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Alexis de Tocqueville noted in his Democracy in America that the concern over domestic issues which characterized most Americans caused them to ignore military matters until an extreme danger had arisen. Once aroused, however, they were inclined to give foreign affairs their undivided attention and effort until the immediate problem was solved. This "Tocqueville oscillation" has continued into the present century with unfortunate effects. In the modern world, where both total war and military procrastination are increasingly unsuitable to the conditions of the time, Americans must constantly seek to reduce the dimensions of this oscillation and maintain a vital yet realistic place in the world.

THE DOMESTIC DETERMINANTS OF FOREIGN POLICY OR THE TOCQUEVILLE OSCILLATION

An address delivered at the Naval War College

by

Dr. Walt W. Rostow

A distinguished psychiatrist at Yale, at the time when Andy McBurney and I were there together, once was asked by a lady in a question period after a lecture, "What do the undergraduates think about sex when they discover it?" He replied in three words, "They like it."

As I thought about the subject Dick Colbert put to me, The Domestic Determinants of Foreign Policy, I asked myself this question: What do the American people think about foreign policy? My general reply is, "They dislike it."

For almost two-hundred years now, the prevailing sentiment in our country has been a passionate desire that foreign policy go away and not bother us. There were, it's true, some exceptional

moments when domestic imperatives led to military action and set purposeful objectives in foreign policy. These were times of controversy. The Revolutionary War was stirred up by some rather awkward fiscal and tax problems, within the British Colonial system. Only a third or so of the American people actively supported the independence movement. There was a strong Tory minority as well as many who viewed the struggle with apathy. The War of 1812 had its Western Warhawks who saw economic advantage if we could steal Canada while the British were otherwise occupied. But it also had its vigorous opponents, some of whom drafted the far-reaching resolutions at the Hartford Convention of January 1815; one of which would have drastically limited the

warmaking powers of the Commander in Chief.

In 1846 strong domestic interests pressed Polk to seek war with Mexico in order to assure the entrance of California into the Union. Once again there was a sturdy anti-war movement hereabouts.

Finally a feverish public opinion pressed on McKinley to lift Spanish rule from Cuba after the sinking of the MAINE. But the passions of empire waned quickly in the face of guerrilla war in the Philippines and a strong anti-imperialist movement in domestic policy.

But these, as I say, were exceptional times. The prevailing balance in American thought in foreign policy, and in our security budget was to avoid, not to seek, engagement in the world, especially outside this hemisphere. On the eve of the First World War—in 1913—our national security budget was about one percent of Gross National Product, about a third the level of the security budget in Britain and Germany.

Nevertheless, the fact is that in this century, we have four times been involved in major military conflicts. How did American participation in these wars come about? How did we become a global power?

We came to where we are, I suggest, by living by Dr. Johnson's famous proposition. He said: "When a man knows he's to be hanged in a fortnight, it concentrates his mind wonderfully."

In 1916 Wilson won reelection on the platform: "Too proud to fight; he kept us out of war." But five months later we went to war in the face of unrestricted German submarine warfare and the palpable threat it represented to our control over the Atlantic, as well as to the survival of Britain and France.

For the next generation, we remained essentially isolationist, acutely and purposefully so, in the 1930's. In the spring of 1940, in the phoney war period, 65 percent of the American

people supported aid to the Allies under the condition that it be short of involvement in the war. Then Paris fell, Britain was beleaguered, the French coast became a base for German submarines; and by January 1941, about 70 percent of the American people were for aiding Britain even at the risk of war.

In Asia, America passively observed the Japanese takeover of Manchuria in 1931, and then the major cities of China. In 1940-41 the Japanese moved into Indochina and toward Indonesia. Franklin Roosevelt had every interest in concentrating, at that time, American attention and American resources on rearmament at home, and aid to Britain and, then, to Russia. But he could not bring himself to accept passively the Japanese takeover of the balance of power in Asia, including control of the sea routes to the Indian Ocean and to Australia and New Zealand. He cut off shipments to Japan of scrap metal and oil, and froze Japanese assets in the United States.

Indochina was the substance of the diplomatic dialogue with Japan right down to the eve of Pearl Harbor.

At Yalta Roosevelt told Stalin that the American people would not support the present military force in Europe for more than two years. And the postwar dismantling of our armed forces appeared to support Roosevelt's assessment. Only when the balance of power in southern and western Europe was clearly threatened, by a mixture of economic weakness and Communist pressure, did President Truman respond in 1947. And he did so only after surrendering hard-won wartime commitments to the political freedom of Poland, in particular, and Eastern Europe in general.

In Korea the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and then in public the Secretary of State in January 1950, drew the line of the American defense perimeter through the Tsushima Straits after American forces began to withdraw in 1949. Six

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months later South Korea was invaded. The United States responded both to protect the balance of power in the Northwest Pacific and to give newborn NATO, now confronted with a nuclear Soviet Union, some credibility.

Out of the Korean experience other pacts were formed, to make explicit the American commitment to hold the balance of power in the Middle East, South and Southeast Asia; and thus to deter further overt aggression across international frontiers. After their failure in Korea, the Communists turned to guerrilla warfare as a primary tool. Hanoi decided that it could proceed with success in Southeast Asia, despite the SEATO Treaty, and later, the Geneva Accords on Laos of 1962. The United States did not react promptly and decisively to the violation of the Laos Accords. And in 1965, in consequence, we confronted a choice of fighting or seeing an area judged critical to the American interest, fall to aggression; a judgment incorporated in treaty, in a Congressional resolution, as well as in the words and actions of three successive Presidents.

Now what are we to make of this story of erratic American behavior from 1916 to 1965?

I believe it comes to this: whatever the speeches made and the postures struck during intervals of quiet, or relative quiet, the United States as a nation has behaved systematically as if it were endangered when a single potentially hostile power should seize control of the balance of power in Europe or Asia, or of course, to emplace itself south of us, in this hemisphere. But the United States has not acted regularly on this proposition in Europe or Asia. We acted only when the gallows hove into view. Between such crises we talked and behaved in ways which led a whole series of ambitious men in Europe and Asia to believe we would acquiesce in the fulfillment of their dreams for dominant power. I know no story more

worth contemplating than the statement of Vishinsky made in the presence of Americans after the Korean War. Vishinsky said that the Americans had deceived Moscow about our interest in South Korea. In quite different ways the Kaiser, and Hitler, Mussolini, the Japanese militarists, Stalin and Ho Chi Minh, could all claim to have been deceived by us. In a most dangerous century we have, time after time, permitted, even created, a gap—a gap between the image of American interests, projected by the dynamics of American domestic life, and our behavior as a nation, when the balance of power in Europe or Asia was actually at stake.

I believe this oscillation has contributed substantially to the instability of the world arena over the past 54 years. And I believe a consciousness of this oscillation has strongly shaped the policy of all our Presidents since 1945.

No man can confidently read the mind of a President of the United States. Only the President himself can know the balances struck among the immense array of factors that enter into his decisions. But I do know this much. In making his decisions on Southeast Asia in 1961, President Kennedy did not believe his option was war, if he stood firm on the treaty commitment, versus peace if he let Laos and Vietnam slide away. He believed the United States in the end would not acquiesce in the region from Saigon and Vientiane, to Singapore and Jakarta, falling under the hegemony of a potential enemy. He was conscious, too, that Burma was the military gateway to the Indian subcontinent; and that the American performance in Southeast Asia would affect profoundly the stability of other regions in the world. He believed his realistic option was to stand on the treaty commitment, whatever the cost, or see the United States engaged in a wider war fairly soon.

I know, as you do, what President

Johnson said at San Antonio on 29 September, 1967. He said,

I cannot tell you tonight as your President with certainty, that a Communist conquest of South Vietnam would be followed by a Communist conquest of Southeast Asia. But I do know there are North Vietnamese troops in Laos. I do know there are North Vietnamese-trained guerrillas tonight in Northeast Thailand. I do know that there are Communist-supported guerrilla forces operating in Burma. And a Communist coup was barely averted in Indonesia, the fifth largest nation in the world. So your American President can not tell you with certainty that a Southeast Asia dominated by Communist power would bring a Third World War much closer to a terrible reality. One could hope that this would not be so; but all that we have learned in this tragic century strongly suggests to me that it *would* be so. As President of the United States, I'm not prepared to gamble on the chance that it is not so. I'm not prepared to risk the security, indeed the survival of this American nation on mere hope and wishful thinking. I'm convinced that by seeing this struggle through now, we are greatly reducing the chances of a much larger war, perhaps a nuclear war. I would rather stand in Vietnam, in our time and by meeting this danger now and facing up to it, thereby reduce this danger for our children and for our grandchildren.

And President Nixon outlined in some detail a similar calculus, when he summed up on 3 November, 1969: "For the future of peace, precipitate withdrawal from Vietnam would thus be a

disaster of immense magnitude. It would not bring peace; it would bring more war."

The heart of the tension in contemporary America over Southeast Asia has been, then, between the choices as seen by the Presidents, on the one hand, and those who came to oppose them, on the other. The Presidents have seen the real choice before us as pursuing the engagement there through to stable peace, versus a larger war, and quite possibly, a nuclear war. The opponents of their policy in Southeast Asia argue, in effect, that American disengagement from Southeast Asia would lead to peace or to a situation in which the United States would or could, passively acquiesce in safety.

There has been and there remains, a dangerous gap between the national interest as our Presidents see it, and as we have seen it as a nation at times of acute crises; and the way many Americans see it, when the danger of a major shift in the balance of power in Europe and Asia is not palpable.

What is the basis of this gap? It arises, I believe, from the nature of democracy, and particularly democracy in the United States. Alexis de Tocqueville stated the problem vividly a hundred and thirty-five years ago. In *Democracy in America* he describes the overwhelming attraction of civil life for Americans "placed in the midst of the wilderness where they have, so to speak, no neighbors." He believed "the excessive love of the whole community for quiet" would lead Americans to ignore military problems until they became acute, and then they would turn to deal with them late, but wholeheartedly. It was an awareness of what we might call "Tocqueville behavior" by Americans between 1916 and 1947 which led President Truman to face up to Stalin's threat in Europe before it became a purely military threat. Our Presidents have understood how dangerous the Tocqueville oscillation might be in a

nuclear and highly interdependent world.

And they have understood something else imposed on us by the coming of nuclear weapons. They have been conscious in Korea and Southeast Asia, but also in the Middle East and in Berlin and the Cuban Missile Crisis, that danger lay not merely in a late reaction, but in a wholehearted turning to war, engaging in Tocqueville's phrase, "the full passions of the people." There is no rational place for total war in a nuclear age.

Contrary to older American instinct, then, we have been trying to deter threats to the balance of power in Europe and Asia in a forehanded way, and when challenged, to use limited, rather than total force. This has been difficult for us Americans, given our history and our national operating style. It has been made more difficult by two other strands of thought and feeling at work in our domestic life in recent times.

First, the feeling that the United States is, in some sense, overcommitted or disproportionately committed on the world scene. Second, an opinion among some that the fate of Asia does not, in fact, matter all that much to the United States. I shall say something about each of these factors in turn.

First, the question of American overcommitment. After the Cuba Missile Crisis, I took stock with some of my colleagues in the State Department (including Dick Colbert) of the forces which gathered strength after that historic event. One fact was central. The fear of Moscow, rightly or wrongly, was considerably reduced in the world, once the technique of nuclear blackmail was faced down by President Kennedy; and, partially in consequence, the Sino-Soviet split became more overt and more intense. In every part of the world this reduction in fear and tension led to an increased desire of nations to take a larger hand in shaping their own destiny. The image of a bipolar world was

weakened, both by Khrushchev's failure in the Caribbean and by the evident disarray of the Communist camp. There seemed to be more opportunities for old-fashioned nationalism and for the nation-state. In the United States there developed a feeling that the Communist threat had been reduced, and somehow, the world ought to be more manageable with less American effort, cost, and commitment.

Analyzing these trends I concluded that the problems actually confronted demanded stronger and more effective regional cooperation—if the nations of the world in fact, were to forge a destiny increasingly independent of the major powers. If rich European nations of sixty million could not handle their problems without effective regional cooperation, how could nations in the less-developed areas do so on a nationalist basis? As for the United States, I concluded, that the heart of the problem was not excessive commitment, but a sense of excessive loneliness in bearing the burdens of the world. Our actual outlays for security purposes were, in fact, declining slightly in the first half of the 1960's, as a proportion of GNP. But the American image was one of our carrying an unfair share of the task of maintaining minimal order and progress in the world arena.

I cite this exercise, which was set out formally in a paper dated April 1965, because it preceded our full engagement in Vietnam. The paper commended increased American support for regionalism in Latin America, Africa, and Asia, as well as for continued support of regionalism in Western Europe. And it commended increased American effort to move toward a more equal sharing of the security and economic burdens of the world community.

Quite independent of the State Department's Policy Planner, President Johnson had come to a similar conclusion. And in one of the least-noted, but

most important foreign policy developments in recent years, President Johnson moved systematically, particularly from 1966 on, to make the encouragement of regionalism central to American policy in Latin America, Africa, and Asia; and to shift our global arrangements in monetary affairs, in trade and aid, on to what he called a partnership and fair-share basis.

President Johnson articulated this strategy fully in a speech in New Orleans on 10 September, 1968. Warning, as he came close to the end of his term against isolationism, he stated this alternative doctrine: "We have always hoped and believed that as our friends and allies grew in strength, our burden would grow less lonely. We have been moving over the last few years toward a long-run position in which the United States would be able to assume its responsibility in enterprises of common concern, but our partners would be able to assume theirs. I believe the day will soon come which we have been building toward for twenty years, when some American President will be able to say to the American people, 'The United States is assuming its fair share of responsibility in promoting peace and progress in the world, but the United States is assuming no more, or no less than its fair share.'"

President Nixon's foreign policy paper of 18 February, 1970, was as you know, in much the same spirit.

What is it then, that the United States is trying to accomplish? First, our Presidents have recognized that the American interest in avoiding domination of Europe or Asia, and indeed, Latin America or Africa, by a potentially hostile power, is an abiding interest of the United States. It is heightened, not diminished, by the nature of modern weapons and means of communications. Second, they recognize that this negative interest is fully shared by the smaller nations of these regions. In fact, this convergence between our

interests and theirs, has been the underlying strength of American postwar diplomacy.

The nations of Europe do not wish to be dominated by Russia, or Germany, or United States. The nations of Asia do not wish to be dominated by China, or Japan, or Russia, or the United States. The nations of Africa, south of the Sahara, wish to forge their destiny without the military presence or political dominance of any major external power. The wisest leaders of Latin America wish not only to keep extra-continental powers out of the security affairs in this hemisphere, but they wish to build societies in a regional structure, which would permit them to deal with the Colossus of the North, from a base of greater strength and greater dignity. That is the underlying political objective of movements toward Latin American economic integration.

The United States has been able to throw its weight behind regionalism in all these areas, because our interest does not require that we dominate, and because the stronger the regional organizations, so long as they are not dominated by a potentially hostile power, the more likely they are to resolve their own problems, and reduce the level of American commitment and concern.

Third, the Presidents have recognized that the pace at which the United States could safely step back, had to be delicately adjusted to the rise of strength and cohesiveness in the regions. They recognized in Europe, for example, that a premature and excessive pullout of American forces from NATO, would lead not to a new and better balanced Atlantic equilibrium, but to crisis—a crisis as dangerous as, or more dangerous than the Berlin crises of 1948-49 and 1961-62.

The exercise called Vietnamization, if I understand it correctly, is an even more delicate exercise in shifting the balance of responsibilities in Southeast

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Asia in ways that would avoid collapse of the region, chaos, and a larger war.

The strategy of our moving back in degree as the strength and cohesiveness of others permit them to take a larger hand in shaping their destiny, while avoiding a collapse of the balance of power in regions of vital interest to the United States, is certainly the most subtle and difficult task of foreign policy ever undertaken by the United States.

This is so because historically America has performed best when it faced a palpable and acute problem. One widely recognized and defined in common terms and in the solution of which we could roll up our sleeves and address our full energies, talents, and resources in a straightforward way. The First World War, once we were in it, was a problem of this kind; the Great Depression after 1933; the Second World War after Pearl Harbor; Stalin's challenge in western and southern Europe in 1947; the race to put a man on the moon after the Soviet launching of the first Sputnik. These slambang, straightforward affairs fitted well the national style.

Now we are trying to do something quite different. After the Second World War we moved into vacuums of power—not to build an empire—but because the cost of not moving in was judged—case by case—more dangerous than the reluctant acceptance of additional responsibility in a war-weakened world. Now a quarter-century later we are trying to manage a redistribution of responsibility in which we will do less, others will do more, without inducing major crises or chaos on the world scene. We are trying safely to withdraw in degree from the preponderant positions we initially built after 1945. We are trying to exploit constructively the gathering strength of others on the world scene, their desire increasingly to shape their own destiny without being dominated by any major power including the United States, and

the fact that the abiding American interest is satisfied by an essentially negative proposition—that no potentially hostile power hold the balance of power in Europe and Asia.

This is the complex pattern of policy which our Government has been trying to pursue in recent years in order to reconcile abiding American interests and the widespread sense in America that we were somehow, overcommitted or disproportionately committed in the first postwar generation.

The pursuit of this policy is obviously complicated by many forces in our domestic life: an economy subject both to rising unemployment and rising prices, which is not developing enough real resources for public purposes, from the tax base; an infirm balance of payments position; acute racial tension; massive tasks of urban rehabilitation; the cleaning of the air and water; an ardent margin of the affluent young, affronted by the ugliness of war, racial inequity, and other gaps between American aspiration and performance, who have been led to believe that a quick route to the humane and decent life they seek, lies in confrontation and violence and destruction.

I cannot, evidently, deal with all these features of the domestic scene here: the reactions they set up in our political life; and their playback effects on our ability to conduct the mature and subtle foreign policy which our interests require and to which we have been committed.

But I will say a few words about one view to which some Americans have come, in part driven by these domestic pressures: the view that the United States can safely abandon its interests in and its commitments to Asia and let the forces at work there find their way to chaos or equilibrium, war or peace, without American participation. Let me quote the words of John Gardner, whom I regard as a good friend as well as an old and respected colleague.

Anguished by the intensity of our domestic debate and the urgency of our unsolved domestic problems, he counsels abandonment of our role in Vietnam and of our peacekeeping commitment in Asia. I quote him as an eloquent and sensitive representative of a good many Americans whose views on Vietnam and Asia have changed. Here is a passage from an interview with Gardner published in *The Christian Science Monitor*, 8 June of this year. He was asked what should the President do about Vietnam. He began:

I think that if the President would set a date, a terminal date (the questioner broke in: 'You're speaking about getting troops entirely out?') that's right, he said, it would be extremely helpful. I think if we would finally relinquish the notion that the word winning or losing has any relevance whatever any more with respect to Vietnam. The whole relevance of those two words is a thing of the past now. If he, as the President, would relinquish what appears to have been his conception in his last Press Conference that we might conceivably be the peacekeeper in the Asian world, I think we could move expeditiously to get out of Vietnam and I think it would produce very considerable change in our national mood. Then I think, moving vigorously on domestic priorities, would be the next order of business. And the nation is ready for it. People are hungry for it. Americans are not people who want to turn their backs on their problems.

Elsewhere in this interview, Gardner said: "Nothing we could possibly be accomplishing in Southeast Asia could balance or compensate for what the war is doing to this country."

This is a solemn proposition. It ought to be discussed dispassionately, with care, since we all recognize the burden that's thrown upon our national life by the war in Southeast Asia. The proposition is, as I understand it, that the United States should promptly withdraw its forces and commitments from Vietnam whatever the consequences may be in Asia and on the World scene.

Contrary to every conceivable political and personal interest, three American Presidents—and one might add indeed, President Eisenhower as a fourth—decided that the forces set in motion by such a decision risked a larger war in Asia and dangerous instability in other regions of the world. I believe no citizen taking a contrary view can, in good conscience, ignore the lines of argument that led our Presidents to this conclusion. For the risk of a larger war—quite possibly a nuclear war—should weigh heavily in the scales in assessing how much of a burden we can afford to bear at home.

Now I would not pretend to reconstruct fully the lines of argument which led the Presidents to this painful judgment; although in two cases I have some knowledge of their thoughts. But I would offer my own brief summary of at least some of the possible or probable causes of unconditional, immediate withdrawal from commitment in Vietnam and Asia.

First, the withdrawal of American commitment in Southeast Asia would change the terms of the debate going forward in mainland China. Powerful forces are at work there to move post-Mao China toward the long-delayed concentration of its energies and talents on the modernization of its life. American withdrawal would, in my view, inevitably lead Peking not to concentrate on its domestic tasks, but to exploit its new opportunities to the South. No one can predict the precise form in which a nuclear China, with huge ground forces, would exercise its

power in the vacuum we would create. But I can not believe that Peking would remain passive. Indeed, it is not passive now: in its influence on Hanoi; its roadbuilding in Laos; and its actions elsewhere.

Second, the nations of Southeast Asia, certainly as far as Singapore—quite possibly as far as Indonesia—would lose their independence, as for example, Lee Quang Yew, Prime Minister of Singapore, believes; or be thrown into a protracted military or quasi-military struggle which would disorient for some of them, exceedingly promising paths to economic, social and political development.

Third, Burma in particular, would either fall under Communist domination or become the scene of an Indian/Chinese struggle. For Burma, not Tibet, is the point of critical strategic danger for the Indian subcontinent; a proposition consistently made to me in private, with equal lucidity, by high and responsible officials of both India and Pakistan.

Fourth, almost certainly Japan and India would quickly acquire nuclear weapons, and quite possibly the Nonproliferation Treaty would die elsewhere in the world as well. It is perhaps not generally understood that the willingness of many nations to forego the production of nuclear weapons is based on a carefully balanced calculation—a calculation that relies upon the United States, explicit or implicit, to provide marginally greater security at less risk than going it alone on the basis of a national nuclear capability. The policy Gardner proposes would shift that marginal calculation. An America that walked away from a treaty commitment because it could not deal with its domestic problems—after bringing into the field a half million of its armed forces, and encouraging a small ally to fight desperately for its independence—that kind of America might not be

regarded as a reliable ally on such a mortal issue in Asia or elsewhere.

Paragraph 1 of Article X of the Nonproliferation Treaty, opens with this sentence: "Each party shall, in exercising its national sovereignty, have the right to withdraw from the Treaty if it decides that extraordinary events related to the subject matter of this treaty, have jeopardized the supreme interests of its country." I believe an American withdrawal from a treaty commitment in a critical part of the world on the grounds that its domestic problems did not permit it to continue to honor that treaty could well be judged an extraordinary event related to the subject matter of the Nonproliferation Treaty, jeopardizing the supreme interests of nations which now depend upon us. We should be quite clear that whatever public postures they may strike on one issue or another, India and Japan, as well as many others, count on our nuclear deterrent and the will, as well as the hardware, that gives it meaning.

Fifth, I would put a question which every American must answer for himself, out of his knowledge and sense of our country, its history, and its character. The question is this: at home, would the United States observe these consequences of its decision passively? Would we turn with energy and pride and unity, to clean the air and the water and deal with the ghettos, the racial inequities, as we read of Hue-like slaughter in Vietnam and elsewhere? Of an Asia thrown into chaos or worse? Of a world gripped of a proliferating nuclear arms race?

And what of the effects of all this in Moscow? Cairo?

I for one, do not believe that we would remain unified and passive. I agree with Gardner that Americans are not people who want to turn their backs on their problems. We might repeat what I called the Tocqueville oscillation, in a peculiarly dangerous way. But I do

not believe that we Americans in the end, will turn our backs on Asia and on the world.

For what is Asia? Asia is the place where about 60 percent of humanity now live and will continue to live. In the year 2000, which is not so far away, Asia's population will be about ten times that of the United States—say, 3.7 billion souls. There are some I know, who regard Asia as primitive, in no way to be compared to Europe, in potential importance to the United States. But as anyone who has recently been to Asia knows, it is a region on the march. We are all familiar with the extraordinary growth of Japan, now the third industrial power in the world and closing fast on a sluggish Soviet Union. But in South Korea, Taiwan, Thailand, and in Malaysia and Singapore, and in India, Pakistan, and Iran as well, the modernization of these old societies is moving forward swiftly. And Indonesia, too, is coming out of the chaos in which Sukarno left it. Mainland China has been virtually stalled for a decade, set back first by the failure of the Great Leap Forward, and then by the Cultural Revolution. But sometime in the years ahead the great natural gifts of the Chinese on the mainland will come to be focused on the modernization of that society in more or less rational ways.

Around about the year 2000, then, we shall face across the Pacific almost four billion people, who by that time will have acquired the capacity to use most of then-existing technology. They will have reached, or be close to reaching the stage of growth I have described as technological maturity. In income per capita they will not be rich. They will average, perhaps, only about \$350 per capita. The average brought down by the low starting point and heavy weight in the Asian index of the Indian subcontinent and mainland China. But Asia will be a formidable center of power, a major factor in the kind of life Americans—that is to say, our children and

grandchildren—will then lead.

Right now I believe the kind of Asia that will exist in the year 2000 is being determined.

It is being determined by the outcome of the debate on the mainland concerning post-Mao Chinese domestic and foreign policy and priority. It is being determined by the Japanese and Indian decisions on the Nonproliferation Treaty. It is being determined above all, by a growing sense of regional cooperation that has emerged since the United States honored its commitment to South Vietnam in 1965 at a time of mortal danger to Southeast Asia.

Each of these factors will be drastically affected by the way we conduct ourselves in Southeast Asia. If we patiently, painfully, see it through to an honorable, stable peace in Southeast Asia, there is a decent hope that the Asia that emerges will not be dominated by any single power. It could be an Asia in which the inherent weight of mainland China is balanced by the cooperative efforts of others living in the great and vital arc from Seoul and Tokyo, to Karachi and Teheran—an Asia not hostile to China, but offering to it no temptation to expand; an Asia to whose multilateral efforts Japan could make an enormous contribution; an Asia where nuclear proliferation did not happen; where the guarantee of the United States remained good; but whose inherent strength and cooperation permitted us to fall back to a role of even-handed partnership across the Pacific.

That outcome is not assured; but it is a decent hope, because it is rooted in a political reality—the political reality that most Asians share with the United States, the abiding interest that the region not be dominated by a single power.

If we do not see it through to an honorable and stable peace in Southeast Asia, we could confront a very different and dangerous concentration of power

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across the Pacific which would alter the whole setting of American society and its inner life, and pose dangers greater than those that came upon us at Pearl Harbor. I disagree, therefore, with John Gardner's dictum that "nothing that we could possibly be accomplishing in Southeast Asia could balance or compensate for what the war is doing to this country."

The state of Asia and America's long-run relation to Asia is at stake, and this is a very great matter indeed.

Now, neither as a former public servant, nor as an active teacher, nor as a social scientist, nor as a man, am I insensitive to the cost of our commitment in Southeast Asia and the war in which we are still engaged. Clearly, the war in Vietnam has contributed substantially to student unrest in the United States. But I do not believe the war is primarily responsible for the restlessness and dissatisfaction of the young. Student unrest is a global phenomenon in the developed—the richer—countries of the world.

Clearly, the war has diverted substantial resources from private or public purposes. But I do not believe it is primarily responsible for the slackening in allocations to the cities, or education, or for the present state of racial tension. The net cost of the war in Vietnam—what we would actually save by abandoning the effort—is less than 2 percent of our GNP. The figure is declining, it is not rising. At a normal 4 percent growth rate, it is less than half the annual increment in GNP we should have available to allocate to new private and public purposes. I regret every nickel of it, as I regret even more every casualty of the war, whether American or other. But with a GNP approaching a trillion dollars, we obviously command the resources in the United States to do far more in the public sector if we manage the economy well and generate the political will to allocate those resources wisely. And while the war in Vietnam is

not irrelevant to the problem of bringing the Negro to full citizenship in our land, I do not believe for one moment that it is a critical barrier.

The coming of stable peace in Southeast Asia would surely ease some of the strain in our domestic life; but our domestic problems have different and deeper roots and must be dealt with essentially in their own terms.

In considering our domestic life in relation to our foreign policy, I would make one further and related point. Historically, in this century, we have had domestic and foreign policy crises in sequence. Wilson had time to launch his New Freedom Program after his election in 1912, before confronting the realities of the First World War. For good or ill—and probably for ill—Franklin Roosevelt could launch his New Deal Program in an America locked into isolationism; and that program had run its course well before the outbreak of the Second World War. President Truman could face the Cold War crises of 1945 to 1952 from a base which did not generate acute pressures for domestic innovation. He was, in fact, well out in front of his Congressional support in proposing domestic legislative innovations. But since 1963—say, from the Civil Rights March on Washington of August and the assassination of Diem in November—our political life has been strained by simultaneous crises of an acute kind, at home and abroad.

I can easily understand the instinct of Gardner and others, somehow to get "abroad" off our neck so we can wholeheartedly turn to affairs at home. And I believe history will record that President Johnson faced—and now President Nixon faces—challenges of unique severity because of this convergence in time of domestic and foreign crises. But history is ruthless with those who build their policies on illusion. And I believe it is an illusion to hold that America at this time in history, can safely walk

away from its commitments and interests in Asia, or in Europe, or in the Middle East. I see no other viable course—in an age of nuclear weapons and modern communications, where the global community is being pulled closer together every day—than to play a responsible role on the world scene, to move patiently and cautiously toward a world of partnership and fair shares while continuing to grapple at home with a long agenda of unfinished business in this rich, but troubled society of ours.

For I believe it equally an illusion to hold that we can be callous about the cities and the race problem, or that we can for long safely live with a mixture of economic stagnation and inflation.

Yes, our problems are multiple and they are complex. And they will not yield to a conventional American short-term burst of energy and enterprise. They require extraordinary perception, maturity, and balance. But with this practiced democracy of ours, approaching its second century of continuous life under the Constitution, commanding a unique concentration of material and human resources, we ought to be able to meet these challenges.

The outcome is not certain. It will require the best that is in us. We must set aside the notion that soft options are available, either at home or abroad. We must reach out to try to understand each other—where we are—what makes up our common agenda, and then act on it together.

A decade ago the challenge was put very well in these terms:

Can Americans achieve enough agreement on their aims to act in concert? The answer is unequivocally yes. We want peace with justice. We want a world that doesn't live under the fear of the bomb; a world that acknowledges the rule of law; a world in which

no nation can play bully; and no nation need live in fear.

How many Americans would disagree with that purpose? Is it easy? Have we achieved it? Read your morning paper.

We want freedom. We don't think man was born to have someone else's foot on his neck, or someone else's hand over his mouth. We want freedom at home and we want a world in which freedom is possible. Who would disagree with that as a national aim? Who would call it easy? Who would say we achieved it?

We believe in the dignity and worth of the individual, and it's our unshakable purpose to protect and preserve that dignity. We believe that every person should be

BIOGRAPHIC SUMMARY



Professor Walt W. Rostow is a recognized international authority on economics and economic history and has written many prominent books and articles in the field. Graduating from Yale in 1936, he

attended Oxford as a Rhodes Scholar and completed his Ph.D. degree at Yale in 1940. He also holds M.A. degrees from both Oxford and Cambridge.

After serving in the Office of Strategic Studies during World War II, Professor Rostow taught American history at both Oxford and Cambridge prior to returning to the United States. In 1950 he joined the faculty of Massachusetts Institute of Technology as Professor of Economics and senior staff member of the Center for International Studies, where he remained for ten years. In January of 1961 he was appointed as Deputy Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs. In November of that year he was designated Chairman of the Policy Planning Council of the State Department. Selected as Special Assistant to President Johnson in 1966, Dr. Rostow left Washington in 1969 to become Professor of Economics and History at the University of Texas.

enabled to achieve best that is in him, and we are the declared enemies of all conditions such as disease, and ignorance, and poverty, which stunt the individual and prevent such fulfillment. We believe in equality before the law, equal political suffrage, and dearest of all to Americans, equality of opportunity.

To the extent that we've made progress on these matters, we've done so through fierce and faithful effort. Courageous men and women have spent lifetimes of effort, endurance, and frustration in pursuit of these aims. Others have fought and died for them. And the same measure of devotion is required today. The fact that millions of men and women have died violent deaths defending the ideal of individual freedom does not insure the survival of the ideal if we cease paying our tithes of devotion.

These words were written by John Gardner in an essay called "Excellence," published in 1961. I do not quote them now to score off an old and respected

friend; for Gardner and others have painfully come to the conclusion that we cannot both keep a society of quality and excellence at home and support our search for a decent and stable peace in Asia. In all conscience, the decade since his words were written has been a bruising, difficult, dangerous—but I would also say—a creative period in the life of America and the world community. Looking at what we have experienced, and having lived through it, knowing a little of its lacerations, I can understand why some would draw back to a more limited vision of our agenda.

But I do not. I believe withdrawal to a search for the good life at home in a world of war and chaos and deepening danger, is an illusion. And neither we nor humanity at large can afford another Tocqueville oscillation. There is no other rational way for America than to go forward on both fronts, increasingly sharing the burdens abroad with those capable and willing to play their part. Despite the debate that swirls around us, I believe deep within our nation is the understanding, the strength, and the will to do so.

