

policy is sound from our viewpoint such things cannot injure it. . . . We can afford to "take the cash and let the credit go!"

The nature of our interest and of our objectives in that part of Asia has changed very considerably in the decades which have elapsed since that time. The search for a sound policy, however, reflecting our conception of our own interests and of world interests and enabling us to bring to bear whatever means we have to influence events there has not been abated, even when our role has not been a major one and our interests have been indirect.

In order to understand the main lines of our current Asian policy it is important to note the various ways in which our involvement in Asian affairs has grown. Our bilateral relations with most of the leading nations and with a number of the other nations have expanded steadily. The change in the nature of the Commonwealth has brought us into closer contact in most fields of interest with several Asian nations. Trade and economic assistance have opened up channels for political contact. We have committed troops to a war in Korea under the United Nations flag and participated in United Nations peace-keeping operations on the borders of India and Pakistan.

Our membership on the International Control Commissions for Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia since 1954 has extended our involvement in Asian affairs beyond bilateral relations and beyond participation in the United Nations operations I have mentioned. We did, of course, accept a task, in effect, on behalf of the world community but under unique political conditions which made it necessary for us to maintain impartiality in Control Commission affairs in a political and military situation of very great complexity and which steadily involved us to a greater extent in judging the clash of interests in Southeast Asia. It is natural at present that definition of an Asian policy for Canada should tend to begin with the Vietnam conflict and the closely-related question of the position of Communist China in the world community, before it goes on to deal with the other considerations which influence our deliberations.

Now that we have a fairly wide involvement in Asian affairs, we can, in order to delineate policy, point to some general characteristics of our relations with nations in that area and to activities and attitudes with respect to the main Asian problems.

When I speak of an Asian policy, I do not, of course, use the term in the old-fashioned and rather grandiloquent sense in which the rulers of empires or leading powers tried to pursue masterly strategies designed to capture the opponents' pieces one by one and move remorselessly, if indirectly, towards a clear-cut objective. No nation, large or small, should have illusions as to the extent to which it can steer events by force, pressure, influence or guile towards desired but hypothetical international goals.

In a more modest and pragmatic sense, we must relate one specific policy objective to another to ensure that we are not working at cross purposes. Beyond that we can only hope that, in addition to stating what our own specific interests are, we shall be able to set forth principles and objectives which will meet with a response from many other nations and which will help to create a consensus leading to effective action by the world community.