

TOP SECRET

STATEMENT OF POLICY

on

U. S. POLICY IN MAINLAND SOUTHEAST ASIA*

I. GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS

1. General. Since mainland Southeast Asia does not represent a unified area, courses of action must generally be determined in the light of widely varying country situations. However, basic objectives and main directions of U. S. policy can and should be established on a regional basis.

2. Consequences of Communist Domination. The national security of the United States would be endangered by Communist domination of mainland Southeast Asia, whether achieved by overt aggression, subversion, or a political and economic offensive.

a. The loss to Communist control of any single free country would encourage tendencies toward accommodation by the rest.

b. The loss of the entire area would have a seriously adverse impact on the U. S. position elsewhere in the Far East, have severe economic consequences for many nations of the free world, add significant resources to the Communist bloc in rice, rubber, tin and other minerals, and could result in severe economic and political pressures on Japan and India for accommodation to the Communist bloc. The loss of Southeast Asia mainland could thus have farreaching consequences seriously adverse to U. S. security interests.

3. The Communist Threat

a. Overt Aggression. Although Communist policy now emphasizes non-military methods, the danger of overt aggression will remain inherent so long as Communist China and North Viet Nam continue a basically hostile policy supported by substantial military forces. There is only a cease-fire in Viet Nam and sporadic hostilities continue in Laos. The Viet Minh have continued to improve

* For purposes of this paper "Mainland Southeast Asia" consists of Burma, Cambodia, Laos, Thailand, Viet Nam, Malaya and Singapore. In addition, there is attached a supplementary statement of policy on the special situation in North Viet Nam.