah placed on the VRP due to Nkrumah's constant search for investment and aid in the project. Still, it is unlikely a coincidence that in his recommendations on Ghana, Nixon sandwiched an explanation of Nkrumah's desire for

¹⁵⁸ Memcon, Kwame Nkrumah and Richard Nixon, Accra, March 4, 1957, 3-4, Africa Trip – 1957, Box 8, Series 325, Executive Branch File, RNVPC, RNL.

¹⁵⁹ Memcon, Nkrumah and Nixon, 4, RNVPC, RNL.

¹⁶⁰ Emil Rado, “Progress on the Volta” *Africa Today* 7, No. 7 (November, 1960), 8.

¹⁶¹ For Nixon and Nkrumah speaking at length about the VRP see Memcon, Nkrumah and Nixon, 1-3, RNVPC, RNL. For Nixon's recommendations concerning better American staff in Ghana and the advisability of helping Ghana with the VRP see Report to the President on the Vice President's Visit to Africa (February 28 – March 21, 1957), 4, Box 100, Subject Series, Dwight D. Eisenhower: Records as President, WHCF, 1953-1961, (Confidential File), DDEL.

American advice and representation between two separate sections which emphasized the VRP's importance.¹⁶²

Nixon showed the most concern for Communist influence in Africa in Liberia, but it was still far from the level of concern or focus he had shown on previous missions. Nixon's conversation with President Tubman, which took place on March 8, 1957, is important in that while Nixon was the first to bring up the threat of "Communist subversion" in Africa, he did so in a way that suggested it was as a matter of course rather than a topic he wished to discuss in depth.¹⁶³ Nixon touched on the Communist threat and quickly moved to explaining to Tubman the "unique" responsibilities Liberia and Ghana would share as independent nations in Africa.¹⁶⁴ Nixon both gauged Tubman's estimates of Communist success in Ghana and convinced Tubman to take greater steps to try to curtail Communist advances in Liberia and Africa in general.¹⁶⁵ Tubman later informed Nixon of Nkrumah's response to a message the Liberian had sent to the Ghanaian in regards to cooperating in efforts against Communism. That Tubman informed Nixon of this message shows that either Tubman felt obligated to do so, or that Tubman believed Nixon would want to know.¹⁶⁶

Nixon's conversations with several Ethiopian officials as well as his related notes demonstrate that the vice president developed a more nuanced view of Communism and international relations, and that he intended to attempt to secure America's influence over

¹⁶² For the VRP being generally accepted as the most important of Nkrumah's projects to revitalise Ghana's economy see Ebere Nwaubani, "Eisenhower, Nkrumah and the Congo Crisis," *Journal of Contemporary History* 36, No. 4 (October, 2001), 602-603. For Nixon's tactical sandwiching see Report to the President on the Vice President's Visit to Africa, (February 28 – March 21, 1957), 3-4; DDEL.

¹⁶³ Memcon, William Tubman and Richard Nixon, Monrovia, March 8, 1957, 3, Africa Trip – 1957, Box 8, Series 325, Executive Branch File, RNVPC, RNL.

¹⁶⁴ Memcon, Tubman and Nixon, 3, RNVPC, RNL.

¹⁶⁵ Memcon, Tubman and Nixon, 3-4, RNVPC, RNL.

¹⁶⁶ Memcon, Tubman and Nixon, 4, RNVPC, RNL.

African nations where possible. Nixon met with many Ethiopian officials, including Emperor Haile Selassie, and did not once bring up concerns over Communism. Ethiopian officials insisted that increased aid meant Ethiopia would be in a better position to support American aims, such as regional security. Selassie attempted to portray Ethiopia as in need of not only military but economic aid, stating that he believed he would “utilise United States economic aid to help correct” the problem of Ethiopian unemployment.¹⁶⁷ Ethiopia’s Foreign Minister Ato Aklilou was incredibly open in his attempt to convince Nixon of Ethiopia’s usefulness when he argued that Ethiopia was an African and Middle Eastern country; with U.S. aid it could be of value in both regions.¹⁶⁸

Nixon’s meeting with Ethiopia’s prime minister persuaded him that the nation was deserving of more efficient aid delivery. The vice president was convinced Ethiopia was willing to act as an American proxy and simply needed more aid to do so effectively. When he met with Prime Minister Endelkachew, Nixon was immediately confronted with an indirect question that resonated with the vice president: if the United States wanted to be able to exert its influence in Africa, how could it do so with militarily weak allies?¹⁶⁹ That Endelkachew’s arguments persuaded Nixon was made clear in the vice president’s notes. Above several recommendations he believed would help Ethiopia, Nixon quoted the exact words the prime minister had used during their meeting: “to strengthen yourself, strengthen your friends.”¹⁷⁰ Indeed, Nixon argued that Ethiopia, if properly armed and directed, could be quite useful as an American proxy in

¹⁶⁷ Memcon, Haile Selassie and Richard Nixon, Addis Ababa, March 12, 1957, 2, Africa Trip – 1957, Box 8, Series 325, Executive Branch File, RNVPC, RNL.

¹⁶⁸ Memcon, Ato Aklilou and Richard Nixon, Addis Ababa, March 12, 1957, 1, Africa Trip – 1957, Box 8, Series 325, Executive Branch File, RNVPC, RNL.

¹⁶⁹ The Prime Minister pointed out that Ethiopia continually supported America’s international efforts, but in order to continue doing so would need increased military aid. See Memcon, Bitwodded Makennen Endalkatchew [sic] and Richard Nixon, Addis Ababa, March 12, 1957, 1, Africa Trip – 1957, Box 8, Series 325, Executive Branch File, RNVPC, RNL.

¹⁷⁰ Handwritten Note, Unmarked Folder, Box 1, Series 351, Subseries E: 1957 Africa Trip, RNPPM, RNL.

Africa and the Middle East. Such a proxy would most likely be used to counter any perceived Communist manoeuvres in the region, but could certainly be used for other purposes, such as combating moves or attempts at regional “domination” by Nasser’s Egypt, which was a concern touched on by several leaders throughout Nixon’s trip.¹⁷¹

Nixon explained his recommendations for increased military aid to Ethiopia in terms which conveyed a desire to maintain or expand American influence. On March 25, after he had returned from Africa, the vice president wrote memos to Secretary of Defense Charles Wilson, as well as to Dulles, recommending that military aid to Ethiopia be expanded, and managed in a much more meticulous fashion.¹⁷² Nixon argued that expanding and better managing military aid to Ethiopia would be useful due to Ethiopia’s “increasingly important influence in African affairs” and that “enlightened self-interest requires that we ensure their continued friendship and support of our policies.”¹⁷³ Indeed, Nixon suggested that if enough aid was given to Ethiopia then the United States could employ the Ethiopian armed forces as a “neutral” police force in “appropriate situations.”¹⁷⁴ Importantly, in an earlier draft of this memo, Nixon had originally written “the area of the Middle East,” but later replaced it with “appropriate situations,” indicating the vice president believed the Ethiopian armed forces might be put to use in maintaining stability should either a Soviet or Egyptian threat rear its head.¹⁷⁵ Given the

¹⁷¹ While both Sudanese and Libyan leaders voiced concern over Nasserism, neither believed Nasser was a Communist puppet. Still, the perceived threat from Nasser to regional stability, while not of great concern to the Sudanese and Libyans was there nonetheless. See Memcon, Abdullah Khalil, Ahmad Mahjub, and Richard Nixon, Khartoum, March 13, 1957, 4-6, Africa Trip – 1957, Box 8, Series 325, Executive Branch File, RNVPC, RNL; Memcon, Mustafa Ben Halim and Richard Nixon, Tripoli, March 15, 1957, 3, Africa Trip – 1957, Box 8, Series 325, Executive Branch File, RNVPC, RNL.

¹⁷² Memo, Richard Nixon to Charles E. Wilson, March 25, 1957, 1, Ethiopia – Schedules, Speeches, Statements, Box 1, Series 352, Subseries E: 1957 Africa Trip, RNPPM, RNL

¹⁷³ Memo, Nixon to Wilson, March 25, 1957, 1, RNPPM, RNL.

¹⁷⁴ Memo, Nixon to Wilson, March 25, 1957, 1, RNPPM, RNL.

¹⁷⁵ Draft Memo, Ethiopia – Schedules, Speeches, Statements, Box 1, Series 352, Subseries E: 1957 Africa Trip, RNPPM, RNL

Eisenhower Doctrine's promise to provide aid to maintain the independence of any Middle Eastern nation vulnerable to Communist attacks, Nixon's enthusiasm for building up Ethiopia's military strength certainly fell in line with the doctrine's intent.¹⁷⁶

Nixon's arguments to the president also focused on securing American influence over Ethiopia. Three of the five recommendations Nixon made to Eisenhower on Ethiopia concerned military topics. The vice president argued that since Ethiopia had adhered to American foreign policy, and since it was committed to "collective security," an important aspect of the New Look, it would be in the U.S. interest to help build up Ethiopia's armed forces.¹⁷⁷ Relatedly, Nixon advised that if the United States sought to secure base facilities in Ethiopia in addition to those they already had, it would help the American cause to increase aid there.¹⁷⁸ Significantly, none of Nixon's recommendations regarding Ethiopia mentioned or alluded to Communism, the Soviet Union, or an external or internal threat of any kind. This does not mean that the vice president no longer perceived Communism as a threat, but it does point to a growing focus on building America's influence abroad rather than simply holding back Soviet influence. Nixon realised the benefit of having allies who supported American policies and interests, such as general regional stability in the Middle East, over allies who simply supported anti-Communism.

During his conversations with Sudan's Prime Minister Abdullah Khalil and Foreign Minister Ahmad Mahjub on March 13, 1957, Nixon asked, as he often did, about general Communist infiltration of the student communities, but only after the prime minister and foreign

¹⁷⁶ The Eisenhower Doctrine provided for American aid to any nation in the 'general area' of the Middle East in order to maintain independence. Though the Eisenhower Doctrine was initially stated to provide American military intervention to nations which requested it and were attacked by a nation "controlled by international Communism," it would eventually be enacted to justify intervention in Lebanon in July, 1958, with flimsy at best evidence of international Communist direction. See Dwight D. Eisenhower, *The White House Years: Waging Peace, 1956-1961* (Garden City: Doubleday, 1965), 180-181, 266-271.

¹⁷⁷ Report to the President on the Vice President's Visit to Africa, (February 28 – March 21, 1957), 6, DDEL.

¹⁷⁸ Report to the President on the Vice President's Visit to Africa, (February 28 – March 21, 1957), 6, DDEL.

minister argued in front of Nixon over the merits of the Eisenhower Doctrine, Sudan's strong efforts against Communism, and the level of Communist infiltration at the University of Khartoum.¹⁷⁹ Nixon did take note of the prime minister's high estimate that up to fifty percent of university students were communist, but also took the opportunity to write down a clearly facetious solution: "more university students needed."¹⁸⁰ Nixon's notes on his mission to Sudan show some small concern with Communist infiltration, but as his conversations with Libyan and Tunisian officials illustrate, it was not the focal point of his attention.

In conversations with Libyan and Tunisian officials, Nixon focused his attention on African nationalism and a contemptuous dismissal of Soviet propaganda. In his conversation with Tunisia's deputy prime minister on March 18, 1957, Nixon noted the "devotion to...independence" prevalent in the nations he had visited and commented that such nations were likely proud to not "slavishly" follow the dictates of another country.¹⁸¹ In his notes, Nixon made a point to record that the Eisenhower administration thought Tunisia's current government fit well with current American goals, and thus wanted the Tunisian government "kept in power" but did not go into further detail.¹⁸² When he spoke with Mustafa Ben Halim, Libya's prime minister, Nixon brought up Communism only to dismiss the Soviets' criticisms of the Eisenhower Doctrine, which Halim declared was a wonderful policy for the U.S. to initiate, as he appeared to believe it created the opportunity for "Arab solidarity."¹⁸³ Halim vocally opposed Communism without prodding from Nixon, and went so far as to divulge that he had recently

¹⁷⁹ President Eisenhower had made the speech which would become known as the "Eisenhower Doctrine," months before. See Eisenhower, *The White House Years*, 182-185, 191-193. For Nixon asking about Communism only after the Sudanese officials' extensive argument see Memcon, Abdullah Khalil, Ahmad Mahjub, and Richard Nixon, Khartoum, March 13, 1957, 2-5, RNL.

¹⁸⁰ Handwritten Note, Unmarked Folder, Box 1, Series 351, Subseries E: 1957 Africa Trip, RNPPM, RNL.

¹⁸¹ Memcon, Post-Luncheon conversation between Deputy Prime Minister Ladgham and Richard Nixon, Tunisia, March 18, 1957, 4, Africa Trip – 1957, Box 8, Series 325, Executive Branch File, RNVPC, RNL.

¹⁸² Handwritten Note, Unmarked Folder, Box 1, Series 351, Subseries E: 1957 Africa Trip, RNPPM, RNL.

¹⁸³ Memcon, Halim and Nixon, 3, RNVPC, RNL.

demanded that the Soviet mission in Tripoli reduce its staff.¹⁸⁴ Nixon was clearly more focused on improving America's ability to influence Libya since he argued in his notes that in order to counteract Egypt's influence over Libya, American assistance to Libya ought to be increased.¹⁸⁵

During his mission to Africa, Nixon recognised an opportunity for America in the newly emerging nations. Nixon's notes convey significant concern with Ghana and other emerging African nations. The vice president worried that independence, and the anticipated independence of Uganda, Nigeria, and Kenya, might well be coming "too soon," but that such events would occur and thus the U.S. ought to plan accordingly.¹⁸⁶ Although such nations would likely begin their existences "free," without guidance and "strong advice" they could easily lose that freedom.¹⁸⁷ This again shows that Nixon was concerned about Communism, but also about ensuring American influence in Africa.

Nixon's report on his findings from his mission to Africa caused much conversation within the Eisenhower administration. Not only was the vice president's report on Africa circulated throughout circles in the Eisenhower administration, it was insightful and contentious enough that John B. Hollister, head of the International Cooperation Administration/Association (ICA), an organization created by the State Department to coordinate the U.S.'s foreign aid, sent Nixon and the entire National Security Council a point by point commentary on the report.¹⁸⁸ The majority of Hollister's comments were explanations of why the ICA agreed with Nixon.¹⁸⁹

¹⁸⁴ Memcon, Halim and Nixon, 5, RNVPC, RNL.

¹⁸⁵ Memcon, Halim and Nixon, 5, RNVPC, RNL

¹⁸⁶ Handwritten Note, Unmarked Folder, Box 1, Series 351, Subseries E: 1957 Africa Trip, RNPPM, RNL.

¹⁸⁷ Handwritten Note, RNPPM, RNL.

¹⁸⁸ Memo, John B. Hollister to Richard Nixon, August 20, 1957, Africa, RN Report and Other Papers, Box 8, Series 325, Executive Branch File, RNVPC, RNL.

¹⁸⁹ The ICA "agreed" or "concurred" outright with over fifteen of Nixon's recommendations, and when action had not already been taken on other recommendations which the ICA believed they could play a part in, the ICA's

Thus, whatever course the foreign policy of the Eisenhower administration took in Africa, it did not take such a course without discussion of various options, as the ICA report often cited budgetary or diplomatic alternatives whether it agreed or disagreed with Nixon's recommendations.¹⁹⁰

Nixon's report to Eisenhower on his mission to Africa strongly points out the Communist threat despite Nixon having shown little interest in it while actually in Africa. Some of the recommendations in the vice president's report include scathing judgements of the current status of both the Eisenhower administration's efforts in Africa and the U.S., often hidden within warnings about Communist encroachment. One of Nixon's recommendations begins by praising Eisenhower and the U.S.'s symbolic position in Africa, then moves to state that embassies and related diplomatic missions in Africa ought to be, meaning they currently were not, staffed by people skilled enough to explain American policies in such a way that those policies would appear indicative of the "independence, equality, and economic progress" which Africans admired the U.S. for.¹⁹¹ The vice president also pointed out that American diplomatic officials allowed racial prejudices to negatively impact international relations.¹⁹² Nixon viewed such problems as personality issues, as the vice president noted that ambassador John Tappin had

response was one which usually defended its position. See ICA Commentary on Vice President's Report, Africa, RN Report and Other Papers, Box 8, Series 325, Executive Branch File, RNVPC, RNL.

¹⁹⁰ ICA Commentary on Vice President's Report, 9-11. See also Nwaubani, "The United States and the Liquidation of European Colonial Rule in Tropical Africa," 529.

¹⁹¹ The Vice President's Report to the President on trip to Africa, (February 28 – March 21, 1957), 3-4, Box 505, Official File, Dwight D. Eisenhower: Records as President, White House Central Files (hereafter WHCF), 1953-1961, DDEL.

¹⁹² Nixon argued that the three most important factors to consider for Ghana's ambassador were "merit, experience, and absence of prejudice." See Report to the President on the Vice President's Visit to Africa, (February 28 – March 21, 1957), 4, DDEL.

done a good job in Libya but that his “personal character” was a deficiency which might necessitate his dismissal.¹⁹³

Nixon’s pragmatism is further evidenced by his linkage of domestic problems and their international implications. When the vice president addressed racial discrimination in the United States in his report to Eisenhower, he not only demonstrated the importance of such problems vis-à-vis U.S.-Africa relations, but also showed how such problems were hindering America from winning the Cold War. Nixon portrayed Soviet propaganda about domestic racial prejudices in America as overblown yet skillful and persistent. While Soviet propaganda on racism in America was not accurate, the Communists were exploiting a real weakness in American society and gaining influence in African and Middle Eastern nations because of it.¹⁹⁴ In his report to Eisenhower on Africa, Nixon first pointed out the hypocrisy of preaching equality abroad but not practising it at home, and then offered a solution that he claimed was both in the “national interest,” and morally necessary: “the elimination of discrimination in the United States.”¹⁹⁵ The vice president also couched these recommendations in terms which created a sense of immediacy in acting on them. Nixon portrayed Africa as the “priority target” for Communism, arguing that Africa was the new China, but also stating that at present most African leaders stood against Communist influence, meaning that the Eisenhower administration ought to deal with the problems in current domestic and international issues immediately or risk losing Africa.¹⁹⁶

¹⁹³ Handwritten Notes, Unmarked Folder, Box 1, Series 351, Subseries E: 1957 Africa Trip, RNPPM, RNL.

¹⁹⁴ Vice President’s Report to the President, (February 28 – March 21, 1957), 4, DDEL.

¹⁹⁵ Vice President’s Report to the President, (February 28 – March 21, 1957), 4, DDEL.

¹⁹⁶ Vice President’s Report to the President, (February 28 – March 21, 1957), 7, DDEL; Many of Nixon’s recommendations were adopted into NSC 5791/1, which was designed to deal with the “long-range” nature of actions the United States ought to take with regard to its relations in Africa. See “Statement of U.S. Policy Toward

The 1957 mission to Africa granted Nixon an opportunity to develop as a statesman, but it also served a significant purpose for the Eisenhower administration. Indeed, many of Nixon's recommendations were carried over into America's first "comprehensive" policy on Sub-Saharan Africa, NSC 5719/1, which contributed to the establishment of the Bureau of African Affairs in 1958.¹⁹⁷ This policy stressed that the U.S. should help independent African nations develop in an "orderly manner," work to solidify nationalist governments against Soviet and Egyptian "Islamic" overtures, respectively, and move to maintain and create ties between emerging African nations and Western Europe.¹⁹⁸ The vice president also argued that through student exchanges American "ideals...aspirations... traditions...institutions" could be communicated to intelligent African youth and that a "great advance in common understanding" could be achieved as well, a theme which was included in NSC 5719/1.¹⁹⁹ Other aspects of NSC 5719/1 display many of Nixon's concerns and recommendations for American-African relations. Of note is the section in NSC 5719/1 which focuses on the balancing act the United States must perform in regards to nations seeking independence from their European colonisers. The document advised that premature independence would be as detrimental for emerging nations and "our [American] interests" as continuing the rule of the colonial powers, but stressed the need to tailor attitudes to each emerging nation appropriately.²⁰⁰ The document also portrayed the Soviet Union as an expanding colonial power, and Western Europe as a contracting colonial power.²⁰¹ These and

Africa South of the Sahara Prior to Calendar Year 1960, NSC 5719/1," *FRUS 1955-1957*, Volume XVIII, *Africa*, John P. Glennon and Stanley Shaloff eds. (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1989), 76.

¹⁹⁷ "NSC 5719/1," *FRUS 1955-1957, Africa*, 76-87. For this being the first time the U.S. had a comprehensive policy on Africa South of the Sahara, see Meriwether, "A Torrent Overrunning Everything," 184.

¹⁹⁸ "NSC 5719/1," *FRUS 1955-1957, Africa*, 76-78.

¹⁹⁹ For the quote see Vice President's Report to the President, 10, DDEL. For NSC 5719/1 including at least two types of exchange (both of unspecified "persons" and educational) see "NSC 5719/1," *FRUS 1955-1957, Africa*, 78-79.

²⁰⁰ "NSC 5719/1," *FRUS 1955-1957, Africa*, 79.

²⁰¹ "NSC 5719/1," *FRUS 1955-1957, Africa*, 80, 81.

other recommendations made in NSC 5719/1 closely mirror the advice Nixon offered in his report to Eisenhower on Africa.

During his mission to Africa, Nixon showed no lack of concern for Communism; however, it is clear that expanding and solidifying American influence in the long term was also a top priority. Factors such as regional stability and aiding in Middle East security were integral pieces of the New Look and strong themes within NSC 5719/1, but it is important to note that NSC 5719/1 made clear that even with American aid, problems in several African nations would take “a generation or more” to be resolved.²⁰² Given that the New Look was itself a long-term plan for the Cold War, it should not be surprising that another long-term plan was created for African nations seen as viable targets for the East/West struggle. Since Nixon made recommendations which were designed to grant immediate as well as enduring benefits to America, Western Europe, and those African nations involved, it is fair to state that while anti-Communism was a driving factor behind his recommendations, the potential for lasting American influence in the region was also present.

Many of the criticisms Nixon made of Eisenhower’s policies and actions in Africa indicate that the vice president was pushing the administration to more fully apply its New Look (and anti-Nasserist) objectives. While contributing significantly to the Eisenhower administration’s foreign policies in Africa, Nixon’s mission also demonstrated his development into a more confident and pragmatic statesman. During Nixon’s 1958 mission to Latin America, the vice president levelled additional criticisms against the Eisenhower administration for not adhering closely enough to the New Look policy.

²⁰² “NSC 5719/1,” *FRUS 1955-1957, Africa*, 76.

Chapter Three: Latin America 1958

“...the Goodwill mission ended with the calling out of U.S. marines and army”²⁰³

In 1958, Vice President Nixon visited several nations on his Latin American mission, including Uruguay, Argentina, Paraguay, Bolivia, Ecuador, and Colombia. His trips to Peru and Venezuela, however, were the most significant and the most sensational. In these two nations, Nixon was confronted by officials and angry protestors who were dissatisfied with the policies of the Eisenhower administration. The diplomatic incidents in Peru, and especially Venezuela, demonstrated Nixon's growing sophistication as a statesman and the heavy-handed nature with which the Eisenhower administration often dealt with Latin American nations.

Nixon's mission revealed significant problems in the Eisenhower administration's approach to Latin America. As was the case with Africa, the vice president argued that U.S. policies were partly to blame for communist gains in Latin America. As a result of his mission to the region, the vice president became convinced that Eisenhower's policies were not lining up with the goals of the New Look. Therefore, he made recommendations which were designed to change these policies and improve U.S. relations with various countries in Latin America.

The Eisenhower administration made clear early in its tenure that under the New Look, the Monroe Doctrine was alive and well and the Good Neighbour Policy dead and gone.²⁰⁴ In 1954, the Eisenhower administration ordered the C.I.A. to launch a coup against Guatemala's

²⁰³ Memo, Soviet Bloc Propaganda on the Vice President's Trip, May 15, 1958, Box 11, Cabinet Series, Dwight D. Eisenhower, Papers as President 1953-1961, Ann Whitman File (hereafter AWF), DDEL.

²⁰⁴ To provide a truncated explanation of the Monroe Doctrine versus the Good Neighbour Policy, it will suffice to establish that while both programs declared American supremacy over the Western hemisphere, the Good Neighbour Policy was decidedly less interventionist than the many iterations of the Monroe Doctrine (save for the quite militant Roosevelt Corollary), which allowed for U.S. intervention in any Latin American nation believed to be threatened by external nations. See Marco Mariano, "Isolationism, Internationalism and the Monroe Doctrine" *Journal of Transatlantic Studies* 9, No. 1, (March 2011), 35-40; cf. Eric Paul Roorda, "Genocide Next Door: The Good Neighbor Policy, the Trujillo Regime, and the Haitian Massacre of 1937," *Diplomatic History* 20, No. 3 (Summer 1996), 301-303.

President Arbenz, a man considered by the Eisenhower administration to represent the “first Soviet beachhead” in Latin America.²⁰⁵ While there was evidence of Arbenz having connections to the Soviet Union, the extent and depth of these connections are difficult to discern.²⁰⁶ Less difficult to discern is the irritation Arbenz caused with his land reform policies and moves against the United Fruit Company, which angered American businessmen, the Eisenhower administration in general, and the Dulles brothers.²⁰⁷ While the factors which led to, and allowed for, the coup belie a simple explanation, the Eisenhower administration was convinced of the necessity to overthrow Arbenz despite outcry and protests from many Latin American diplomats the U.S. had previously courted.²⁰⁸

Historians have suggested that much like its policies in Africa, the Eisenhower administration attempted to maintain a simple, status quo approach in Latin America until a Communist threat arose. Bevan Sewell convincingly argues that the Soviet Economic Offensive of 1956, an outpouring of Soviet resources to any Latin American nations willing to accept them, also caused the Eisenhower administration to have greater sensitivity to foreign actions in Latin American nations where anti-American sentiment was perceived to be high; the prospect of a

²⁰⁵ Max Paul Friedman, “Fracas in Caracas: Latin American Diplomatic Resistance to United States Intervention in Guatemala in 1954,” *Diplomacy & Statecraft* 21 (2010), 669-670.

²⁰⁶ For the Soviet’s increasing aid to the developing world as early as 1953, see Burton Ira Kaufman, *Trade and Aid. Eisenhower’s Foreign Economic Policy, 1953–1961* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press: 1982) 64

²⁰⁷ Bevan Sewell, “The Pragmatic Face of the Covert Idealist: The Role of Allen Dulles in US Policy Discussions on Latin America, 1953–61,” *Intelligence and National Security* 26, Nos. 2–3 (April-June 2011), 278-279; John W. Young, “Great Britain’s Latin American Dilemma: The Foreign Office and the Overthrow of ‘Communist’ Guatemala, June 1954,” *The International History Review* 8, No. 4 (November 1986), 574-575.

²⁰⁸ Andrew J. Schlewitz provides a strong explanation for the Guatemalan military’s “betrayal” of Arbenz, attributing it much more to the military’s desire to survive as an institution than to any U.S. or C.I.A. overtures. See Andrew J. Schlewitz, “Imperial Incompetence and Guatemalan Militarism, 1931-1966,” *International Journal of Politics, Culture, and Society* 17, No. 4, (Summer, 2004), 604. For the U.S. courting support for, and then ignoring Latin American diplomats protests over removing Arbenz, please see Friedman, “Fracas in Caracas,” 671-673; Vanni Pettina, “The Shadows of Cold War over Latin America: the US reaction to Fidel Castro’s Nationalism, 1956–59,” *Cold War History* 11, No. 3 (August 2011), 321.

Soviet beachhead in the Western hemisphere was viewed as a threat.²⁰⁹ Indeed, the Operations Coordinating Board contended that in light of the Soviet Union's overtures to Latin America, the policies which the National Security Council had in place would be inadequate to meet the established objectives of the Eisenhower administration in Latin America.²¹⁰ As Michael Kryzaneck points out, John Foster Dulles had shown concerns about Communist influences in Latin America at least as early as 1952, thus open evidence of Soviet plans to become involved in the region would certainly have caused alarm.²¹¹

Historians have also argued that the Eisenhower administration was quite willing to interfere with Latin American nations' self-determination if the administration perceived a Communist threat. Matthew Loayza contends that Eisenhower was not merely fending off the outside threat of Communist infiltration in Latin America, but was also wary of any form of nationalism and utilised a kind of altered Monroe Doctrine in which the administration involved itself in Latin American affairs not only to keep outside influences out, but to repress any internal, left leaning, influences which might hamper "free trade."²¹² Loayza portrays the Eisenhower administration as economically and politically domineering, working to control and guide the course of Latin American nations and often refusing to listen to requests for alteration to economic programs.²¹³ Stephen Rabe argues that the Eisenhower administration's goals in Latin America were often as simple as anti-Communism. As Acting Secretary of State Christian

²⁰⁹ Bevan Sewell, "A Perfect (Free-Market) World? Economics, the Eisenhower Administration, and the Soviet Economic Offensive in Latin America," *Diplomatic History* 32, No. 5 (November 2008), 841-843.

²¹⁰ National Security Council Progress Report on U.S. Policy in Latin America by the Operations Coordinating Board, March 28, 1956, 2, Box 13, Policy Paper Subseries, NSC Series, WHO, OSASNSA, DDEL.

²¹¹ Michael J. Kryzaneck, *U.S.-Latin American Relations* Second Edition (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1990), 57-58.

²¹² Matthew Loayza, "An 'Aladdin's Lamp for Free Enterprise: Eisenhower, Fiscal Conservatism, and Latin American Nationalism, 1953-61," *Diplomacy and Statecraft* 14, No. 3 (September 2003), 87-88.

²¹³ Loayza, "An 'Aladdin's Lamp for Free Enterprise," 99.

Herter pointed out, the key question in Latin America was always, “is the country on our side?”²¹⁴

Nixon’s impact and input on the development of Eisenhower’s Latin American policies is often simplified by historians. Rabe argues that the attacks on Nixon in Peru and Venezuela by angry protestors spurred greater spending on Latin America by the Eisenhower administration.²¹⁵ Sewell further posits that Richard Nixon’s entire 1958 mission to Latin America, but particularly the attacks on him, served as part of the catalyst for the Eisenhower administration to adapt its policies towards the continent.²¹⁶ Loayza dismisses the importance Rabe and others attach to the assassination attempt by protestors on Nixon in Caracas, dubbed the “Caracas Incident,” insofar as it related to policy changes as “exaggerated.”²¹⁷ While these historians all emphasise the impact of the attacks in Venezuela, their analyses tend to ignore Nixon’s role as a statesman, his response to the attacks, and the implications of Eisenhower administration’s response to the Caracas Incident.

Eisenhower’s desire to address the criticism of Latin American protestors and Democrats in the U.S. that his administration openly supported dictators in Latin America was a key reason for Nixon’s mission to Latin America.²¹⁸ This objective necessitated Nixon’s attendance at President Arturo Frondizi’s inauguration, on May 1, in Buenos Aires.²¹⁹ The Eisenhower administration very much wanted to display the U.S.’s support for the new leader in order to

²¹⁴ Stephen G. Rabe, *Eisenhower and Latin America: The Foreign Policy of Anti-Communism* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1988), 107. Rabe ably points out the problems Congressional and Intelligence officials had with the administration’s outlook, but were unable to voice much opposition until the attacks on Nixon hit Eisenhower’s approval hard.

²¹⁵ Rabe, *Eisenhower and Latin America*, 100.

²¹⁶ Sewell, “Soviet Economic Offensive,” 865.

²¹⁷ Loayza, “An ‘Aladdin’s Lamp for Free Enterprise,” 99

²¹⁸ Marvin R. Zahniser and W. Michael Weis, “A Diplomatic Pearl Harbor? Richard Nixon’s Goodwill Mission to Latin America in 1958,” *Diplomatic History* 13, No. 2, (April 1989), 163-164.

²¹⁹ Goldberg, “One Man’s Quest,” 163-165; Zahniser and Weis, “A Diplomatic Pearl Harbor?” 164.

distance itself from the deposed Juan Perón, who the administration had also supported.²²⁰

Fronzizi's Argentina was only one of Nixon's destinations on his mission, and he was comparatively well-received there, whereas in Peru and Venezuela Nixon was confronted with angry and violent protestors. Marvin Zahniser and W. Michael Weis propose that Nixon being sent to such places is evidence of "questionable" judgment on the parts of Eisenhower and Dulles, as the administration was aware of anti-American sentiments in both nations.²²¹ This proposal has merit, but, it is also possible that Eisenhower and Dulles were either unaware of the severity of the anti-American sentiments or grossly under-estimated them.²²²

Nixon was sent on the mission to Latin America after Roy Rubottom Jr., Assistant Secretary of State for Latin American Affairs, was able to convince Eisenhower and Dulles that the perceived indifference of the Eisenhower administration to Latin America's most recent economic and political problems was creating a rift between the U.S. and its Latin American allies that "the Communists" might fill.²²³ The economic problems included a considerable drop in the price of Latin American exports to which the Eisenhower administration responded by contemplating tariffs and offering financial advice, while the political problems were made up of general political unrest combined with the recent overthrow of dictators in Peru and Venezuela.²²⁴ While Eisenhower's role in the formation, execution, and consideration of Nixon's mission was sporadic, Dulles played a significant role.

²²⁰ Rabe, *Eisenhower and Latin America*, 101.

²²¹ Zahniser and Weis, "A Diplomatic Pearl Harbor?" 189.

²²² Alan McPherson, *Yankee No! Anti-Americanism in U.S.-Latin American Relations* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2003), 24-26.

²²³ Nixon, *Memoirs*, 228; Rabe, *Eisenhower and Latin America*, 101.

²²⁴ Rabe, *Eisenhower and Latin America*, 101; Cynthia McClintock and Fabian Vallas, *The United States and Peru: Cooperation at a Cost* (New York: Routledge, 2003), 20.

Rubottom first conceived of the mission, but it was the secretary of state who firmly proposed the mission to Nixon, and Dulles's actions in this capacity, as well as during and after the mission, are significant. Although Nixon dismissed the initial prospect of the Latin America mission when it was suggested in an abstract form by Rubottom, he was less able to dismiss Dulles's more concrete proposal, and the "wondering" of President Eisenhower, and Eisenhower's Latin American expert and brother Milton.²²⁵ When Dulles first contacted Nixon regarding the possibility of a mission to Latin America, he attempted to parry a possible repeat of Nixon's 1957 manoeuvre of expanding the itinerary. Dulles made clear that "we," hinting at himself and Eisenhower, endorsed the plan, and that he had included a proposed itinerary designed to "extract maximum advantages from a foreign policy standpoint."²²⁶

Dulles went on to explain why Nixon should visit the nations Dulles and Eisenhower proposed. The secretary of state noted that Uruguay was recommended in order to show the Uruguayan government "the importance that we accord to that country," and made other such justifications.²²⁷ Dulles recommended Nixon visit Venezuela "because of the recent revolution...and also because of the special economic and strategic interests we have there" [emphasis mine].²²⁸ The revolution Dulles mentioned saw the overthrow of Venezuela's Marcos Perez Jimenez, in January of 1958. Jimenez, one of the men Nixon characterised as a "refugee dictator," had been awarded the American Legion of Merit in 1956, the highest honour open to

²²⁵ Nixon contended that whenever Eisenhower "wondered" if the vice president might be able to take on a task, it was actually Eisenhower's delicate tactic for highly recommending Nixon accept the task while still allowing for a polite refusal. See Nixon, *Memoirs*, 228; Richard Nixon, *Six Crises* (New York: Touchstone Publishing, 1990), 184-185.

²²⁶ Memo, John Foster Dulles to Richard Nixon, March 6, 1958, 1, South American Trip, Box 1, Series 397, Subseries F: 1958 South American Trip, RNPPM RNL.

²²⁷ Memo, John Foster Dulles to Richard Nixon, March 6, 1958, 1, RNL.

²²⁸ Memo, John Foster Dulles to Richard Nixon, March 6, 1958, 1, RNL.

non-American citizens.²²⁹ The Eisenhower administration was again eager to distance itself from the image of supporting an overthrown dictator, and thus Nixon's mission to Venezuela was designed to show America's support for the new leading military junta. The special economic and strategic interests mentioned by Dulles referred to Venezuela's oil resources, over which America enjoyed a significant amount of control, and hoped to continue to enjoy.²³⁰ The presumption that Venezuelan and Latin American resources were simply there for America's taking and would remain that way was borne out in NSC 6009, which examined the ability of Latin America to serve as a supply base for America should the U.S. be attacked in a nuclear conflict.²³¹ Such a report could not have been compiled unless the U.S. expected to continue to exert significant control over Latin American nations.

A similar situation existed in Peru, which had thrived under the dictatorship of Manuel Odria during the early 1950s. After the faltering of Peru's resource-export based economy following the end of the Korean War, however, Odria, also a Legion of Merit recipient, held elections and lost power.²³² Whereas during Odria's reign Peru had prospered along with many American companies based there, during Odria's fall and the subsequent presidency of Manuel Prado, Peruvians blamed Odria's pro-American policies, those same American companies, and the Eisenhower administration for Peru's ailments.²³³

²²⁹ David F. Schmitz, *Thank God They're on Our Side: The United States and Right-Wing Dictatorships, 1921-1965* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1999), 184.

²³⁰ Robert J. McMahon, "Eisenhower and Third World Nationalism: A Critique of the Revisionists," *Political Science Quarterly* 101, No. 3 (1986), 468.

²³¹ "Capabilities of Latin America as a Supply Base in the Event of a Nuclear Attack on the United States," Prepared by Office of Civil and Defense Mobilization, May 27, 1960, Cover Memo, Box 28, Policy Paper Subseries, NSC Series, WHO, OSANSA, DDEL.

²³² McClintock and Vallas, *Cooperation at a Cost*, 19.

²³³ McClintock and Vallas, *Cooperation at a Cost*, 19.

Still, the very fact that Dulles took the time to prepare and explain a detailed itinerary, in combination with the secretary of state's later attempts to dissuade Eisenhower from forming new Latin American policies based on Nixon's recommendations, suggests that Dulles was trying to assert a greater level of control over Nixon due to the vice president's expanding role in foreign policy.²³⁴ It was not uncommon for Dulles to encourage Nixon at one time but then attempt to rein him in if Dulles believed Nixon was crossing into areas the secretary of state believed to be outside of the vice president's purview.²³⁵ Nixon accepted the mission, considering it an opportunity for information gathering, but the conclusions this information led the vice president to brought he and Dulles into stark disagreement.²³⁶

Nixon's conversations with various Peruvian officials contributed significantly to his understanding of problems Latin Americans had with American policies. During a meeting with Peruvian labour leaders on May 7, 1958, in Lima, Nixon received candid and often critical opinions of the United States. Nixon was told about the relief the Peruvian Mining Federation felt after the Eisenhower administration finally decided against tariffs on lead and zinc exports from Peru; the speaker also hinted that when the U.S. simply informed Latin American nations about such possible economic actions without considering the effect they would have on nations such as Peru, this created discontent.²³⁷ This discontent was demonstrated through aggressive protests during Nixon's public outings in Peru. The protests Nixon encountered in Peru involved

²³⁴ Dulles justified his criticisms of Nixon's recommendations due to the fact that Nixon's itinerary in Latin America had been "brief" and had included too many nations for a formula like the one Nixon proposed to work. See Stephen G. Rabe, "Dulles, Latin America and Cold War Anticommunism," ed. Richard H. Immerman, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990), 181-182.

²³⁵ Dulles made a more successful move to keep Nixon from becoming Chairman of the OCB in January of 1957. See Memo, John Foster Dulles to Dwight Eisenhower, January 14, 1957, 1-3, Box 14, JFD Chronological Series, John Foster Dulles: Papers, 1951-1959, DDEL.

²³⁶ Rabe, *Eisenhower and Latin America*, 101.

²³⁷ Memcon, Meeting of Vice President with Peruvian Labor Leaders, May 7, 1958, 2, Lima, Peru –Reports and Conversations, Box 1, Series 397, Subseries F: 1958 South American Trip, RNPPM RNL.

large crowds chanting “Fuera Nixon” (Get out Nixon), “Muera Nixon” (Death to Nixon), and eventually protestors began spitting on Nixon and his party.²³⁸ While the protestors were clearly directing their anger at Nixon, the anger itself had its base in economic problems for which many Latin Americans believed America held the blame.

Such problems had been building in Peru and other Latin American nations for some time. The Eisenhower administration’s consideration of tariffs against Latin American trade goods contributed to the problems of the often vulnerable economies of countries such as Peru.²³⁹ Feelings of resentment and of being ignored had been growing among many Latin Americans not in the upper class.²⁴⁰ The frankness of the labour leaders who spoke to Nixon was made clear by the complaint and recommendation of another labour leader, Santiago Tamaria. According to Tamaria, private foreign investment from the U.S., such as that of the International Petroleum Company, was a fine idea, but would not solve all of Latin America’s problems, especially if the U.S. refused to place some manner of control over the American companies that invested in Latin America only to exploit its citizens.²⁴¹

Tamaria’s criticism touched on three key issues which resonated with Nixon. The most obvious factor is that the criticism went against the basic policy of the Eisenhower administration that private investment would solve Latin America’s economic issues.²⁴² Tamaria also pointed out that foreign investment often resulted in the American companies involved abusing workers’ rights. In addition, he implicitly chastised the Peruvian government for not protecting citizens

²³⁸ Nixon, *Memoirs*, 230-231.

²³⁹ McClintock and Vallas, *Cooperation at a Cost*, 20.

²⁴⁰ McClintock and Vallas, *Cooperation at a Cost*, 20.

²⁴¹ Memcon, Meeting of Vice President with Peruvian Labor Leaders, 2, RNL.

²⁴² For one argument of the Eisenhower administration’s strong faith in private investment see Sewell, “Soviet Economic Offensive, 847, 850-851.

from exploitation.²⁴³ Specific to this meeting, the labour leaders brought up American companies' refusing to allow labourers to form unions, and forcing those in unions to strike for excessive periods for already-promised wage increases.²⁴⁴ Strikingly, Nixon did not argue with these men, but listened intently, only sometimes explaining American actions when he believed a valid reason or counter-point existed. When a labour spokesman recommended that the United States should support democratic nations in Latin America rather than dictatorships, the vice president took it under advisement.²⁴⁵

Although Nixon's time in Peru had been disturbed by protestors, for the most part the vice president was able to safely proceed with his pre-arranged schedule. In Venezuela, however, the situation was much different. The infamous "Caracas Incident" occurred on May 13, 1958, when, upon arriving in the capital city, Richard and Pat Nixon were first spat on by protestors at the airport, and then subsequently attacked by a mob of an estimated four thousand Venezuelans as the Nixons' police escort abandoned their motorcade. As Nixon's party proceeded, the Venezuelans shouted the same slogans as protestors Nixon had encountered in other Latin American nations, like Peru. After nearly having their cars flipped over and set on fire, the vice president and his party narrowly escaped with minor injuries, but further attempts at assassination were planned, and Nixon's party spent the remainder of their visit in the embassy under tight guard.²⁴⁶

²⁴³ Memcon, Meeting of Vice President with Peruvian Labor Leaders, 2, RNL.

²⁴⁴ Memcon, Meeting of Vice President with Peruvian Labor Leaders, 2, RNL.

²⁴⁵ For the comment, see Memcon, Meeting of Vice President with Peruvian Labor Leaders, 3, RNL.

²⁴⁶ Nixon, *Memoirs*, 233-235; see also, Memorandum of a Telephone Conversation among the Minister-Counselor of the Embassy in Venezuela (Burrows), the Assistant Secretary of State for Inter-American Affairs (Rubottom) in Caracas, and the Deputy Director of the Office of South American Affairs (Sanders) in Washington, May 13, 1958, 2 p.m. in *FRUS, 1958-1960, Volume V, American Republics*, John P. Glennon, Suzanne E. Coffman, and Charles S. Sampson eds. (Washington: United States Government Printing Office: 1991), 226-227.

The junta in charge of the Venezuelan government was understandably embarrassed by their inability to assure their guests' safety, but not so embarrassed that they arrived on time for their call on Nixon at the embassy.²⁴⁷ When the junta and President Larrazabal finally arrived, hat in hand, Nixon dismissed their apologies. If left unchecked, he argued, Communist subversion and violence could engulf the nation.²⁴⁸ Claiming to be too "dispirited" to deal with the situation beyond apologising profusely, President Larrazabal raised Nixon's ire even more.²⁴⁹

While Nixon was insulted and incensed by the Venezuelan government's inability to ensure his party's safety, the reaction of the Eisenhower administration, in its preparation for a rescue mission, was altogether more aggressive. The flurry of activity which occurred within the Eisenhower administration in the immediate wake of the Caracas Incident provides important insight into the attitudes of those in the Eisenhower administration. When news of the dispatching of American naval forces to Venezuela was leaked to the press by an unknown source, Venezuelan officials complained to their American counterparts, that such an act might be enough to topple their "shaky" government.²⁵⁰ Meanwhile, John Foster Dulles made several phone calls requesting clarification of the situation in Caracas, and the state of Nixon's safety.²⁵¹ In addition, the president demanded that Venezuelan officials be informed that if there was "any

²⁴⁷ The junta, who made the appointment for 4 p.m. did not arrive until after 5 p.m. See Memo, Call on the Vice President by the Venezuelan Junta of Government, May 13, 1958, 5:15 p.m., Caracas, Venezuela – Reports and Conversations, Box 1, Series 397, Subseries F: 1958 South American Trip, RNPPM RNL.

²⁴⁸ Memo, Call on the Vice President by the Venezuelan Junta of Government, May 13, 1958 RNPPM, RNL.

²⁴⁹ Memo, Call on the Vice President by the Venezuelan Junta of Government, May 13, 1958, RNPPM, RNL.

²⁵⁰ Memcon, Captain Bettinger, Admiral Miller, and William P. Snow, 10:55PM, May 13, 1958, 1-2, Caracas, Venezuela – Report and Conversations, Box 1, Series 397, Subseries F: 1958 South American Trip, RNPPM RNL.

²⁵¹ Memo, Telephone Call from Senator Knowland, Tuesday, May 13, 1958, 4:24 p.m., Box 13, Telephone Calls Series, John Foster Dulles, Papers, 1951-1959, DDEL; Memcon, Telephone Call to General Goodpaster (Hagerty on too), 5:14pm, May 13, 1958, Box 13, Telephone Calls Series, John Foster Dulles, Papers, 1951-1959, DDEL.

doubt” about Nixon’s safety or the ability of the Venezuelans to assure it, Eisenhower expected the Venezuelans to request assistance from America.²⁵²

The forces prepared by the U.S. to rescue Richard Nixon were more than sufficient to carry out the mission. On May 13, Admiral Arleigh Burke put in motion a plan for at least five hundred marines as well as relevant naval transport to be dispatched towards Venezuela.²⁵³ The movement of the five hundred marines involved twenty-two C-130 troop carrier planes, and an additional ten C-124 Globemaster planes transported jeeps, helicopters, and “other airborne combat equipment” to the staging base, Ramey Air Force Base, in Puerto Rico.²⁵⁴ If these forces proved inadequate or were in need of reinforcements, more troops and the materiel necessary to make them combat operational were on standby at the same base, while other troops were prepped at Guantanamo Bay.²⁵⁵

These additional forces indicate that the Eisenhower administration’s military was preparing for the possibility of ground combat, as reinforcements would be unnecessary unless resistance was met or casualties experienced.²⁵⁶ The fact that the U.S. Air Force was prepared for what could have been either an aggressive show of military force or an actual bombing run

²⁵² Memo, Special Assistant to the Secretary of State J.N. Greene Jr. to John Foster Dulles, May 13, 1958, Box 13, Telephone Calls Series, John Foster Dulles, Papers, 1951-1959, DDEL.

²⁵³ Memcon, Telephone Conversation Between Captain Kefauver, U.S. Navy, and the Deputy Director of the Office of South American Affairs, Washington, May 13, 1958, 3 p.m., *FRUS, 1958-1960*, Volume V, *American Republics*, 228-229; John Foster Dulles also confirmed such tactics were in play. See Telephone Call from Senator Knowland, Tuesday, May 13, 1958, 4:24 p.m., Box 13, Telephone Calls Series, John Foster Dulles, Papers, 1951-1959, DDEL.

²⁵⁴ Memo, Colonel Glen W. Clark to Major James D. Hughes, September 15, 1958, 1-2, South American Trip, Box 9, Series 325, Executive Branch File, RNVPC, RNL.

²⁵⁵ I presume here that the additional forty-eight C-130s and twenty-six additional C-124s on standby were capable of holding and transporting roughly the same amount of men and materiel, meaning possibly fifteen hundred troops, if not more, were being readied. See Memo, Hughes to Clark, September 15, 1958, 1-2, RNVPC, RNL. For troops being readied at Guantanamo see Memo, General Goodpaster to General Twining, May 13, 1958, Box 8, Telephone Calls Series, John Foster Dulles, Papers, 1951-1959, DDEL.

²⁵⁶ One is also reminded that overthrowing Arbenz in Guatemala required little more than one thousand troops, and while the two situations are certainly different, there were striking similarities. See Kryzanek, *U.S.-Latin American Relations*, 57.

on the capital city of a foreign nation displays the extent of power the Eisenhower administration was willing to exercise. The more offensive aircraft included twelve F-100 Super Sabres, a fighter-bomber on standby “for immediate combat deployment,” and forty-five of the Strategic Air Command’s (SAC) B-47 bombers, all readied at Myrtle Beach Air Force Base for a “show-of-force demonstration or...whatever the need required.”²⁵⁷ Such aircraft could literally bomb Caraquenians should they attempt to assault Nixon again, but could also simply demonstrate this ability with a fly-over.

While obviously not sympathetic to the protestors who had attacked him, Nixon’s analysis of the situation in Venezuela pointed out that such aggressive actions by the Eisenhower administration would only play into the Communists’ hands. Nixon did not forgive the actions of the protestors who had attacked his party, but his explanation for the attacks illustrated his growing ability to distinguish between Communism and anti-Americanism. After returning to the United States, Nixon argued that Communists had organized and led the protests which attacked him in Caracas. According to Nixon, certain nations were “naïve” to the effects of Communist influence.²⁵⁸ In the vice president’s view, however, the vast majority of the protestors he encountered in Venezuela were not rabid Communists but rather angry citizens with legitimate political and economic grievances with the United States. An argument made by Nixon well after the mission nicely summarised how he explained the Caracas Incident: “the Communists spearheaded the attack. But you have to remember they had a lot of willing spear-carriers.”²⁵⁹

²⁵⁷ Memo, Clark to Hughes, September 15, 1958, 1-2, RNVPC, RNL. For a brief overview of the F-100’s role as a fighter-bomber see Thomas E. Gardner, *F-100 Super Sabre at War* (St. Paul: Zenith Press, 2007), 98.

²⁵⁸ Minutes of Cabinet Meeting, May 16, 1958, 9:05AM-9:50AM, 2, Box 11, Cabinet Series, Dwight D. Eisenhower, Papers as President 1953-1961, AWF, DDEL.

²⁵⁹ Richard Nixon, *The Challenges We Face* (New York: McGraw and Hill Book Company Incorporated, 1960), 92-93.

Reporting to members of the NSC, Nixon explained that the Venezuelans would “*rather*” [emphasis mine] be friends with America than Russia, but that American policies made this difficult.²⁶⁰ In particular, he emphasised problematic American policies such as the harbouring of “refugee dictators” who had fled Latin America and found a safe haven in the U.S, and American price controls on commodities.²⁶¹ While Nixon in no way discounted the Communist influence in the protests, the fact that he admitted American fault and argued that without different policies such anti-American sentiments would only grow, displays yet again Nixon’s developing sophistication as a statesman.

Nixon contended that problematic political and economic policies on the part of the Eisenhower administration were more to blame for anti-American sentiment than Communist overtures. The vice president argued that the Eisenhower administration should strive to raise the standard of living of the general populace, or “masses,” of Latin America.²⁶² One of Nixon’s criticisms of the Eisenhower’s foreign policies in Latin America focused on the tendency within the administration to ignore the impact of policies, such as restrictions on crude oil, which solely benefitted Americans and Latin American elites.²⁶³ The vice president took this criticism a step further when he argued that the U.S. ought to take actions which at least did not portray the Eisenhower administration as focusing American resources on the prosperity of the “privileged” in Latin America.²⁶⁴ Nixon made a point of explaining to Secretary of Agriculture Ezra Taft Benson that American businessmen in Latin America did very little to “mingle” with Latin

²⁶⁰ Minutes of Cabinet Meeting, May 16, 1958, 2, DDEL.

²⁶¹ Minutes of Cabinet Meeting, May 16, 1958, 1-2, DDEL.

²⁶² Minutes of Cabinet Meeting, May 16, 1958, 2, DDEL.

²⁶³ Minutes of Cabinet Meeting, May 16, 1958, 2, DDEL.

²⁶⁴ Minutes of Cabinet Meeting, May 16, 2, DDEL.

Americans.²⁶⁵ Thus, Nixon was clearly keen on pointing out flaws in American economic policies in Latin America at the time of his mission.²⁶⁶

Nixon also parroted the criticisms made by the Peruvian labour leaders he had met with during his trip. When the vice president addressed the National Security Council after returning from his mission, on May 16, 1958, he argued that “various economic policies such as...tariffs, and proposed legislation on lead, zinc, copper, etc.” needed to be addressed but were not as important as other political policies such as supporting dictators on the continent.²⁶⁷

While Nixon acknowledged that supporting such dictators as Jimenez while they were in power was better than Communist rule, he had also clearly caught on to the fact that many Latin Americans had been alienated and antagonised as a result of Eisenhower’s supporting dictators.²⁶⁸ It is significant that Nixon’s suggestion to support democratically elected governments in Latin America wherever possible, and support dictators only when necessary, was not only a novel idea but one that met with much resistance from John Foster Dulles and his brother.²⁶⁹

The Dulles brothers both disagreed with Nixon’s interpretations of the problems in Latin America, but to varying degrees and for different reasons. Allen Dulles, head of the C.I.A. and brother of John Foster Dulles, made several remarks in regards to the aftermath of Nixon’s

²⁶⁵ Minutes of Cabinet Meeting, May 16, 2, DDEL.

²⁶⁶ Nixon had evidence of this from his trip and from his briefing materials in that one of his briefings dealt with the restrictions the Eisenhower administration had placed on Venezuelan crude oil. This briefing argued that American restrictions were not having “any substantial adverse impact” on the Venezuelan petroleum industry despite Venezuelan complaints of the detrimental effect it was having on the nation’s economy. See Position Paper: U.S. Restrictions on Imports of Crude Oil, 1-2, South American Trip – Briefing Book 1 of 3, Box 9, Series 325, Executive Branch File, RNVPC, RNL

²⁶⁷ Minutes of Cabinet Meeting, May 16, 1958, 1, DDEL.

²⁶⁸ Schmitz, *Thank God They’re on Our Side*, 184; Kryzaneck, *U.S.-Latin American Relations*, 56-57.

²⁶⁹ Stephen G. Rabe, “Dulles, Latin America and Cold War Anticommunism,” in *John Foster Dulles and the Diplomacy of the Cold War*, ed. Richard H. Immerman (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990), 182-183.

mission which demonstrated a refusal to accept the more complex situation proposed by Nixon. Allen Dulles stated that the governments of Venezuela and Peru had awoken “at last, to the extent of the Communist menace.”²⁷⁰ Allen Dulles confirmed that the attacks on Nixon had almost toppled the Venezuelan government, as internal strife over the embarrassment led military leaders to question the abilities of the ruling junta.²⁷¹ Most interesting is that despite the fact that the information Dulles presented to the NSC showed that of the close to one hundred protestors arrested by Venezuelan authorities in connection with the protests, only twelve were Communists, Dulles still believed Communist actions were at the heart of the riot.²⁷² Still, Allen Dulles recognised that the Communist instigators were taking advantage of an existing feeling of anger among Latin Americans.²⁷³

In contrast to Nixon, Secretary Dulles was uncomfortable with the idea that the Eisenhower administration might have to alter its support of dictatorships in Latin America. When the possibility of withholding support from dictators was raised, John Foster Dulles attempted to bog down policy changes with semantics. The secretary of state contended that Nixon’s suggestion that the Eisenhower administration should attempt to support democracy in the lower and middle classes was “complicated.”²⁷⁴ If given enough power, Dulles argued, the lower classes “will bring in more of a dictatorship of the masses.”²⁷⁵ The secretary also stated privately that it was “presumptuous” of Nixon to “think he has all the answers” after being in

²⁷⁰ Memo, Discussion at the 366th Meeting of the National Security Council, Thursday, May 22, 1958, 1-2, Box 10, NSC Series, AWF, DDEL.

²⁷¹ Memo, Discussion at the 366th Meeting of the National Security Council, May 22, 1958, 2, DDEL.

²⁷² Memo, Discussion at the 366th Meeting of the National Security Council, May 22, 1958, 2, DDEL.

²⁷³ Schmitz, *Thank God They’re on Our Side*, 210-211.

²⁷⁴ Minutes of Cabinet Meeting, May 16, 1958, 2, DDEL.

²⁷⁵ Minutes of Cabinet Meeting, May 16, 1958, 2, DDEL.

Latin America for only a “couple of days.”²⁷⁶ As well, Dulles told Nixon directly that there were a “whole series of gradations” of dictators, apparently meaning that some were less problematic for the U.S. to deal with than others.²⁷⁷ In the end, the secretary of state was not the victor in this contest, as Eisenhower eventually shifted the administration’s policies in Latin America to reflect Nixon’s recommendations more than Dulles’s.²⁷⁸ Based on Nixon’s advice, the Eisenhower administration worked not only to increase aid to Latin American countries such as Venezuela, but also to work with institutions such as the World Bank to increase the availability of loans.²⁷⁹

While Nixon’s economic recommendations are important, another aspect of his recommendations display a form of continuity from previous missions, and this is important as regards his development as a statesman. At the conclusion of Nixon’s missions to both Africa and Latin America, he strongly supported student exchange programs. After being accosted multiple times by students during his Latin America mission it is perhaps not surprising that Nixon spoke on the need for greater exchanges. That he argued such student exchanges should at a minimum be doubled shows the premium he placed on such programs.²⁸⁰ Whether the vice president believed that exposure to American culture would convince anti-American or Communist students to change their minds, or that sending more American students to such nations would create goodwill among their citizens, or that expanding such programs would be good publicity, or some combination of these, are valid questions. However, it is more important

²⁷⁶ Telephone Conversation with Gov. Herter, May 18, 1958, c. 10 a.m., Box 8, Telephone Calls Series, John Foster Dulles, Papers, 1951-1959, DDEL.

²⁷⁷ Telephone Call to the Vice President, Monday, May 19, 1958, 11:25 a.m., Box 8, Telephone Calls Series, John Foster Dulles, Papers, 1951-1959, DDEL.

²⁷⁸ Rabe, “Dulles, Latin American and Cold War Anticommunism,” 182.

²⁷⁹ Zahniser and Weis, “A Diplomatic Pearl Harbor?” 188.

²⁸⁰ Minutes of Cabinet Meeting, May 16, 1958, 2, DDEL.

here to note that by 1958, Richard Nixon was espousing a cultural means to achieve American ends in the Cold War.

From reluctantly accepting the Latin American mission to becoming a critic of the problems with the Eisenhower administration's policies in Latin America over the course of a few months, Nixon's interest in Latin American matters obviously fluctuated. When labour officials in Peru complained to Nixon of unfair American economic practices, or when he encountered students, protestors, and would-be assassins, all accusing the Eisenhower administration of supporting tyrannical dictators, Nixon made the decision to not simply dismiss these problems as Communist-inspired subversion. The U.S.'s near invasion of Venezuela, which came after the attack on Nixon, beyond irritating the vice president, provided more evidence that the Eisenhower administration was not paying enough attention to the repercussions of its actions and policies in Latin America.²⁸¹

By 1958, Nixon was comfortable placing blame on the Eisenhower administration for foreign policy shortfalls. The vice president pointed out that if, in attempting to fulfill the New Look's objective of defending America and the non-Communist world's "free institutions and fundamental values," the administration was willing to enact policies which sacrificed or subjugated the free institutions and fundamental values of Latin American nations, then those policies needed to be changed.²⁸² While still clearly working to defeat Communism, Nixon argued in favour of more nuanced economic and political foreign policies in Latin America. In

²⁸¹ Previous to his mission but after the research he conducted for it, Nixon characterised the junta's hold on their power as "shaky." Thus, the Eisenhower administration's demand that the junta openly ask for American intervention likely would have shattered that already tenuous hold. See Nixon, *Six Crises*, 185.

²⁸² "NSC 162/2," *FRUS: National Security Affairs*, 578.

1959, Nixon travelled to the Soviet Union, where his development and sophistication as a statesman were displayed and tested.

Chapter Four: The Soviet Union 1959

Bringing the Cold War Home

In the summer of 1959, Richard Nixon travelled to the Soviet Union on a mission designed to display American culture and society to Soviet citizens. While the New Look did not make specific mention of the cultural exchanges Nixon often pushed for, or exhibitions of the type Nixon travelled to the U.S.S.R. to promote, the policy did endorse taking “overt and covert measures to discredit Soviet prestige.”²⁸³ Exchanges, exhibitions, and other such programs became yet another battleground in the propaganda and cultural struggle between the U.S. and U.S.S.R. The importance placed on these programs should not be underestimated, as beyond their use to “further international understanding,” the exchanges and exhibitions were potent weapons of propaganda.²⁸⁴

The 1959 American National Exhibition (ANE) in Moscow was the U.S. response to the Soviet National Exhibition in New York that same year. A keen awareness of the possible propaganda gains, both at home and abroad, contributed to the now famous “Kitchen Debate” between Richard Nixon and Nikita Khrushchev at the ANE. While this squabble is the most well-known event of Nixon’s mission, it was only one, very public, indicator of the intense planning, preparation, and power-jockeying that would occur before, during, and after the mission. The vice president’s mission to the Soviet Union was an opportunity to initiate, advance, resolve, and muddle talks on a variety of topics including nuclear arms, cultural exchanges, technology, and espionage.

²⁸³ “NSC 162/2,” *FRUS: National Security Affairs*, 595.

²⁸⁴ Eisenhower had begun appropriating “emergency” funds to such programs as early as 1954. See Kenneth Osgood, *Total Cold War: Eisenhower’s Secret Propaganda Battle at Home and Abroad* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2006), 214-215.

Relations between the United States and the Soviet Union in 1959 were, as ever, complex. While tensions continued to rise over the state of Berlin and the two Germanys, Soviet officials such as First Deputy Chairman Anastas Mikoyan toured the United States and publically praised their Cold War rivals.²⁸⁵ Concerns over nuclear weapons also continued to dog both governments and arguments over test-bans, arms control, and other issues remained contentious.²⁸⁶ While the planned meetings and tours of high-level officials point to the appearance of a greater willingness to communicate, both the American and Soviet governments were still quick to distrust the intentions of the other.²⁸⁷

Cold War historians undertaking cultural studies often touch on Nixon's 1959 mission to the Soviet Union. Both Yale Richmond and Nicholas Cull deal with the vice president's mission, but neither offer in depth analysis.²⁸⁸ Walter Hixson examines the entire mission, exploring the use of the "Kitchen Debate" and other events such as the ANE as propaganda.²⁸⁹ However, Hixson's study is often isolated from consideration of the political context, and of the ANE's implications as an expression of the New Look.²⁹⁰ The debate and the mission have also been portrayed by historians such as Richmond, Marilyn Kushner, and Victor Rosenberg as symbolising a giant leap forward in the erosion of Soviet cultural controls, as events which

²⁸⁵ Rosenberg, *Soviet-American Relations*, 186-189; Dockrill, *Eisenhower's New-Look*, 249-250.

²⁸⁶ Dockrill, *Eisenhower's New-Look*, 250; Nixon, *Six Crises*, 237.

²⁸⁷ Nixon records how John Foster Dulles pointed out that the Soviets would not accept criticism for their actions in Hungary. However, he ignores American intervention in Lebanon and portrays the U-2 incident, in which an American pilot was captured after being shot down whilst spying on the Soviet Union, as simply a pre-text for Khrushchev to rescind an invitation to Eisenhower to visit the Soviet Union. See *Six Crises*, 242-243.

²⁸⁸ Yale Richmond, *Cultural Exchange and the Cold War: Raising the Iron Curtain* (University Park: Pennsylvania University Press, 2003), 9, 133. Nicholas Cull labels the Kitchen Debate a "defining moment in the ideological clash between East and West." However, Cull's focus is the debate's use vis-à-vis the USA. See Nicholas Cull, *The Cold War and the United States Information Agency: American Propaganda and Public Diplomacy, 1945-1989* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 166-167.

²⁸⁹ Walter L. Hixson, *Parting the Curtain: Propaganda, Culture, and the Cold War, 1945-1961* (New York: St Martin's Press, 1997), 177-179; cf. Osgood, *Total Cold War*, 356.

²⁹⁰ Hixson, *Parting the Iron Curtain*, 228.

occurred only after heated domestic debates over art, and as hard fought diplomatic and cultural victories for both the Soviets and Americans.²⁹¹ Thus, by examining both the cultural and political elements involved in the preparation and execution of Nixon's mission, it is possible to understand not only the foreign policy manoeuvres of the Eisenhower administration, but also to more fully understand Nixon's development as a statesman in 1959.

Just before leaving for his mission Nixon had a meeting with Eisenhower on July 22, during which the vice president displayed a significant level of confidence and control, and was shown to have the trust of the president as well. Nixon asked Eisenhower at several points for simple "definitions," such as Eisenhower's definition of "progress," in order to not overstep his mandate and to be more able to communicate to Khrushchev the president's mindset should the opportunity arise.²⁹² At one point during the conversation, Eisenhower directed the vice president to keep the conversations with Soviet officials, "cordial, almost light."²⁹³ However, when Nixon responded that he planned to forcefully debate and counter Khrushchev, the president agreed.²⁹⁴ Indeed, Eisenhower advised Nixon "not to be afraid to talk substantive matters...in his conversations with Khrushchev."²⁹⁵

The vice president was prepared to discuss serious issues with the Soviet leader, but he was also equipped to meet Khrushchev's anticipated boasting with aggressive messages. During

²⁹¹ Yale Richmond, "The 1959 Kitchen Debate (or, how cultural exchanges changed the Soviet Union)," *Russian Life* 52, No. 4 (July/August, 2009), 45-47; Marilyn S. Kushner, "Exhibiting Art at the American National Exhibition in Moscow, 1959 Domestic Politics and Cultural Diplomacy," *Journal of Cold War Studies* 4, No. 1, (Winter 2002), 13-15; Victor Rosenberg, *Soviet-American Relations, 1953-1960: Diplomacy and Cultural Exchange During the Eisenhower Presidency* (Jefferson: McFarland and Company Publishers, 2005), 210-211.

²⁹² Memorandum of Conference with the President, July 22, 1959, 2-3, Box 7, International Trips and Meetings Series, WHO, Office of the Staff Secretary: Records, 1952-1961, DDEL.

²⁹³ Memorandum of Conference with the President, July 22, 1959, 3, DDEL.

²⁹⁴ Memorandum of Conference with the President, July 22, 1959, 3, DDEL.

²⁹⁵ Memorandum of Conference with the President, July 22, 1959, 4, DDEL.

his time in Moscow, Nixon was armed with statements prepared at the order of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. One such statement is indicative of the tone of the others:

Military opinion in the U.S. is divided on the adequacy of its [the U.S.'s] retaliatory power. One group maintains it is entirely adequate to destroy all targets in in the Soviet Union with a large margin for error. The other group feels it is adequate to destroy all those targets 10 times over.²⁹⁶

Other statements included an assurance for the Soviets that while America would not start the next war this did not mean it would not drop the first nuclear bomb, a threat to arm smaller nations with nuclear weapons, and several statements which simply mocked the Soviet Union on the basis of its economy and “low education.”²⁹⁷ Nixon utilising any such statements would very likely have created problems rather than solutions in his arguments with Khrushchev, and the vice president chose not to make use of any of them.

While preparing for his mission to the Soviet Union, the vice president made certain that he had as much information on a multitude of topics as possible. This included background checks of the American personnel that would be accompanying him who he was not familiar with. While some of these checks were requested by Nixon or one of his staff members, others were conducted on the initiative of, and were personally supervised by J. Edgar Hoover, Director of the F.B.I. These reports were often sent directly to Nixon by special messenger.²⁹⁸ The background checks conducted on the personnel accompanying Nixon to the U.S.S.R. not only display the level of concern within the F.B.I. for Communist sympathisers, they also demonstrate

²⁹⁶ These memos, in a kind of “one off” form, were examined by General Cushman and passed on to Nixon, but at the time had yet to be approved by the Joint Chiefs. See Memo, Oliver S. Picher to Colonel Taylor, July 15, 1959, 2, Russian Trip Conversations with Khrushchev, Others, Box 11, Series 325, Executive Branch File, RNPPC, RNL.

²⁹⁷ Memo, Oliver S. Picher to Colonel Taylor, July 15, 1959, 4, 5, 13-15, 18, RNPPC, RNL.

²⁹⁸ Memo, J. Edgar Hoover to Richard Nixon, July 2, 1959, FBI Reports on Personnel for Russian Trip (RN on Plane), Box 11, Series 325, Executive Branch File, RNPPC, RNL.

the extents to which Nixon, through his enlistment of Hoover's resources, was willing to go in order to prepare for his mission.

Hoover brought personal and often embarrassing moments from the past to Nixon's attention. Foy David Kohler, a current Deputy Assistant Secretary for European Affairs and former director of the Voice of America program, was portrayed by Hoover as a bumbling fool, if not a Communist sympathiser, due to Kohler's arrest for driving while intoxicated in 1952, after which Kohler's also intoxicated wife made several pro-Soviet comments.²⁹⁹ While some reports vindicated certain personnel, other personnel, such as Leonard J. Hankin, were not as fortunate. Leonard Hankin had a history of left-leaning associations which were suspicious enough for Hoover to make personal comments to Nixon via letters, wherein Hoover provided interpretation of the F.B.I.'s information arguing for a connection between Hankin and problems or "controversy" attached to the mission.³⁰⁰

Hoover's attempts to sway the vice president's opinion are important more for what they indicate about the importance attached to Nixon's mission than what they reveal about Hoover's tactics. Hoover informed Nixon that Robert Dowling, the man essentially in charge of the city of New York's representation at the ANE, had had a romantic relationship with a "second secretary at the Soviet Embassy," was once passed over for a position due to political reasons, and thought John Foster Dulles was "stupid," before finally informing Nixon that Dowling had also conducted information exchanges with Soviets in Moscow, and thus considered Dowling unfit to

²⁹⁹ FBI Memorandum of Data on Foy David Kohler, July 2, 1959, 1, FBI Reports on Personnel for Russian Trip (RN on Plane), Box 11, Series 325, Executive Branch File, RNPPC, RNL.

³⁰⁰ John Austin Armitage and Richard Townsend Davies were cleared of the majority of suspicion by Hoover's analysis, but Leonard J. Hankin, who was the Executive Director of the Fashion Industry Presentation for the ANE, was viewed by Hoover as very suspicious due to his history of Communist leanings. See FBI Memorandum of Data on John Austin Armitage, July 2, 1959; FBI Memorandum of Data on Richard Townsend Davies, July 2, 1959; Memo, J. Edgar Hoover to Richard Nixon, July 16, 1959, 1-2, FBI Reports on Personnel for Russian Trip (RN on Plane), Box 11, Series 325, Executive Branch File, RNPPC, RNL.

be in close proximity to Nixon.³⁰¹ Whatever Hoover's biases were, he was attempting to rid the American mission of those who were or could be manipulated by Soviet agents. Nixon did follow up on at least one of the personnel that Hoover provided information on, but it was not the man with the most glaring Communist sympathies.³⁰²

Nixon requested more information on Hankin rather than Dowling. This information, essentially a defence of Hankin provided by the U.S.I.A.'s deputy director, Abbott Washburn, mostly defended Hankin, but was labelled as "crap" by General Robert E. Cushman, Nixon's Assistant for National Security Affairs.³⁰³ Since Hankin had been investigated and trained by the C.I.A.'s predecessor, the Office of Strategic Services (O.S.S.), the U.S.I.A. believed Hankin could not have hidden Communist sympathies. However, Cushman argued that "many an OSS [sic] was a left wing pinko and worse, I've known of some."³⁰⁴ Still, it is interesting that while Hoover's focus was on rooting out Communist sympathisers from Nixon's mission, the vice president's focus was on removing possible sources of controversy, such as that which had surrounded some of the artists involved in the art exhibit.³⁰⁵

One of the difficulties in Nixon's mission to the Soviet Union was that while Nixon's meeting with Khrushchev was certain to be the highlight for the vice president, the mission itself occurred during the American National Exhibition, which opened in Moscow on July 24, 1959. As the exhibition was funded by the U.S. government, Nixon was not in direct control of the

³⁰¹ Dowling had at least three "weak spots" that Soviet agents might exploit. See Memo, J. Edgar Hoover to Richard Nixon, FBI Memorandum of Data on Robert W. Dowling, July 6, 1959, 1-3, FBI Reports on Personnel for Russian Trip (RN on Plane), Box 11, Series 325, Executive Branch File, RNPPC, RNL.

³⁰² While Hoover continued to supply Nixon information on Dowling, it was Hankin who concerned Nixon and his staff the most, as Nixon requested more information on Hankin's role. See Memo, Security Questions Regarding Leonard J. Hankin, July 20, 1959, 2, FBI Reports on Personnel for Russian Trip (RN on Plane), Box 11, Series 325, Executive Branch File, RNPPC, RNL.

³⁰³ Margin of Memo, Security Questions Regarding Leonard J. Hankin, July 20, 1959, 2, RNPPC, RNL.

³⁰⁴ Margin of Memo, Security Questions Regarding Leonard J. Hankin, July 20, 1959, 2, RNPPC, RNL.

³⁰⁵ Memo, J. Edgar Hoover to Richard Nixon, July 16, 1959, 2, RNPPC, RNL.

contents of the Exhibition. However, the vice president did attempt to exert some control over what was exhibited. A section of the ANE was devoted to examples of American art. Whereas much of the ANE was devoted to domestic technology and the material advantages of capitalism, and was thus less scrutinized by government officials for its deeper meaning, the art that had been sent for display at the exhibition was not as easily accepted. Great controversy arose in the lead-up to the opening of the exhibition when it was found that at least twenty-two of the sixty-seven artists whose pieces would be displayed had strong connections with Communism.³⁰⁶ What began as a debate over the soundness of including art crafted by artists with Communist leanings quickly escalated into an argument regarding which kind of art was best suited to thwart the Communists' drive to destroy American culture.³⁰⁷

During a telephone conversation with the new Secretary of State, Christian A. Herter, Nixon argued that the entire art exhibit should be withdrawn from the ANE. The reasons he gave to Herter hinted that the vice president was uncomfortable labelling the proposed works "typical" of American art.³⁰⁸ Nixon indicated that he wanted avoid the questions he anticipated would result from displaying such art.³⁰⁹ Herter, however, convinced the vice president, that the U.S. government should not be "in the business" of censoring art.³¹⁰ In the end, the art exhibit went ahead as planned with minor additions rather than removals. Nonetheless, the debate demonstrates the sensitivity felt by both Nixon and the American government concerning the inherent hazards of any and all things Communist. Considered together with Nixon's interactions with Hoover and the F.B.I., the level of involvement Nixon took in this mission

³⁰⁶ Kushner, "Exhibiting Art," 10-11.

³⁰⁷ Kushner, "Exhibiting Art," 15.

³⁰⁸ Richard M. Nixon to Christian A. Herter, June 25, 1959, Box 12, CAH Telephone Calls, Christian A. Herter Papers, DDEL.

³⁰⁹ Nixon to Herter, June 25, 1959, DDEL.

³¹⁰ Nixon to Herter, June 25, 1959, DDEL.

becomes clear; the vice president was not only researching various topics, but was also attempting to remove issues and people which might create controversy in America or serve as an easy target for his Soviet hosts to pick up on, since any aspect of the ANE which might praise the Soviet system, or undermine the American one, would be a complication.

Unfortunately for Nixon, the U.S. Congress passed the Captive Nations Proclamation/Resolution and President Eisenhower signed it into law in July 1959. The Captive Nations Proclamation, and Captive Nations Week, which Eisenhower made an annual observance starting on July 17, less than a week before Nixon departed for Moscow on July 22, called for Americans to study the “plight” of those under Soviet control and to pray for those people to achieve freedom.³¹¹ This resolution caused enough problems for Nixon in dealing with Soviet officials that Ambassador Llewellyn Thompson cited it as specifically “hampering” the vice president’s progress, arguing that Nixon had to overcome such challenges before addressing more pertinent issues.³¹² The president’s brother Milton, a member of the President's Advisory Committee on Government Organization and a member of the National Advisory Committee on Inter-American Affairs, who Dwight Eisenhower trusted a great deal, argued in a report that the Captive Nations Resolution had a wholly negative effect in the Soviet Union both in regards to Soviet citizens and officials.³¹³ For his part, Nixon complained directly to Eisenhower that every

³¹¹ “President Proclaims Captive Nations Week” *New York Times*, July 18, 1959, 2. For Nixon linking his cool welcome in Moscow to the Captive Nations Resolution, see Nixon, *Memoirs*, 254-255.

³¹² Telegram, Llewellyn Thompson to Christian Herter, August 3, 1959, Russian Trip Reports, Series 325 Executive Branch File, RNPPC, RNL.

³¹³ For one example of Milton being trusted by Ike, in the instance of the mission to Russia, see Rosenberg, *Soviet-American Relations, 1953-1960*, 202. For Milton arguing about the negative impact of the Captive Nations Resolution, see Comments by Milton S. Eisenhower on the effect of Vice President Nixon’s mission to the Soviet Union and Poland, August, 7, 1959, 4, Russian Trip, Trip Reports, Box 12, Series 325 Executive Branch File, RNPPC, RNL.

meeting he had with Soviet officials involved some form of grievance on the part of the Soviets regarding the Captive Nations Resolution.³¹⁴

Khrushchev and Soviet officials came up with many ways to display their displeasure with the Resolution. Other than the very public complaint Khrushchev made to Nixon on July 24 at the ANE, where Khrushchev literally grabbed a Soviet worker and demanded of Nixon, “does this man look like a slave?,” Khrushchev kept most of his displeasure with the Captive Nations Resolution relegated to more private discussions with Nixon.³¹⁵ The most dramatic display came early on July 26, when during a two and a half-hour motor-boat tour of the Moscow River, Khrushchev stopped on eight occasions to gather up people on the shore of the river, apparently sunbathers and leisure-seekers, in order to show Nixon the “captive peoples.”³¹⁶ Nixon later claimed that this was an elaborate set-up for Khrushchev to “make propaganda,” since that section of the river area was reserved for higher-ranking party members.³¹⁷ Whether or not Nixon knew the sunbathers were simply a ploy by Khrushchev is not as important as the fact that Khrushchev and Soviet officials took the time to prepare for such a seemingly spontaneous display.³¹⁸

First Deputy Chairman Anastas Mikoyan conveyed most clearly how the Soviets felt about the Captive Nations Resolution. In a conversation with Nixon on July 28, 1959, Mikoyan expressed confusion as to why the Resolution would be passed just prior to Nixon’s mission, as

³¹⁴ Telegram, Richard Nixon to Dwight Eisenhower via Christian Herter, July 31, 1959, 7pm, Moscow, 1-2, Reports to President by RN, Box 12, Series 325 Executive Branch File, RNPPC, RNL.

³¹⁵ Conversation between Premier Khrushchev and Mr. Nixon (Recorded on Video Tape), July 24, 1959, 2, Russia Trip, Box 1, Series 411, RNPPC, RNL

³¹⁶ Telegram, Richard Nixon to Dwight Eisenhower, July 26, 1959, 8:10pm, Moscow, 1, Box 7, International Trips and Meetings Series, WHO, Office of the Staff Secretary: Records, 1952-1961, DDEL.

³¹⁷ Nixon, *Memoirs*, 259.

³¹⁸ Rosenberg, *Soviet-American Relations, 1953-1960*, 206.

that would seem “designed to worsen the Vice President’s reception here.”³¹⁹ The Soviets were offended, but also confused as to why the American government would seemingly intentionally sabotage a diplomatic mission.

Nixon’s response was rather clumsy in that he argued that the U.S. Congress was simply vocalising the desire of Americans with ethnic backgrounds in Soviet territories to pray for those still under Soviet rule, and he also pointed out that Eisenhower’s signed Resolution differed from Congress’s in that the president had left out specific references to the Soviet Union.³²⁰ Nixon finally admitted that if he, Eisenhower, or even Milton Eisenhower, had had the power to keep Congress from passing the Captive Nations Resolution, they would have done so.³²¹ Rather than being able to devote more of his limited time with Khrushchev to topics such as trade, technology, cultural exchanges, nuclear weapons, and so on, Nixon was forced time and again to address the Captive Nations Resolution.

During Nixon’s mission, Khrushchev often displayed an acute sensitivity to criticism of the Soviet Union and Communism. This sensitivity was on display during the Kitchen Debate, which occurred on July 24, 1959. The Kitchen Debate, the name given to an argument which arose during Khrushchev’s tour of the American exhibits with Nixon, grants a snap-shot of some the anxieties the Soviet Union and the United States felt towards one another at the time. The Kitchen Debate served as an opportunity for Khrushchev and Nixon to air concerns over one another’s policies and actions. That these series of arguments were spontaneous was evident throughout the exchange, as both Nixon and Khrushchev were often taken off guard by their

³¹⁹ Memcon, Anastas Mikoyan and Richard Nixon, July 28, 1959, 1, Box 7, International Trips and Meetings Series, WHO, Office of the Staff Secretary: Records, 1952-1961, DDEL.

³²⁰ Memcon, Vice President’s Kremlin Conversation with Khrushchev, July 24, 1959, 2, Russian Trip Conversations with Khrushchev, Others, Box 11, Series 325, Executive Branch File, RNPPC, RNL.

³²¹ Memcon, Vice President’s Kremlin Conversation with Khrushchev, July 24, 1959, 3, RNPPC, RNL.

rival's points or questions.³²² Walter Hixson has pointed out that both men undertook a great deal of preparation and research in anticipation for their meeting. However, Hixson's contention that the Kitchen Debate and related public arguments between the two were "not as spontaneous as they appeared," is problematic.³²³ The Kitchen Debate was quite spontaneous, as the heated arguments between Khrushchev and Nixon shocked onlookers and members of both Nixon and Khrushchev's retinue.³²⁴ This spontaneity meant that occasional uneasiness or insecurity showed through each man's comments.

The Soviet desire to match and exceed the United States in all matters, from the space race to consumer goods, was expressed by Khrushchev several times during his arguments with Nixon. Responding to Nixon's praise of the "typical American home," which included many amenities unavailable in the Soviet Union, Khrushchev alternately claimed during their conversation that the U.S.S.R. already possessed similar technology, or that in a few years they would attain it, improve upon it, and then surpass the Americans.³²⁵ These were not claims that Khrushchev made simply to placate or appeal to Soviet audiences, as he made the same claims to American audiences two months later.³²⁶ The Soviets were aware that in many areas they were

³²² Nixon would answer '150 years' to Khrushchev's question of how long America had been a nation, incorrect by 33 years, an error Nixon would gloss over in his memoirs. For the original see Conversation between Premier Khrushchev and Mr. Nixon (Recorded on Video Tape), July 24, 1959, 3-4, RNPPC, RNL. For Nixon correcting his error without acknowledging it, see Nixon, *Memoirs*, 256. Conversely, when Nixon pointed out that thefts occurred even in the Soviet Union, Khrushchev refused to address the allegation. See Rosenberg, *Soviet-American Relations, 1953-1960*, 204.

³²³ Hixson, *Parting the Curtain*, 176.

³²⁴ Hixson, *Parting the Curtain*, 179-180.

³²⁵ Khrushchev would argue such a point about washing machines, rockets, and the general Capitalism vs. Communism struggle. See Speeches and Statements of the Vice President of the United States Richard Nixon in Connection with his visit to the Soviet Union and Poland, 9, Ideas and Suggestions, Box 1, Series 407, RNPPC, RNL.

³²⁶ For example, Khrushchev used an analogy about train whistles to make this same point at a luncheon at Pittsburgh University. See Colourful Khrushchev Quotations, Khrushchev Quotes, September 24, 1959, Box 1, Series 409, RNPPC, RNL.

not as advanced as the Americans, but they contended that the U.S.S. R. would soon meet and exceed the U.S. in these areas.

During the Kitchen Debate, Nixon made a challenge to Khrushchev which expanded the scope of the Cold War. Nixon called for Khrushchev and the Soviet Union to compete with America on “the relative merits of washing machines” rather than rockets. This proposal served to display the Eisenhower administration’s desire for peaceful competition with the U.S.S.R.³²⁷ The brilliance of this seemingly benign challenge lies in that it dared the Soviets to not just keep up with America’s military might, but to attempt to maintain similar standards of living, comfort and consumerism. Indeed, while neither an American nor Soviet citizen would likely boast over their nation’s washing machine advancements, an important factor should be kept in mind. Nixon’s challenge was designed to not just discredit Soviet prestige but also to inform the Soviet citizens of the freedoms and comforts available to the Americans about to be “passed and waved goodbye to” by the Soviets.³²⁸ With this challenge Nixon placed military and consumer achievements on a similar plane; he argued that rocket technology and home appliance technology were both viable areas of competition. Thus, with this challenge, Nixon brought the Cold War home.

Still, both Nixon and Khrushchev usually stuck to their respective governments’ agendas, such as the Eisenhower administration’s desire to have greater cultural and psychological access to Soviet citizens, and in Nixon’s case this meant forcefully requesting, and arguing a need for, fewer restrictions on the flow of information and culture to and from the Soviet Union. At several points during his mission, Nixon voiced concerns which echoed the desire of Eisenhower

³²⁷ Speeches and Statements of the Vice President of the United States Richard Nixon in Connection with his visit to the Soviet Union and Poland, 9, RNPPC, RNL.

³²⁸ Colourful Khrushchev Quotations, September 24, 1959, RNPPC, RNL.

and the U.S.I.A. for greater access to Soviet citizens, or at least, Soviet airwaves. Nixon told Khrushchev during the preamble to the Kitchen Debate that “we should hear more of you on our television, you should hear us more on yours.”³²⁹ In its simplest forms, this request can be viewed as both the Eisenhower administration stressing the value of cultural exchanges, and as Nixon emphasising the difference between America’s strive to spread freedom and the Soviet drive to control it, a key part of Eisenhower’s and the U.S.I.A.’s propaganda.³³⁰ However, this was not simply a reiteration of the greater emphasis being placed on cultural exchange by the Eisenhower administration’s New Look, but also Nixon’s way of expressing that by granting greater exposure to one another’s leaders, tensions would ease as both sides learned more about each other.³³¹ This would mean both nations’ citizens would become more acquainted with the other’s general way of life in a less censored or controlled fashion.

The vice president’s continued support of cultural exchanges before, during, and after the mission to the Soviet Union is indicative of an important trait of Nixon’s statesmanship. After his missions to Africa and Latin America, Nixon called for increased student exchanges and the expansion of cultural exchange programs.³³² In conversations with Khrushchev and during his radio and television addresses, Nixon argued for an expansion of American-Soviet student and cultural exchanges.³³³ However, the vice president’s vision of these exchanges contrasted

³²⁹ Conversation between Premier Khrushchev and Mr. Nixon (Recorded on Video Tape), July 24, 1959, 3, RNPPC, RNL. The value of access to Soviet audiences had been stressed by the U.S.I.A. since at least the inception of Radio Free Europe in 1949, as had the potential for using such access to frustrate and counter Soviet propaganda. See Cull, *The Cold War and the United States Information Agency*, 50, 63-64.

³³⁰ Shawn J. Parry-Giles, “The Eisenhower Administration’s Conceptualization of the USIA: The Development of Overt and Covert Propaganda Strategies,” *Presidential Studies Quarterly* 24, No. 2, Eisenhower and Governance, (Spring, 1994), 272-273.

³³¹ General Robert Cushman stressed this point to Nixon in a report he presented to Nixon. See Special Memorandum #1, July 21, 1959, Ideas and Suggestions, Box 1, Series 407, RNPPC, RNL.

³³² As an example see Vice President’s Report to the President, 10, DDEL.

³³³ Transcript of the Radio-Television Address of the Vice President of the United States, Richard Nixon, Moscow, August 1, 1959, 3-4, Box 892, Dwight D. Eisenhower: Records as President, WHCF, 1953-1961, DDEL.

starkly with the Soviet leader's. Whereas Khrushchev was favourable to increasing the number of medical and federal delegations for such exchanges, Nixon believed "people," meaning well educated and influential citizens, exchanges and cultural exchanges like the ANE ought to be expanded in tandem with an increase in the number of visits by more professional officials of the type mentioned by Khrushchev.³³⁴

According to the vice president, such exchanges would help increase understanding between the Soviets and Americans, and would also help remove fears, misconceptions, and other negative perceptions which might create conflict. Almost certainly unintentionally, Nixon's mission and the surrounding events had this exact effect on Clarence Francis, a special consultant to Eisenhower who accompanied Nixon on the mission. Francis was clearly not impressed by the U.S.S.R. or Russians, labelling the former inefficient and rundown, while critiquing the latter by stating that they would "surely...not win many beauty contests."³³⁵ Regardless, Francis noted having had the exact experience intended by cultural exchanges with the Soviets: "the more I see...the less I fear them."³³⁶

In the case of cultural and student exchanges with the Soviet Union, Nixon suggested that restrictions be made that had heretofore been absent from his recommendations on the topic. The vice president was certainly in favour of expanding exchanges; however, he advised a revamped selection process for sending Americans to the Soviet Union. Nixon argued that many Americans were embarrassing themselves in arguments with the "well indoctrinated" Soviet citizens, since the Americans were not capable of defending the U.S. "system" with the same

³³⁴ Summary Comparison of Arguments and Recommendations made by Khrushchev and Nixon, "Exchanges," Russian Trip Conversations with Khrushchev, Others, Box 11, Series 325, Executive Branch File, RNPPC, RNL.

³³⁵ Notes from Russia Trip – July 1960 [sic], 3, Box 9, Clarence Francis: Papers, 1933-1973, DDEL.

³³⁶ Notes from Russia Trip, 4, DDEL.

sophistication as the Soviets' attacks.³³⁷ Since the Soviets were sending "their best," the Eisenhower administration ought to lay the groundwork to either send Americans more capable of defending the U.S. system or establish a stricter selection process and create briefings for any Americans who could be perceived by the Soviets as representatives.³³⁸ Nixon still supported exchange programs, but also understood that the Soviet Union was a unique challenge for such initiatives.

The idea behind expanded and modified exchange programs was that the Western lifestyle would be more appealing to Soviet citizens than the Soviet lifestyle would be to Westerners, or at least attractive enough to cause them to question the Soviet system. This was supported by information the U.S.I.A. had gathered which found that Soviet citizens enjoyed Western-style entertainment and news programs.³³⁹ That such programs were subject to an elaborate and evolving Soviet jamming system, the U.S.I.A. took as further support that the Voice of America was a potent psychological weapon.³⁴⁰ Nixon was thus aware that unrestricted access to the Soviet audience was difficult to gain, and he noted that the verbatim reprinting of one of his speeches in *Pravda* was a "hopeful sign."³⁴¹ His report to Eisenhower did not mention the decidedly less neutral treatment the rest of his time in the U.S.S.R. received from the same magazine.³⁴² Thus, while aware of the fact that the Soviets were still exercising tight controls over the media within their sphere of influence, Nixon saw it as a positive sign both that the

³³⁷ Undated Memo, Nixon to Eisenhower, 4, August, 1959, Russian Trip: Reports to President by RN, Box 12, Series 325 Executive Branch File, RNPPC, RNL

³³⁸ Undated Memo, Nixon to Eisenhower, 4, August, 1959, RNPPC, RNL

³³⁹ Hixson, *Parting the Curtain*, 50-51.

³⁴⁰ Report, Abbott Washburn to Richard Nixon, "Background on USIA Activities in or to the USSR," July 15, 1959, Ideas and Suggestions, Box 1, Series 407, RNPPC, RNL.

³⁴¹ Undated Memo, Nixon to Eisenhower, 3, August, 1959, RNPPC, RNL.

³⁴² Transcript of Pravda Article, Russia Trip, Box 1, Series 411, RNPPC, RNL.

Soviet authorities had kept their word in reprinting his speech unaltered, and that his refutation of Soviet attacks on American policies was allowed to reach Soviet citizens.

That Nixon was at the very least trying to expand and enhance communication between the U.S. and U.S.S.R. is striking given that his next notes covered a theme that he repeatedly returned to during his mission to the Soviet Union: the idea of a bi-polar world being inherently flawed. Indeed, Nixon had instructed all of his speechwriters beforehand that they were not to write any speeches which contained endorsements of the idea of coexistence.³⁴³ The vice president considered coexistence to be an idea which had a bi-polar world at its core, and thus Nixon argued against it.³⁴⁴ When he gave his radio speech in Moscow on August 1, Nixon labelled coexistence “completely inadequate and negative.”³⁴⁵ Nixon wrote in several notes that the perception of “two worlds” was flawed, that there was “no curtain between them,” meaning the non-Communist and Communist nations.³⁴⁶ Nixon argued that to coexist intrinsically meant that two opposite elements were present, and the vice president argued that there was only “one world,” and that while “peaceful competition...seems like an impossible dream” there was no reason that the differences between the West and the East had to translate to diametric opposition.³⁴⁷

While such speeches point to potentially warmer ties between the superpowers, another of Nixon’s objectives on his mission was not as openly friendly. Part of Nixon’s mission was an

³⁴³ Khrushchev was a firm advocate of peaceful coexistence, but would, two months after Nixon’s visit, admit that Nixon’s idea of peaceful competition was more attractive. However, Khrushchev would note that relations between the U.S. and Soviets would have to “develop into peaceful competition” from peaceful coexistence. See Nikita Khrushchev, “On Peaceful Coexistence,” *Foreign Affairs* 38, No. 1 (October, 1959), 4.

³⁴⁴ Summers, *The Arrogance of Power*, 174.

³⁴⁵ RN’s Copy Moscow Radio/TV Broadcast, August 1, 1959, 13, August 1, 1959 Radio-TV Address Moscow RN’s Reading Copy, Box 1, Series 404, Subseries H: 1959 USSR, RNPPM, RNL.

³⁴⁶ Handwritten notes, Moscow Speech Notes, July, 1959, Box 1, Series 407, Subseries H: 1959 USSR, RNPPM, RNL.

³⁴⁷ RN’s Copy Moscow Radio/TV Broadcast, 13-14, RNPPM, RNL.

to attempt to convince Khrushchev that while America planned to continue to test and build larger nuclear weapons, and establish and expand military bases abroad, such as in Turkey, such actions were not meant as provocations or a prelude to war.³⁴⁸ The bases in Turkey were especially contentious as they had been used by the United States to maintain America's position in the Middle East, often to the vocal protestations of the Soviets.³⁴⁹ Such bases obviously made the Soviets nervous for a number of reasons beyond the simple fact that they allowed the United States to involve themselves in Middle Eastern politics in an often heavy-handed manner.³⁵⁰ The proximity of such bases to the U.S.S.R. also worried the Soviets. Khrushchev argued that since the United States had missile launch sites and military bases within three hundred kilometers from the U.S.S.R., while the U.S.S.R. was "several thousand kilometers" from the United States, continued atomic tests and base expansions would not be conducive to building trust.³⁵¹ Given that Khrushchev accused Nixon of conducting espionage during the vice president's time in the U.S.S.R., building trust was sure to be difficult.

In the course of one conversation on July 26, Nixon utilised Khrushchev's tendency to boast about Soviet military achievements in order to extract useful information which pointed to the Soviet military's technological progress. During a luncheon that day, Khrushchev volunteered specific and intricate details about Soviet rocket and intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) technology; he also volunteered that during a test flight one ICBM had gone 2000

³⁴⁸ Khrushchev brought up the establishing of an American base in Turkey as a provocative action, clearly not convinced of their peaceful purposes, demanding of Nixon 'Why are you there?' See Telegram, Thompson to Herter, July 27, 1959, Moscow, Section Two of Seven, 3, Russian Trip: Reports to President by RN, Box 12, Series 325, Executive Branch File, RNPPC, RNL.

³⁴⁹ Hahn, "Securing the Middle East, 45-46.

³⁵⁰ "Heavy-handed" here refers to Eisenhower's attempts both covertly and in organising Middle Eastern nations, to control and later topple the Syrian government. See Hahn, "Securing the Middle East," 43.

³⁵¹ Khrushchev stated that if the U.S. liquidated all bases surrounding the U.S.S.R., then he would allow American inspection of Soviet missile launch sites. See Memcon, American Officials and Soviet Officials, July 26, 1959, 3:30pm, Government Summer House near Moscow, 2, Russian Trip Conversations with Khrushchev, Others, Box 11, Series 325, Executive Branch File, RNPPC, RNL.

kilometres off course and could have landed in Alaska.³⁵² When Nixon questioned Khrushchev on other weapon-related technology, Khrushchev revealed specific range limitations of certain missiles, claimed the Soviet Union was scaling back and hoping to discontinue building bomber-planes in favour of ICBMs, and asserted that the Soviet Union was building submarines “as fast as they [could].”³⁵³

When Nixon commented that submarines were useful as missile-launching platforms, he managed to pull Khrushchev into revealing a significant weak spot in Soviet defences.

Khrushchev responded by stating that land bases were much better for launching missiles since sub-based missiles had limited range, and that submarines were more useful for disrupting naval functions.³⁵⁴ This revealed a weakness in the Soviets’ technology since the United States was little more than five months away from launching its first nuclear submarine equipped with Polaris missiles. With a range of 1200 nautical miles, the American missiles had the advantages of being fireable with the submarine still submerged and, despite the missile’s less than global reach, the American Navy believed that 45 Polaris submarines would have the capacity to completely destroy Russia.³⁵⁵ While Nixon may or may not have been privy to such details about the Polaris program, he certainly knew of the program’s existence.³⁵⁶

Khrushchev’s willingness to divulge Soviet military technology came to a quick halt when Nixon pressed him on the issue of missile fuel. When Khrushchev claimed to be incapable

³⁵² Khrushchev gave the specific range and deviation of a Soviet ICBM, while also noting that the Soviets would also be able to put a man in orbit with only some difficulty. See Telegram, Thompson to Herter, July 27, 1959, Moscow, Section One of Seven, 1, Russian Trip: Reports to President by RN, Box 12, Series 325, Executive Branch File, RNPPC, RNL.

³⁵³ Thompson to Herter, July 27, 1959, Moscow, Section One of Seven, 3, RNPPC, RNL.

³⁵⁴ Thompson to Herter, July 27, 1959, Moscow, Section One of Seven, 3-4, RNPPC, RNL.

³⁵⁵ Donald Mackenzie and Graham Spinardi, “The Shaping of Nuclear Weapon System Technology: US Fleet Ballistic Missile Guidance and Navigation: I: From Polaris to Poseidon,” *Social Studies of Science* 18, No. 3, (August, 1988), 438-439.

³⁵⁶ Memo, “Implications of a Test Ban,” 1, RNPPC, RNL.

of speaking on the fuel issue, he likely had nothing to boast about, did not know the answer, or, for some reason, felt such information should not be freely discussed. While Khrushchev later confused the location where this conversation with Nixon occurred, and absolved himself of any responsibility for choosing the topic of the conversation, he remembered Nixon's question about solid fuels, and labelled him a "second-rate spy."³⁵⁷ Of course, given that Khrushchev often announced to Nixon and the American party that he was about to "reveal another secret" before doing just that, Nixon's request for information can hardly be considered peculiar.³⁵⁸ Still, Khrushchev's spy comment was not far from the truth at least as concerns the aspect of espionage.

Nixon had been informed via one of his briefings of the lost opportunity when during another of Khrushchev's boasts, this time to Governor Averell Harriman on June 23, Khrushchev had given a monetary value and a date range for the Soviet Union to build enough ICBMs to destroy all American and Western European industrial centres.³⁵⁹ This briefing noted that "unfortunately, Governor Harriman did not follow up with...probing questions," and went on to explain that clarification on exactly what Khrushchev meant when he made such boasts would be very useful to American officials.³⁶⁰ Indeed, a list of issues that American officials desired clarification on vis-à-vis Soviet missile capabilities was given to Nixon; the list included

³⁵⁷ Sergei Khrushchev, *Khrushchev on Khrushchev: An Inside Account on the Man and His Era*, ed. William Taubman (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1990), 225. Khrushchev also stated that Nixon should have depended on "special services" for such information.

³⁵⁸ For several examples see Memcon, American Officials and Soviet Officials, July 26, 1959, 3:30pm, 2, 4, 8, RNPPC, RNL.

³⁵⁹ For the conversation between Harriman and Khrushchev, see Despatch from the Embassy in the Soviet Union to the Department of State, Moscow, June 26, 1959, *FRUS, 1958-1960*, Volume X, Part One, *Eastern Europe Region, Soviet Union, Cyprus*, Glenn W. Lafantasia, Ronald D. Landa, James E. Miller, William F. Sanford, Jr., Sherrill Brown Wells, eds. (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1993), 279. For Nixon being told to investigate what Harriman had not, see Soviet Intercontinental Ballistic Missiles, July 12, 1959, Russian Trip Briefing Papers in Addition to Black Book, Box 11, Series 325, Executive Branch File, RNPPC, RNL.

³⁶⁰ Soviet Intercontinental Ballistic Missiles, July 12, 1959, RNPPC, RNL.

questions on magnitude, production, deployment, and a question specifically about the type of fuel the Soviets were using for their missiles.³⁶¹ Thus, it is quite plausible that Nixon was posing probing questions because the administration believed the information would be useful.

During their conversations, Khrushchev and Nixon often fell into the pattern they displayed in the Kitchen Debate, one man raising an issue and then both arguing at length only abandoning the topic to raise another. However, during these private conversations the two were much more argumentative on specific topics of contention. For example, a topic raised by Khrushchev on July 26 was the issue of elections in Vietnam. Arguments over Berlin and the fate of the two Germanys led to the situation in Vietnam becoming a topic of debate for Nixon and Khrushchev.³⁶² In 1959, the situation in Vietnam was escalating for all sides: the United States had essentially placed Ngo Din Diem in power in South Vietnam and perpetuated the division of the country while the Soviets and Chinese, both providing aid to the North Vietnamese, were becoming more divided on the proper course the communists in North Vietnam should take.³⁶³ When the vice president tried to address Khrushchev's evaluation of the situation in Berlin, Khrushchev shouted over Nixon in order to make the point that Vietnam was a similar situation in that "there were not two correct answers...only one, and the whole world knew that."³⁶⁴ Khrushchev went on to argue that the United States could not offer up Diem's

³⁶¹ Priority Questions on Soviet ICBMs, July 12, 1959, Russian Trip Briefing Papers in Addition to Black Book, Box 11, Series 325, Executive Branch File, RNPPC, RNL.

³⁶² The fate of Germany continued to be a point of conflict between the U.S. and Soviet Union. See William Burr, "Avoiding the Slippery Slope: The Eisenhower Administration and the Berlin Crisis, November 1958-January 1959" *Diplomatic History* 18, No. 2 (Spring 1994), 177-179.

³⁶³ Porter, *Perils of Dominance*, 44-46.

³⁶⁴ Memcon, American Officials and Soviet Officials, July 26, 1959, 3:30pm, 11, RNPPC, RNL.

refusal to hold elections in Vietnam as the reason for the U.S.'s opposition to elections since "everybody knew the West pulled the strings on him."³⁶⁵

The vice president's response to these criticisms was equally revealing of Nixon's opinions on the situation in Vietnam in 1959. Interesting here is that Nixon responded by asking Khrushchev if North Vietnam's strings were being pulled by "the people," hinting that the United States believed Ho Chi Minh to be a puppet of the Soviets and Chinese.³⁶⁶ Nixon also argued that the central reason elections had not been held in Vietnam was because of the "impossible conditions created there by the Communists."³⁶⁷ Indeed, both the U.S. and Soviet Union suspected the other of controlling the situation on the respective sides of the Vietnam border, whereas in truth, both the U.S. and U.S.S.R. had limited success in directing and controlling the South and North Vietnamese leaders.³⁶⁸

Nixon's mission to the U.S.S.R. then, was much more than an ideological clash between American and Soviet perspectives, an opportunity for the vice president to gain exposure, or yet another goodwill mission. The mission was certainly all of these things, but when one considers the extent to which Nixon displayed his development as a statesman, it is obvious that the mission was also the culmination of a great deal of preparation for Nixon from the beginning of his vice presidency. From the attempts at removing the art exhibit to the exhaustive background checks on those who would be close to him during the mission, Nixon displayed a strong desire for control over, and knowledge of, his surroundings. During his multiple arguments with Khrushchev, Nixon listened and countered with consideration, never backing down to

³⁶⁵ Memcon, American Officials and Soviet Officials, July 26, 1959, 3:30pm, 11, RNPPC, RNL.

³⁶⁶ Memcon, American Officials and Soviet Officials, July 26, 1959, 3:30pm, 12, RNPPC, RNL.

³⁶⁷ Telegram, Thompson to Herter, July 27, 1959, Moscow, Section Four of Seven, 1, Russian Trip: Reports to President by RN, Box 12, Series 325, Executive Branch File, RNPPC, RNL.

³⁶⁸ Porter, *Perils of Dominance*, 44, 47; Wintle, *The Vietnam Wars*, 103, 104-108.

Khrushchev. Just as importantly, Nixon also often simply let Khrushchev speak without interruption, jumping in to ask for clarification or to steer Khrushchev towards another topic.

Nixon's development as a statesman did not translate into the vice president becoming a perfect negotiator. In 1959, Nixon suffered from one of the same flaws he had previously criticised the Eisenhower administration for in that he did not recognise the international ramifications of his domestic actions. During Nixon's mission to the Soviet Union, Khrushchev often sardonically questioned whether the Nixon he was speaking to and who was visiting Russia was the same Nixon who made vitriolic anti-Communist speeches in America; the Nixon in Moscow was not the vehement anti-Communist the Soviets had expected.³⁶⁹ Obviously, Nixon could not tell Khrushchev that his domestic anti-Communist speeches to American audiences were political performances any more than the vice president could give a speech to Americans suddenly extolling the virtues of less hardline approaches, without suffering significant backlash and damage. Nixon recognised this, but the best he could manage was to eventually, in 1960, send his then running-mate Henry Cabot Lodge to speak to Khrushchev and tell him not to "pay any attention to the... speeches. Remember, they're just political statements."³⁷⁰

Nixon's mission to the U.S.S.R. served a significant purpose for the Eisenhower administration. The ANE definitively proved that Soviet citizens were not only interested in

³⁶⁹ For one example see Memcon, Vice President's Kremlin Conversation with Khrushchev, July 24, 1959, 2, RNPPC, RNL.

³⁷⁰ Nikita Khrushchev, *Khrushchev Remembers: The Last Testament*, translated by Strobe Talbott (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1974), 489-490. Khrushchev understood such nuances, but due to a personal dislike of Nixon, and a consideration that Nixon would be much less easily manipulated than John F. Kennedy, did what he could to "vote" for Kennedy. See Nikita Khrushchev, *Khrushchev Remembers*, 489-491; Aleksandr Fursenko and Timothy Naftali, *Khrushchev's Cold War: The Inside Story of an American Adversary* (New York: W.W. Norton and Company, 2006), 228-229; Sergei Khrushchev held that his father considered Nixon a crafty politician. See *Khrushchev on Khrushchev*, 225. Nixon argued that Khrushchev did not want to have to deal with a president who would stand up to him, thus his attempts to damage Nixon's campaign. See Nixon, *Memoirs*, 264. Khrushchev argued that he had "voted" for Kennedy with this pseudo-sabotage. See *Khrushchev Remembers*, 491-492.

American culture and lifestyle, but that the New Look's oft-ignored prediction that "popular pressures for consumption goods" could play a prominent role in improving Soviet leaders' attitudes towards the U.S. was credible.³⁷¹ The meetings and confrontations between Nixon and Khrushchev also served as valuable opportunities to gain information on Soviet intentions and sensitivities. However, given the intense efforts to remove any hint of Communist sympathy or leaning from everything involved in the ANE, from the art to those close to Nixon, the anti-Communist sensitivities of the Eisenhower administration were also evident. It is obvious that Nixon too placed a high value on America's ability to win the battle on the cultural field of the Cold War.

Nixon's mission to the Soviet Union, along with the significant involvement from so many branches of the Eisenhower administration, including Eisenhower himself, reveals at least two important trends. The first is that the Eisenhower administration was becoming much more sophisticated in its approach to psychological warfare, the ANE being essentially wholly designed for this purpose. The second is that despite problematic and often avoidable complications, such as the Captive Nations Resolution, the Eisenhower administration was committed to presenting the public, both domestically and internationally, with a picture of America and the American lifestyle which were peaceful and prosperous. The vice president's mission to Moscow played a significant part in this, as Nixon emphasised peaceful competition not in front of a rocket, tank, or satellite, but in front of a model kitchen.

³⁷¹ "NSC 162/2," *FRUS: National Security Affairs*, 581. For the popularity of consumption goods, at least in that Soviet citizens understood that such goods were "normal" in the U.S. and thus should be present in the U.S.S.R. see Richmond, "The 1959 Kitchen Debate," 44-46.

Conclusion

In 1960, Arthur Schlesinger stated that “[Richard] Nixon has no ideas...[he] stands for nothing concrete.”³⁷² As this thesis demonstrates, however, the vice president clearly developed ideas about American foreign policies during his missions to Asia, the Middle East, Africa, Latin America, and the Soviet Union. Indeed, by the end of his time in the Eisenhower administration, Nixon stood for something concrete: the pragmatic, global extension of American influence.

In 1953, Nixon was new to the vice presidency and still uncertain about what role he might play in Eisenhower’s foreign policy. During his mission to Asia and the Middle East, Nixon was careful to closely follow his directives and promote the tenets of the New Look. At this time the vice president’s perspectives and abilities were not as sophisticated as they later became. Nixon adhered to John Foster Dulles’s notion that India’s neutralism was at best the expression of Nehru’s naïve narcissism, and at worst a ploy which would make the entire region more vulnerable to Communism. Nixon also stuck close to the New Look, advising Chiang Kai-Shek and Syngman Rhee to restrain themselves and follow the U.S.’s less outwardly militant approach to the Cold War, pushing the French to make genuine moves to assure Vietnam’s democratic independence, and shoring up support in both Pakistan and Iran. Whereas Nixon was comfortable criticising other governments for what he perceived as shortcomings in 1953, the vice president was less apt to heap criticism on the Eisenhower administration. By the time of his 1957 mission to Africa, Nixon was more comfortable placing the blame on American shoulders.

After his mission to several northern African nations in 1957, the vice president utilised the framework of the New Look to underscore the changes that the Eisenhower administration

³⁷² Arthur Schlesinger Jr., *Kennedy or Nixon: Does it Make any Difference?* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1960), 4.

ought to make in order to both spread American influence and proactively contain Communism. While Nixon did spend time during this mission gauging leaders' reactions to the Eisenhower Doctrine, a policy which promised to ensure the independence of Middle Eastern nations suffering from Communist interference, and checking on any Communist in-roads, the vast majority of the vice president's time was not focused on either of these topics. The greater part of Nixon's time was spent exploring how and where America might be able to expand its influence in Africa. The vice president concluded that this was often as simple as increasing aid, such as to Morocco, but in other cases Nixon argued that the Eisenhower administration's policies had weaknesses which needed to be addressed.

Two key weaknesses Nixon noted were the lack of funding and priority given to diplomatic posts in Africa, and the seemingly obvious point that sending racist diplomats or ambassadors to African posts did nothing to further America's interests. Connected to this factor, the vice president contended that the Eisenhower administration had to start taking tangible steps to eliminate prejudice within the United States to, at the very least, avoid the embarrassment such problems caused for the U.S. internationally. The vice president also argued that the Eisenhower administration ought to increase military aid to willing allies, such as Ethiopia, in order to maintain a stronger presence not only as a bulwark against encroaching Communist advances in Africa, but also to properly equip possible proxies to combat Communist or Nasserist manoeuvres in the Middle East. Significantly, many of Nixon's recommendations were implemented.

The vice president's 1958 mission to Latin America served as a dramatic eye-opener for both Nixon and the Eisenhower administration. After learning from labour officials and violent protestors that many middle and lower class Latin Americans were not only angered by

American policies in the region, but were more and more willing to act on this anger, Nixon advocated political and economic changes to the way in which the Eisenhower administration dealt with Latin American nations. The vice president made the point that greater sensitivity on the part of the Eisenhower administration to possible reactions to the actions it took in Latin America was absolutely essential. Whether this meant greater consideration of tariffs on Latin American goods or resources, no longer granting high honours and safe havens to Latin American dictators, or, in the case of the administration's reaction to the attacks on Nixon, avoiding resorting to military intervention, Nixon argued that it was necessary to consider how non-elites in nations such as Peru and Venezuela would react. While Nixon met with resistance from Secretary of State John Foster Dulles after the vice president recommended that the administration place greater support behind democratically elected governments in Latin America, Nixon's recommendations were still harmonious with the New Look.

When he travelled to the Soviet Union in 1959, Nixon displayed the nuance and sophistication of a seasoned statesman. The preparations Nixon undertook for this mission included everything from exhaustive research to extensive background checks on those who would be accompanying him on the mission. Rather than taking an overtly aggressive approach in his debates and arguments with Khrushchev, the vice president conducted himself in a diplomatic manner. Nixon used this approach to glean useful information from Khrushchev, but also to challenge the Soviet leader to compete with America not only militarily but economically and culturally. The vice president proposed peaceful competition rather than coexistence as a means to ease Cold War tensions. This proposal was yet one more seldom-utilised component of the New Look, as the policy predicted that a domestic drive within the Soviet Union for consumer goods, the very thing that would occur with the type of competition Nixon proposed,

could result in enough pressure to force Soviet leaders to negotiate more favourably with America.

As he developed as a statesman Richard Nixon advocated policies which would not simply contain Communism. This meant he no longer viewed containing Communism as an end unto itself, but came to perceive it as an important aspect of a larger objective. Certainly improving relations with emerging African nations would serve to keep Communism off of the continent, but this would also create the opportunity for America to police Africa and parts of the Middle East for other unfriendly forces. Obviously treating Latin American nations like Peru and Venezuela with more economic and political respect might decrease the attractiveness of Soviet overtures, but by addressing longstanding issues rather than repressing them via dictators, where possible, Nixon argued, the Eisenhower administration could create more stable allies and remove some of the international tarnish caused by harbouring “refugee dictators.”³⁷³ And, finally, while the vice president’s mission to the U.S.S. R. demonstrated his anti-Communist leanings, Nixon’s theme of exposing the Soviets to the Western world and vice versa, in media ranging from television broadcasts, to student exchanges, to consumer goods, meant that containment in the strictest sense was clearly not his primary goal.

Nixon’s role as a statesman was shaped by and in turn helped shape Eisenhower’s foreign policies in Asia, the Middle East, Africa, Latin America, and the Soviet Union during the Cold War. From 1953-1959, Nixon’s abilities and opinions as a statesman, Eisenhower’s foreign policies, and the Cold War itself, all developed and progressed concurrently. In 1953, twenty years before he ended direct American participation in the wars in Vietnam, Nixon was gaining first-hand experience of the conflict and displaying concern over American involvement. In

³⁷³ Minutes of Cabinet Meeting, May 16, 1958, 1-2, DDEL.

1959, thirteen years before he became the first president to visit Moscow, Nixon was the first vice president to do so, challenging Khrushchev to alter the focus of Cold War competition. Had Nixon never become president, his vice presidency would still stand as an ideal example of the complex factors at play during the early stages of the Cold War, and his development as a statesman provides an invaluable resource for perspectives and criticisms of Eisenhower's foreign policies. Had the vice presidency been as far as Nixon reached in his political career, his transformation from an enthusiastic but unsophisticated diplomat to a savvy and astute statesman would still be a subject worthy of study. As Eisenhower's vice president, Nixon worked to promote policies that acknowledged the intricate nature of the Cold War, arguing that in order to win the conflict "we need all the weapons – military, economic, and ideological – to fight the most complex battle in history."³⁷⁴

³⁷⁴ Nixon, *Six Crises*, 283.

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