

verdict on the Cuban missile crisis: that our position and actions were criminal acts against mankind and those of the Russians generously humane! The mystique by which Lord Russell arrived at this and other judgments eludes me, but it is neither impertinent nor chauvinistic to resent them and to question whether he is any longer the man of broad objective vision that he once was, or has been deemed to be. The rigidity of Lord Russell's fixations and the ferocity with which he acts upon them must be dismaying to all Americans except the most ardent one-worlders and the most extreme opponents of the Vietnam war. For the organizers of protest marches, demonstrations, and moratoria this book will doubtless afford much satisfaction and provide much lethal ammunition. The rest of us will feel indignation and alarm; also, perhaps, sorrow that an intellect once so greatly respected has now shown itself to be in a degenerated and fossilized condition.

Reviewed by DEAN TERRILL

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### *American Future in Asia*

**America's Role in Asia**, by D. F. Fleming, *New York: Funk & Wagnalls, 1969. viii + 200pp. \$5.95.*

**Toward Disengagement in Asia: A Strategy for American Foreign Policy**, by Bernard K. Gordon, *Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1969. vi + 183pp. \$5.95.*

THESE MONOGRAPHS constitute yet two more contributions to the ongoing debate over the future Asian policy of the United States. That debate, as we are all by now aware, concerns both ends and means: how should the nation order its policy priorities in the Pacific area in the years to come, and, once the priorities have been established, what techniques and tactics appear

most likely to promote them? Needless to say, not only is there little agreement among the debaters over ends, but the discussion of means is moreover befogged by widely-differing assessments concerning the future evolution of Asian international relations. It is thus not surprising that our citizens are bewildered; in their confusion they mirror perfectly the state of much supposedly expert opinion.

The Fleming volume is very nearly a classic case in point. The author is an old new leftist, who for twenty years or more has been vigorously advancing the so-called revisionist interpretation of the Cold War. In this collection of essays, some first published as early as 1964, he applies his view of contemporary world history to Asian international politics. FDR's successors, Fleming tells us, reversed his policy of seeking cooperation with our "great ally," the USSR, and opted instead for conflict with the Soviets over Eastern Europe. Ever since we have been attempting to contain and encircle both the Soviet Union and communism generally throughout the world. The motives for our policy, he believes, are perfectly clear: the American power structure hates communism because "it abolished private profits," and "any extension of Communism contracted the area in which private profits could be freely earned." The Truman Doctrine and the Korean War were the initial expressions of this policy of global anticommunism, and the war in Vietnam is simply the latest in a long series of American attempts to suppress popular majorities and "forbid social change anywhere in the world of which we disapprove."

In the author's view, it was our puppet Diem's calculated violation of the Geneva Accords (which Fleming characterizes as a "great international treaty") and his oppressive treatment of the South Vietnamese people after 1954 which gave rise to the insurgency and to our subsequent attempts to crush it. The war has become the "greatest trauma" in this nation's history, and has brought both the United States and the

world to the brink of tragedy. Having aroused China against us, we now not only must—so Fleming believed in 1965 at least—“be prepared to practice genocide in China,” but moreover “our new definition of ‘aggression’ may even compel the bombing of the Soviet Union, precipitating the final world war.”

Our proper course, then, is to bow to the march of history, and withdraw militarily from Asia; we might even consider assisting China along the path to industrialization and to ultimate great power status. The Chinese, he believes, will be no threat to the security of their neighbors “unless they should finally feel suffocated by a strangling containment from the United States and/or the Soviet Union.” In any event “in her struggle to assert herself in her own region, China is likely to have the warm support of some 750 million other Asians,” and “the long run probability is that all of Korea and Vietnam may have to live through a period of evolving communism, just as the East Europeans are.”

This volume is, in short, an Asian fairy tale. An adequate analysis of Professor Fleming’s errors of fact and interpretation would fill a book at least as long as his: he is partly or fully wrong at nearly every critical point, and even his valid insights are drowned in polemic and hysterical overstatement. But the significance of this work—for Professor Fleming, I suspect, as well as for us—lies not in the quality of its historical or political analysis, but in the philosophical and ethical point of view which inspires it. It is not possible to object to his policy prescriptions on the usual grounds, for Fleming stands avowedly outside the moral framework of the customary debate over America’s Asian policy. That debate is usually concerned with defining the most effective ways of protecting America’s security interests and of advancing the cause of the free society, itself interpreted in terms of the classic political values of the West, in the Pacific area. Fleming, however, rejects these goals. He is a social democrat, and accepts moreover the Enlight-

enment view of history: thus, to paraphrase slightly another historian of similar orientation, he does not fear the victory of communism in Asia; he welcomes it. While conceding that Asian communist nations live under “many regimentations and controls,” he is persuaded that socialist states of all varieties at least protect man’s “elemental liberty to eat”; and he believes as well that the “irreversible” laws of social evolution will ultimately purge communist regimes of whatever evils they now contain.

Whatever else may divide leftists old and new, most remain alike in their materialism and utopianism. The hysterical outbursts of some of the critics of our activities in Asia will continue to mystify Americans until they understand that it is not American foreign policy which is the primary target, but the political values which that policy is intended to support.

The purpose of Dr. Gordon’s volume is superficially the same as Professor Fleming’s: to justify and to delimit the conditions under which the United States might withdraw militarily from Asia. But there the similarity ends. Gordon’s perspective is that of the traditional political analyst, and his concern is with the conditions and policies which lead to balance and stability in international politics. What American foreign policy has lacked most of late, he argues, is a clear set of priorities, and he proceeds to develop at some length a well-conceived, three-level format for distinguishing among the nation’s interests and objectives in the contemporary world. At the first level would be those events and issues justifying a resort to war; at the second, those whose importance is not sufficient to draw us into war but which nevertheless justify a more limited response; and at the third, those which we can and do ignore.

In the past, Gordon believes, United States policy has commonly been based on some such distinctions as these. Dismissing as fatuous most of the recent critiques of America’s alleged globalism, he argues that

historically the nation has gone to war only in pursuit of a quite specific objective: to prevent a great power from attaining regional hegemony, out of a conviction that a concentration of war-making power on a continental scale would constitute a serious threat to American security. This has been true with respect to Asia as well as Europe, he argues, and it is in this light that he interprets the Open Door, the opposition to Japan's Twenty-One Demands, the nonrecognition policy toward Manchuko, and our recent stance toward Communist China. Peking has succeeded Tokyo as the principal threat to the balance of power in Asia, he asserts, since it is clear that China seeks to dominate the region by creating along her periphery a rim of nations submissive to her will. As in the past, we now seek to prevent a power already embarked upon aggrandizement from achieving final regional dominance.

Under present circumstances, however, Gordon feels that our methods need not be identical with those applied against Japan. For the first time since 1915, he believes, the conditions exist for the emergence of a multipolar political system in the Pacific region. The growing Chinese threat is now widely and openly acknowledged in the rimland countries, and there is a spreading conviction that many economic development needs can best be met through closer cooperation. Thus, over the course of the last decade, the interest of the Southeast Asian nations in regional organization has grown apace. A particularly encouraging sign, he feels, is the establishment in 1967 of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), a five-nation union linking Thailand, Malaysia, Indonesia, Singapore, and the Philippines: for the first time a far-ranging, indigenous grouping has been formed in the region without the "stigma" of Western sponsorship. While initially the organization is expected to concern itself primarily with common economic problems, Gordon is convinced that the creation of ASEAN presages closer cooperation among the member states for security pur-

poses as well. He suggests, in fact, that the formation of a joint military force to combat insurgency, trained and equipped by the United States, Australia, and hopefully Japan, might well be a future order of business.

Such developments, he rightfully points out, would clearly be to the advantage of the United States. Although the American nuclear shield would continue to provide the indispensable security framework for the region for some time to come, the task of containing the kind of threats most likely to emanate from China in the future would fall increasingly to the Southeast Asians themselves, thus permitting a lower American profile in the area. As the five nations become more closely united, he suggests further, they increasingly will constitute by themselves the "effective region" of Southeast Asia. This, he feels, will substantially reduce if not eliminate entirely any security interests which the United States might have in other area nations. Through gradual disengagement from the region, then, America's major objectives in Asia can be achieved.

Gordon's thesis, which is based on extensive research and interviewing throughout Asia over a period of some years, is impressively stated. Nevertheless, a few nagging doubts remain. Many will quarrel, for example, with his interpretation of the motives which inspired America's Asian policy during the first four decades of this century. Gordon is content merely to assert that Stimson, Hull, et al. were "less than candid" when they defined our Asian objectives and interests in other than power-political terms; but surely more than assertion—or a few supporting statements from diplomatic historians—is required to establish the intentions which motivated forty years of policy. The suspicion arises, in fact, that Gordon accepts rather uncritically the "iron law of politics" long advanced by his mentor, Professor Hans J. Morgenthau, who believes that all men when they act politically cannot help but pursue "interest defined in terms of power," whatever may

be their assessment of their own motives. In any event, Gordon is outside his field when he writes of diplomatic history, and he clearly has ignored the extent to which ideology and a naive moralism have warped American policy in Asia and elsewhere since 1900, and may continue to influence it in the future.

Equally worrisome is his suggestion that as cooperation increases within the ASEAN group, our own security interest in such countries as Cambodia and Laos will correspondingly diminish. Gordon appears to forget that Southeast Asia is a subregion, not a region, and that the existence of a balance of power within Southeast Asia is not necessarily identical with a balance in the overall Pacific area. Should the non-ASEAN nations within the subregion fall within the Chinese orbit, the impact upon the political structure of Asia would likely be far more profound than he believes. Moreover, while it is possible to overstress the significance of "falling dominoes," from a geostrategic point of view Southeast Asia does constitute an identifiable unit. Should an expansionist power gain substantial influence or control over a significant part of it, the security impact upon the remainder cannot help but be shattering. Fortunately, the perceptions of the Southeast Asians themselves appear superior to Dr. Gordon's on this point: Thailand, for example, has already evinced substantial concern about the erosion of the non-communist position in Laos and Cambodia, and there is no reason to believe that the growth of ASEAN will reduce Thai worries about the possible establishment of a communist salient in the heart of the Indochinese peninsula.

Finally, it seems improbable that the degree of political integration required for joint military action against local insurgencies will exist any time soon. Ethnic divisions and suspicions arising out of past conflicts continue to constitute one of the dominant facts of political life in the region, and are a major obstacle to extensive cooperation of any kind. While the United

States is clearly bent on lowering its profile in the area, we will, if we are serious about maintaining a balance of power in Asia, be heavily involved in the affairs of that continent for decades to come.

These objections aside, Dr. Gordon has given us a solid analysis of contemporary Asian international relations and of the general requirements for a successful American policy in the Pacific region. His monograph offers as well an excellent counterargument to those who suggest that Southeast Asia be abandoned to China. We need more such contributions to the debate over America's role in Asia.

Reviewed by JAMES E. DORNAN, JR.

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### *The New Bend Sinister*

**The New Left Reader**, edited by Carl Oglesby, *New York: Grove Press, Inc., 1969. 312 pp. \$8.50.*

YOUNG MR. OGLESBY and the Grove Press had to push to get this anthology of the new left out in time: they published on December 17, 1969 and on January 17, 1970 an editorial in the *Guardian* announced ". . . the passing of the new left. . . the break-up of the new left . . . the new left has ceased to exist. . . ." Of course the *Guardian*—voice, sign and avatar of the farthest Marxist skirmishers ever since Henry Wallace took that gambol with the "Progressive" party in Harry Truman's 1948—had quite accurately diagnosed the lethal splintering now manifest in the student left. But out of its own dogged survival experience in a still basically unsympathetic ambience, the *Guardian* also knew that the passing of one new left does not foreclose the emergence of another. "Now," it said, "we must build a new left. . . ."