

THE SOUTHEAST ASIA CRISIS, Hammarskjold Forum Series No. 8. By Lyman M. Tondel, Jr., Editor. Dobbs Ferry, New York: Oceana Pub. Inc. 1966. \$6.00.

It is a fact of life that all large and powerful nations tend to look on the smaller countries in their neighbourhood as areas of special interest to them. In fact, one of the main attractions of the United Nations to these smaller countries is their reliance on it, if not to eliminate the Big Power influence altogether to keep it within tolerable limits and to restrain it when it tends to get out of bounds.

Traditionally, any Chinese Government has looked upon Southeast Asia as an area of special interest to China. To understand why, one has only to glance at the map of Asia. Mr. Young's ideas on how the "Southeast Asia Crisis" might be resolved seem to me to pay insufficient attention to this aspect of the matter. But whether or not one agrees with Mr. Young, this book makes interesting reading; and Mr. Young makes what I consider to be a truly perceptive observation.

Having stated earlier his view that the "menace of China is indeed the overriding political issue in our time," Mr. Young proceeds:

I am increasingly worried over the political and psychological impact on Asians of the American-Chinese confrontation and the simultaneous confrontation with Western technology. . . . The more American-Chinese confrontation becomes exclusively Chinese and American, the more the Asian States may one by one try to avoid any involvement or entanglement.

Some Asian reactions seeks a return to the past, cutting off external relations. This is a withdrawal within the confines of the nation or the group. It is not so much the 'Yankee go home' impulse as it is the 'foreigner keep out' feeling. The more we stress anti-communism, containment, prosecution of war, security alliances, and the menace of China, and the longer we neglect political and psychological policies with depth of perception, the more we may drive Asian intellectuals, and particularly the younger Asians, away from us and back into an atavistic hiding place. The more the Chinese threaten, infiltrate and manipulate as they have done with India, Pakistan, Indonesia, Thailand, Cambodia, Laos and Vietnam, the more will people in these countries turn against China. But the net result is that they will be turning against both China and America, if we are not careful.

That this is no needless worry is confirmed by Ambassador Ramani, Malaysian Permanent Representative to the United Nations, who in reply to a question at the Forum on the Vietnamese situation, said:

We in Malaysia have a selfish interest in this situation, because if South Vietnam falls, then we would hope you would find another base.

But having so clearly put his finger on the American dilemma in Southeast Asia, Mr. Young rather surprisingly puts forward a programme the effect of which could easily be to make United States-Chinese confrontation more exclusively United States-Chinese. The core of his programme is the "international insulation of a suitable zone or strip across Southeast Asia" running along the 17th parallel in Vietnam and then dog-legging "northwest up through the valleys of Laos toward the international confluence where Burma, Laos and China meet"—in other words, running along or close to China's southern border. This zone, whose establishment need not, according to Mr. Young, require negotiation with Peking or Hanoi, would be manned by an international force drawn from several nations, "but obviously the United States would have to provide the majority." Mr. Young concedes that this "insulation"

would infringe the 1962 Geneva Agreement on Laos to which the United States is a signatory. "However," he says, "I think for reasons of policy and power we would have to proceed on the basis that the 1962 Agreement has been nullified by the communist signatories." Mr. Young also proposes that the United Nations establish a permanent UN Commission for Southeast Asia. This Commission would have no dealings with Hanoi or Peking. For such dealings Mr. Young would rely on a widened Geneva Conference arrangement because, (he says) "I remain convinced that an enforceable settlement by convergence outside of the UN is mandatory before either Peking or Hanoi should be considered for membership in the UN at all."

Although Mr. Young describes his package as a "policy of convergence beyond containment," it reads to me like a further extension and tightening of the policy of containment, carrying with it the seed of a direct military confrontation between the United States and Peking. Considering the nature of the dilemma which he posed, it might have seemed more logical if Mr. Young had suggested (as Dr. Larson did at the Forum) that instead of continuing down the same old road of containment, Peking should be given the seat in the UN to which she is legally entitled, and so made a party to negotiations in which China's legitimate fears and interests with regard to Southeast Asia (which, as I said earlier, do exist whether or not we choose to recognize them) could begin to be considered and honourable accommodations sought.

—J. BARRINGTON*

* Visiting Professor of Political Science, Department of Political Science, The University of Alberta, Former Burmese Ambassador to Canada.

THE CANADIAN YEARBOOK OF INTERNATIONAL LAW, Vol. IV. Edited by C. B. Bourne. Vancouver: Publications Centre, University of British Columbia. 1966. \$12.00.

A country's interest in international law is some measure of its maturity. Just as an individual, as he matures, shifts from complete egocentrism to an increasing awareness of interpersonal relationships, so too does a country in its development go through a change in emphasis from almost a fixation with domestic problems to paying greater attention to its relationships in the world community. One of the tools used by nations in governing their conduct towards one another is international law and the upsurge of interest in Canada in this field would appear to indicate that we have come of age.

It is fortunate, indeed, that in keeping with this upswing in interest there appeared on the Canadian scene such an admirable publication as *The Canadian Yearbook of International Law*, the fourth annual edition which has just been published. The format and quality of the production of the Yearbook by the University of British Columbia Publications Centre is excellent. A little more careful proof-reading would have spotted one or two glaring typographical errors but they are picayune in relation to the otherwise fine printing job.