

October 2011

Parallel and Divergent Aspects of British Rule in the Raj, French Rule in Indochina, Dutch Rule in the Netherlands East Indies (Indonesia), and American Rule in the Philippines

by David Steinberg

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I dedicate this essay to the memory of my dear friend, co-worker and fellow omnivorous intellect Y. C. Pan (1935-2011).

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A. The Imperialists

1. Similarity of General Culture

1.1 European Cultural Background of the Imperialists

I wrote this essay to better understand the development of the [British Raj](#) in India which is my more central concern. In that context, it is useful to consider the other European empires in Asia and the American ruled Philippines. **All of these great powers largely shared the common European higher culture of their day as well as being influenced by more particularistic national characteristics** concerning the form of, and attitude toward, government, national self-image, economic and military challenges etc.

Like so many people in all times and places, the decision makers, officials and propagandists of the major [imperialist nations](#) in Asia (France, the Netherlands, the UK and the USA) **tried to rationalize their actions in the context of their values. This was a particularly strong challenge given that all of these countries trumpeted their support for human rights. In addition, all four of the major imperialist nations were fundamentally democratic.** The one partial exception was France prior to 1871.

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Metcalfe's statement (below) could apply equally to the Dutch, Americans or French -

“Of necessity, as they sought to come to terms with the existence of their new dominion, the British drew upon a range of ideas that had for a long time shaped their views of themselves and, more generally, of the world outside their island home. **As products at once of Britain's own history of overseas expansion and its participation in the larger intellectual currents of Europe**, these ideas included settled expectations of how a 'proper' society ought to be organized, and the values, above all those of the right to property and the rule of law, that for the English defined a 'civilized' people. As they extended their conquests to India, the British had always to determine the extent to which that land was a fundamentally different, 'Oriental' society, and to what extent it possessed institutions similar to those of Europe; how far its peoples ought to be transformed in Europe's image, and how they should be expected to live according to the standards of their own culture” [Thomas R. Metcalfe, *Ideologies of the Raj*](#), (pp. 1-2)

1.2 Racism, Social Darwinism, Orientalism

The century from about 1850 until about 1950 saw many technical triumphs, a huge increase in the belief in science and technology as panaceas, a decline of religious belief and, a not unrelated, increase in xenophobic nationalism often buttressed by [social Darwinism](#), [scientific racism](#), [racial anti-Semitism](#) and unbridled capitalism embraced and supported by the state.

This racist perspective worked against according oriental subject people equality as human beings. In India this is illustrated by the replacement of the [Utilitarian](#) view that Indian cultures, languages, customs were primitive and inferior¹ while Indian people, minus their culture and acculturation were the same as Europeans to the “Orientalist” racially deterministic view that Asian people were by nature different, and in most things inferior, to Europeans.

The Utilitarian view led to the belief that erasing Indian culture and acculturation, and replacing it with a scientific-rational-European total upbringing and education would turn Indians into ideal rational men. When this would be completed, in the

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words of Lord Macaulay, a leading exponent of the utilitarian point of view, in his historically important *Minute on Indian Education* (1835) -

Come what may, self-knowledge will lead to self-rule, and that would be the proudest day in British history.

Earlier, in 1833, addressing Parliament as secretary to the East India Company Board of Control he stated –

It may be that the public mind of India may expand under our system till it has outgrown that system; that by good government we may educate our subjects into a capacity for better government; that, having become instructed in European knowledge, they may, in some future age, demand European institutions. Whether such a day will ever come I know not. But never will I attempt to avert or retard it. Whenever it comes, it will be the proudest day in English history. To have found a people sunk in the lowest depths of slavery and superstition, to have so ruled them as to have made them desirous and capable of all the privileges of citizens, would indeed be a title to glory all our own.²

The Orientalist racially deterministic view led to the belief that educating Indians as Europeans led only to corrupt Indians showing the worst features of both races³/civilizations. This approach naturally led to the marginalizing of Eurasians⁴.

1.3 Marginality of Concern with Empire

1.3.1 [British Raj](#)

Although India was of great importance to Britain both economically and in maintaining Britain's position in the world there was little general interest in its welfare. Though the Conservative party passionately embraced the Empire, and the Liberal party considered the Empire to be a heavy moral responsibility, many writers have remarked that the few days Parliament dedicated to debating Indian issues were marked by the very sparse attendance of MPs. There were

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prominent British politicians, most notably [Winston Churchill](#), who tried to make India a party issue. However, to their credit, some statesman, such as [Ramsay MacDonald](#), [William Wedgwood Benn](#) and [Stanley Baldwin](#) tried to maintain it as a non-party issue. Unfortunately, this resulted in excessively cautious decision making. This approach resulted in the [Government of India Act 1919](#) and the [Government of India Act 1935](#) both of which were too little and too late to win the cooperation of most nationalist opinion.

In fact, aside from the small number of Britons connected to India by family or service, **concern with India was centred in narrow political circles of which the following were the most important:**

- **The Lancashire cotton trade for which India was the most important export customer for its product as well as being a minor supplier of raw cotton. The main concern of this group was to maintain its position in the Indian market, which implied opposing any imposition of import tariffs, and retarding the development of the Indian cotton industry. Their concern for the wellbeing of India and Indians was non-existent;**
- **Government patronage managers who enjoyed the filling of the limited number of lucrative positions particularly that of [viceroy](#) and the governorships of the three presidencies ([Bengal](#), [Bombay](#), [Madras](#)). The fact that these positions were frequently filled with politically involved aristocrats, often in payment of a political debt, shows a high degree of insouciance of the British political establishment regarding their responsibility for hundreds of millions of Indians. In this connection, one has only to survey the viceroys between [Hardinge](#) and [Montbatten](#) to get the point –**
 - [Lord Chelmsford](#) (viceroy 1916 to 1921)
India made a massive [contribution to the British war effort](#) in [World War I](#). The mishandling of the war effort by British authorities (disaster in Iraq, coerced recruiting for the Indian army, inflation, cutting off of vital imports etc.) led to

inflation and wide-spread social distress and potential unrest. In addition, the wartime propaganda about fighting for freedom etc. led to a [strong demand for "home rule"](#) after 1915 among the numerically small but rapidly growing and important westernized elite.

Lord Chelmsford was considered unimaginative and not very intelligent⁵. However, he was selected at this time of unprecedented crisis because no first class talent in British politics was willing to leave the center of power in London during the First World War. Among the mediocrities available, he was supposedly selected because he was the only [fellow of All Souls](#) at hand in India (see [Gopal, Sarvepalli, "ALL SOULS AND INDIA, 1921-47"](#)). In fact, contrary to what might have been expected, like [Lord Irwin](#) he turned out to be a strategic thinker and reformer making a major contribution to Indian political development (see [Robb 1976](#)).

- [Earl of Reading](#) (viceroy 1921 to 1926) - a brilliant jurist sent when what was needed was a dynamic politician capable of restoring rapport between the British and the Indian political classes – i.e. brilliant but the wrong man for the time and place.

- [Lord Irwin](#) (viceroy 1926 to 1931) – when sent he had not accomplished much in life and was not known to have any interest in India. He made, from the British point of view, serious blunders which decreased the prestige of the Raj, undercut its Indian supporters, strengthened the Indian nationalist movement and led to a split in the Conservative party in Britain. These were:
 - He proposed, and then supported, against opposition, the decision to have an all-white constitutional Statutory Commission ([Simon Commission](#)). This gave a badly needed issue to unify and revivify the flagging nationalist movement;

 - He negotiated the [Gandhi-Irwin Pact](#) to buy Gandhi's attendance at the [second Round Table Conferences in London](#) and a temporary suspension of the [second civil disobedience campaign](#) at the price of treating Gandhi as the leader of India and thus making the [Congress Party](#) into a sort of shadow parallel government. This undermined the support for the British

Government of India among its most important supporters and made the task of governing India almost impossible.

- He made the "[Dominion Status](#)" announcement (31 October 1929) –

The goal of British policy was stated in the [declaration of August 1917](#) to be that of providing for the gradual development of self-governing institutions, with a view to the progressive realization of responsible government in India as an integral part of the British Empire.... I am authorized on behalf of His Majesty's Government to state clearly that in their judgement it is implicit in the declaration of 1917 that the natural issue of India's constitutional progress, **as there contemplated**, is the attainment of Dominion Status.

This statement thoroughly upset the Conservative and Liberal parties while it did little to propitiate the nationalists because:

- It did not give any time for the realization of dominion status;
- Dominion status in 1917 meant internal self-government with the UK being in charge of defense and foreign affairs and a theoretical right to disallow colonial legislation⁶. This was similar to the [commonwealth status enjoyed by the Philippines](#)⁷ 1935-46. Dominion status was redefined in 1926 when the [Balfour Declaration](#), recognized the self-governing [Dominions](#) of the [British Empire](#) as fully autonomous i.e. virtually independent states. It will be noted that **the wording of Irwin's statement essentially stated that the British government remained committed to giving India the pre-1926 version of dominion status**⁸. This was in line with the clear, if undiplomatic, statement of Sir Malcolm Hailey, Home Member to the Government of India, on 8 February 1924 -

The pronouncement of August 1917 spoke of '... the gradual development of self-governing institutions with a view to the progressive realization of responsible government in India '. That is also the term used in the Preamble to the Act ... The expression used in the Act is a term of precision, conveying that the Executive in India would be responsible to the Indian Legislature instead of to the British Parliament. If you analyse the term full Dominion Self-Government ', you will see that it is of

somewhat wider extent, conveying that not only will the Executive be responsible to the Legislature, but the Legislature will in itself have the full powers which are typical of the modern Dominion. I say there is some difference of substance, because responsible government is not necessarily incompatible with a Legislature with limited or restricted powers. It may be that full Dominion self-government is the logical outcome of responsible government, nay, it may be the inevitable and historical development of responsible government, but it is a further and a final step.⁹

Even so, Conservative opposition prevented any [mention of dominion status in the Government of India Act of 1935](#). In fact, **the first statement that Britain was committed to give India dominion status of the post-1926 ([Statute of Westminster](#)) variety was made in a minor speech of the Viceroy in 1940**. It is worth quoting [Rizvi's](#) text (pp. 148-149) -

On 10 January 1940, speaking at the Bombay Orient Club, **Linlithgow stated that the British Government's object was to grant India the 'full Dominion Status . . . of the Statute of Westminster variety', and assured his audience that the government would do its best to 'reduce to the minimum the interval between the existing state of things and the achievement of Dominion Status'....**

The speech, which was somewhat in contrast to his earlier views, was favourably received in India. Gandhi saw in it 'the germ of a possible settlement', and asked for an interview with the Viceroy to explore the possibilities of ending the deadlock.'

...

The reaction was somewhat different in Britain. **Linlithgow's mention of 'Dominion Status of Westminster variety' evoked protests from the diehards who tried to bring pressure on [Zetland](#) to dissuade Linlithgow from coming to terms with the Congress**, The difficulty, as Morley had complained thirty years before, lay in synchronizing clocks in different hemispheres. **'It was not easy to devise a formula that could pass for self-government in India, and for the British Raj at Westminster.'** Sir

Henry Page-Croft, a diehard who was to become a parliamentary Under-Secretary in the Churchill Government, declared himself 'astonished' that in order to placate the Congress 'the Viceroy should have gone out of his way to stress that Dominion Status was of the same kind as that provided by the Statute of Westminster'. A few days later he again warned Zetland:

The Viceroy seems to have made a most definite statement which goes far beyond the intention of Parliament, which statement some of us regard as most dangerous and seriously to embarrass Parliament in dealing with any alteration of the constitution should it become necessary, at the end of the war.

Diehard criticism of his speech put Linlithgow on his guard: in future he avoided the use of the phrase 'Dominion Status of the Westminster variety'.

- [Earl of Willingdon](#) (viceroy 1931 to 1936)

Willingdon had been a very progressive governor of Bombay (1913-18) and Madras (1919-24). He got along well with upper class Indians and had many India friends. He also genuinely wanted the Indians to achieve self-government. Unfortunately he was not very intelligent¹⁰ and time had rather passed him by. Like [Van Mook](#), he believed that no progress could be made in a situation of disorder. In the case of India this required that Congress cease its program of civil disobedience, cease claiming to be the sole spokesman of the Indian people, cease claiming the right to be a parallel government and start behaving as a responsible democratic party, like those in Britain, dedicated to achieving its supporters' goals through constitutional means. Having been landed by Irwin with a situation of severely weakened morale among government officials and the government's traditional supporters¹¹ he used a two pronged approach of encouraging the Home government to make a generous constitutional settlement while trying to re-establish the government's ability to rule¹² through applying repressive measures aptly called "[civil martial law](#)"¹³. Though this was successful it eventually became clear that in the long run, the British had to get the support

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of [Congress](#) as they could not permanently rule through the use of emergency powers.

- [Marquess of Linlithgow](#) (viceroy 1936 to 1943)

Linlithgow was really an aristocratic party hack. If not for his birth it is doubtful whether he would have risen higher than the chairmanship of a parliamentary committee or, at most, a second level ministerial post. He was high-minded, cautious, unimaginative, hard working and extremely unempathetic¹⁴. He lacked the ability to put people at their ease and they generally felt uncomfortable with him.

- [Viscount Wavell](#) (viceroy 1943 to 1947)

Wavell was a man of great integrity, a capable if rather unlucky soldier, an intellectual and a poet. It might fairly be said that his personality was polar opposite to those of Irwin and [Montbatten](#). He knew and loved India and wanted to help it achieve independence. He forced Churchill to provide food to the victims of the [Bengal famine of 1943](#) which had been almost ignored by Linlithgow. However, he was no politician and did not like politicians and politics, whether Indian or British. He had did not have any of the social graces required to develop a relationship with the key political figures.

Wavell was selected by Churchill (see: [Wavell 1973](#); [Mason 1982](#); [Marshall 1977](#)) for two reasons which show his lack of concern for India:

- He did not like Wavell and wanted to force his retirement from the army to clear the way for the appointment of Montbatten as Commander in Chief, South-East Asia;
- No major political figure was willing to take the post which would amount to political exile. [Atlee](#), [Lord Halifax \(formerly Lord Irwin\)](#) and [Eden](#) were considered to be suitable and indeed would have been.

[Sir Stanley Reed](#), the highly respected editor of [The Times of India](#) from 1907 until 1924 wrote the following ([Reed](#) pp. 79-80)

Those whose work and responsibility lay in India were often baffled to understand what possible justification there was for many of the appointments made. When they peered below the surface it was frequently to learn that the last consideration was fitness for the job. "Lord A." was selected because his wife had held a position at Court; "Mr. B." because he was a failure in his political office and it was desirable to get rid of him without friction; "C." because he was a junior Whip or a Parliamentary Private Secretary... This practice prevailed almost to the end.

One of the evening newspapers announced a certain name; it seemed to me so grotesque, knowing the circumstances; I could not believe it possible... To everyone's amazement the official announcement was made two days later, with consequences everyone should have foreseen.... (A)ll blinked their eyes when Sir George Clarke was taken from his desk as Secretary to the Committee of Defence and sent to Bombay. What was the reason? It can be given in his own words. "Haldane had produced his scheme of Army Reform. As Secretary to the Committee of Defence I tore it to pieces in a note, and a precis was sent to each member of the Cabinet. Haldane was told to carry on. After that, of course, there was no place for me in the Committee of Defence and they sent me here."

1.3.2 French Indochina

Historically there was little public or political interest in the empire¹⁵. Indochina started out as an initiative of the French Navy and was run largely for the benefit of French prestige, French settlers (colons) and French investors in that order. No real, as opposed to rhetorical, interest was taken in the native population though any sign of unrest was brutally suppressed.

It was true that **the colonies, African and Asian, had proved valuable to France in the depression**: in 1927 France imported 11.4 per cent of its goods and raw materials from the empire and exported 14.7 per cent; by 1936 the figures were

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33.6 per cent and 33.1 per cent.¹⁶ Colonial soldiers and factory workers had been important in the First World War, even if their importance had apparently been forgotten by the late 1930s.¹⁷ Despite the National Colonial Exposition of 1922 and the vast International Colonial Exposition at Marseille in 1931, the idea colonial had not, however, become a popular one: the colonies remained a minority interest. For the general public they were 'exotic', and colonialist propaganda, evoking that feeling, could not make them less so.¹⁸ The French proletariat, as Ho Chi Minh put it, thought of a colony as 'nothing but a country full of sand below and sun above, with a few green palms and a few brown natives'.¹⁹

Quoted from [Tarlton *Imperialism in Southeast Asia: a fleeting passing phase*](#) p. 272

1.3.3 [Dutch East Indies](#) (Netherlands' East Indies (NEI), Netherlands India, modern [Indonesia](#))²⁰

The degree of public and political interest in the NEI was much higher than in the case of the other imperial powers. This is accounted for by three factors

- The Netherlands' standing as a middle power was due to that tiny country's ruling the huge, populous and potentially wealthy NEI;
- Income from the NEI was of great importance to the Netherlands' economy²¹;
- It was an important source of employment for Netherlands' university graduates.

1.3.4 [The Philippines](#)

There was never much imperialist sentiment in the 19th and early 20th century USA. For that reason the United States defined its colonial mission as one of tutelage, preparing the Philippines for eventual independence.

B. Land and People of the Empires

2. Diversity and Integrity of: the British Raj (Indian Subcontinent); French Ruled Indochina (Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos); the Netherlands East Indies (Indonesia); and the Philippines

2.1 [British Raj](#)

[India](#) is a subcontinent with variations in [geography](#), [language](#) and [culture](#) exceeding the parallel variations in Europe. Underlying all these differences is the underlying unity of the [Hindu](#) religion and culture. In 1940, the Indian total population 360 million²² while the UK population in 1941 was 48.2 million.²³

Two of the most important divisions in the British Raj, comprising in 1937 modern day India, Pakistan and Bangladesh were:

- Religion – Overall, about 25% of the population of the Raj was [Muslim](#) and about 70% were [Hindu](#). Only in the Northwest (modern day [Pakistan](#)) and in the Northeast (modern day [Bangladesh](#)) were Muslims a majority.
- The British directly ruled about two-thirds of the area of the Raj (called British India) containing about three-quarters of the population. The remaining area was divided up into almost 600 [Princely or Native States](#). In the words of Hodson²⁴ -

The Indian States presented a unique problem, and a highly complex one, in the progress to independence. **They varied enormously, from principalities the size of France to petty estates unworthy to be ranked as political entities** yet neither part of British India nor subordinate to any other government than the Crown itself.

Their citizens were not British subjects, but, in international status, 'British protected persons'. Some of the States were ancient monarchies whose history went many centuries back beyond the advent of European power; some had been former feudatories or satrapies of the Mogul Empire which had asserted their independence of the Delhi throne; others were fragments from the breakup of Mogul dominion after the death of [Aurangzeb](#) in 1707, or of the more limited

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empires of the [Mahrattas](#), the [Sikhs](#), or the Muslim overlords of the [Deccan](#) and the south; a few were deliberate creations of the British....

Geographically, India was one and indivisible; communications, common economic interests, and close ties of cultural affinity, linked States and provinces. Only two things separated the Indian States from the rest of India, the historical factor that the States had not been annexed by the British, and the political factor that the States maintained the traditional monarchical form of government.

Did these factors, however, really segregate the States from the Provinces and create an impassable political barrier between them? The freedom of the Indian States from foreign subjugation was only relative; the paramount power controlled the external affairs of the States and exercised wide powers in relation to their internal matters. The whole of the country was, therefore, in varying degrees under the sway of the British Government.

2.2 [French Indochina](#) (modern day [Vietnam](#), [Cambodia](#) and [Laos](#))

As suggested by the name Indochina, the native population was heavily influenced by Chinese and Indian culture and religion²⁵ (mainly Buddhism²⁶).

Population 1936

	Millions	% of Total French Indochina
Cochinchina (in the south – major city Saigon) ²⁷	4.6	20.0
Annam (in the center– major city Huế)	5.7	24.8
Tonkin (northern Vietnam– major city Hanoi)	8.7	37.8
Total Vietnam	19.0	82.6
Cambodia ²⁸	3.0	13.0
Laos ²⁹	1.0	4.3
Total French Indochina	23.0	100
Population France	41.5 ³⁰	

Although containing many minority groups all three countries have one predominant ethnic group and have long, if fluctuating histories as states (see: [Vietnam](#); [History of Cambodia-Khmer Empire](#); [History of Laos-Lan Xang](#)). This is a major distinction between Indochina, on the one hand, and India, Indonesia and the Philippines, on the other. As regards ethnic groups in Indochina –

- "Vietnamese" population (Annamite for the French administration, also known as Kinh ethnic group) always represented more than 80% of the total population of Annam, Cochinchina and Tonkin..³¹
- Cambodia is ethnically homogeneous. More than 90% of its population is of [Khmer](#) origin and speaks the [Khmer language](#), the

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country's official language. The remainder include [Chinese](#), [Vietnamese](#), [Cham](#), [Khmer Loeu](#), and [Indians](#).³²

➤ Laos More than 80% of the population are Lao, while most of the remainder belong to various indigenous minorities such as the Hmong and the Yao. There are small Thai, Vietnamese and Chinese minorities.³³

The [Malay Archipelago](#)

“The Malay Archipelago is a vast [archipelago](#) located between mainland [Southeastern Asia](#) ([Indochina](#)) and [Australia](#). Straddling the [Indian](#) and [Pacific Oceans](#), this group of some 20 000 [islands](#), the world's largest archipelago by area, constitutes the territories of [Indonesia](#), the [Philippines](#), [Singapore](#), [Brunei](#), the [Malaysian](#) states of [Sarawak](#) and [Sabah](#) along with the Federal Territory of [Labuan](#), [East Timor](#), and most of [Papua New Guinea](#).³⁴ “

The native populations of Malaysia, Indonesia (excluding New Guinea) and the Philippines have related linguistic ([Malayo-Polynesian](#)) and ethnic ([Austronesian](#)) origin.

Indian [cultural](#) and religious influence was felt throughout the region. Indian influence was least profound in the Philippines (see [Hinduism in the Philippines](#); [Buddhism in the Philippines](#); [Maradia Lawana](#)³⁵) and in the Outer Islands of Indonesia, more important in [Malaysia](#) (see [Hikayat Seri Rama](#)) and strongest in [Java](#) (see: [Kakawin Rāmāyana](#); [Kakawin Bhāratayuddha](#)) where Hindu (see: [Majapahit Empire](#);) and Buddhist (see [Srivijaya](#); [Sailendra](#)) kingdoms lasted until the rise of [Islam](#) and [Bali](#) ([Ramakavaca](#)) which remains predominantly Hindu until today. In Java a native spiritual tradition, ([Kebatinan or Kejawen](#)) co-exists with Islam.

Subsequently all, except Bali, were converted to [Abrahamic religions](#) by foreign missionaries.

In the case of Malaysia³⁶ and Indonesia Arab traders played a key role. In the case of the Philippines Spanish rule fostered the Catholic faith. However, the Southern Philippines include a significant Muslim population.

However, traces of Hindu influence remain in the [Malay language](#), [literature](#) and [art](#), while “[t]he influence of Hinduism and classical [India](#) remain defining traits of [Indonesian culture](#); the Indian

The Malay Archipelago

concept of the god-king still shapes Indonesian concepts of leadership and the use of Sanskrit in courtly literature and adaptations of Indian mythology such as the Ramayana and Mahabharata.³⁷ “Islam is Indonesia's dominant religion with approximately 88% of its population identifying as Muslims, making it the most populous Muslim-majority nation in the world.”³⁸ However, Indonesia has major Christian, Hindu and animist minorities.

The peoples of the Malay Archipelago, though similar in language and ethnic origin, developed into many isolated communities due to separation by the sea and, within islands, separation by mountains and jungles. This prevented the rise of a shared sense of national identity.

The boundaries of present day Malaysia, Indonesia and the Philippines mirror the final boundaries between the British, Dutch and Spanish empires respectively within the Malay Archipelago rather than any distinction of language, culture or ethnicity. The sense of national identity of Indonesians and Filipinos are products of the nationalist movements of the 20th century, in the case of Indonesia, and the late 19th century in the case of the Philippines. The rise of nationalist movements, in turn, was a response to Western rule and Western education which led to acceptance of Western norms including the normative nature of nation states, the right of self-determination for peoples, democracy and human rights.

2.3 Dutch East Indies (modern Indonesia)

Indonesia, excluding the former Netherlands territory on New Guinea (present day Indonesian provinces of Papua and West Irian Jaya) is part of the Malay Archipelago.

“Most Indonesians are ethnically Austronesian, particularly in central and western Indonesia, although much of eastern Indonesia is Melanesian. There are, however, around 300 distinct native ethnicities in Indonesia and 742 different languages and dialects.”³⁹

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Outside New Guinea the languages are of the [Malayo-Polynesian](#) group. The national language is [Indonesian](#) is a [standardized dialect](#) of the [Malay language](#) though the most widely spoken language is [Javanese](#).

Indonesia is made up of about 18 thousand islands about 6,000 of which are inhabited (see [Geography of Indonesia](#)). Java is by far the most populous island in Indonesia, with approximately 62% of the country's [population](#). With 130 million inhabitants at 940 people per km², it is also the most populous island in the world. If it were a country, it would be the second-most densely-populated country of the world after [Bangladesh](#), except for some very small city-states. Approximately 45% of the population of Indonesia is ethnically Javanese”⁴⁰

At the time of the Second World War, the population of Indonesia was about 72 million as compared to the Dutch population of about 9 million.⁴¹

The Dutch at times claimed that they wanted to develop a sense of Indies nationality while at other times they claimed that valid political institutions could only be rooted in the many diverse Indies’ societies and ethnic groups⁴². This view, strongly propounded by [Colijn](#)⁴³, led to the conclusion that there never was or could be an Indonesian nation and that Dutch rule and coordination would always be required even if local autonomy were to be granted. This view parallels those of the anti-nationalist Conservative politicians in the UK and the associationists in France. In Colijn’s view the Volksraad should never have been established; it promised a non-viable (autonomous Indonesian nation) future.

2.4 [The Philippines](#)

“The Philippines constitutes an [archipelago](#) of 7,107 islands with a total land area of approximately 300,000 [square kilometres](#) (116,000 [sq. mi](#)).”⁴⁴ (See [Geography of the Philippines](#).)

In 1940 the population of the Philippines was about 16.4 million⁴⁵ as compared to the United States population of 131.7 million for that same year.⁴⁶ About two-thirds of the population lived on the island of [Luzon](#) which includes the capital [Manila](#).⁴⁷

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“About 90% of Filipinos are Christians, where 81% belong to the [Roman Catholic Church](#), and the 9% composed of Protestant denominations.... Approximately 5% of Filipinos are Sunni [Muslim](#). They primarily settled in parts of [Mindanao](#) and the [Sulu archipelago](#).”⁴⁸

C. Origin of the Asian Empires

3.1 British Raj

“[The British East India Company](#) ... [b]ased in London ... presided over the creation of the [British Raj](#). In 1617, the Company was given trade rights by the [Mughal Emperor](#). 100 years later, it was granted a royal dictate from the Emperor exempting the Company from the payment of custom duties in [Bengal](#), giving it a decided commercial advantage in the Indian trade. A decisive victory by [Sir Robert Clive](#) at the [Battle of Plassey](#) in 1757 established the British East India Company as a military as well as a commercial power. By 1760, the French were driven out of India, with the exception of a few trading posts on the coast, such as [Pondicherry](#).”⁴⁹

“The efforts of the company in administering India emerged as a model for the [civil service](#) system in Britain, especially during the 19th century. Deprived of its trade monopoly in 1813, the company wound up as a trading enterprise. In 1858, the Company lost its administrative functions to the British government following the 1857 uprising which began with what the Company's Indian soldiers called the *Sepoy Mutiny* or [Indian Rebellion of 1857](#). India then became a formal crown colony.”⁵⁰

3.2 French Indochina

“[France](#) assumed sovereignty over Annam and Tonkin after the [Sino-French War](#), which lasted from [1884](#) to [1885](#). French Indochina was formed in October [1887](#) from Annam, Tonkin, Cochin China, and the Kingdom of Cambodia; Laos was added after the [Franco-Siamese War of 1893](#). The federation lasted until [1954](#). The French formally left the local rulers in power, who were the [Emperors of Vietnam](#), [Kings of Cambodia](#), and [Kings of Luang Prabang](#), but in fact gathered all powers in their hands, the local rulers acting only as figureheads.”⁵¹

3.3 Dutch East Indies

“Beginning in 1602 with the founding of the [Dutch East India Company](#), the [Dutch](#) took three centuries to establish themselves as rulers of what is now Indonesia, exploiting the fractionalisation of the small kingdoms that had replaced Majapahit.... Although the full extent of the colonial territory was not established until the early twentieth century⁵², it was these boundaries that formed the modern nation of Indonesia that was [declared in 1945](#)....

[The of the Dutch East India Company] went bankrupt at the end of the 18th century and after a short British rule under [Thomas Stamford Raffles](#), the Dutch state took over the ... possessions in [1816](#).”⁵³

3.4 The Philippines⁵⁴

In the wake of the [Spanish-American War](#), “Spain was forced to cede the Philippines to the United States in exchange for 20 million [United States dollars](#) with the [Treaty of Paris](#) in 1898.”⁵⁵ United States forces then bloodily defeated the Filipinos in the [Philippine-American War](#).

“A [civilian government](#) was established by the Americans in 1901, with [William H. Taft](#) as the first [civilian governor](#) of the Philippines. [English](#) was declared the official language. Six hundred American teachers were imported aboard the [USS Thomas](#). Also, the [Catholic Church](#) was disestablished, and a considerable amount of church land was purchased and redistributed.

Some measures of Filipino self-rule were allowed, however. An elected Filipino [legislature](#) was inaugurated in 1907.

When [Woodrow Wilson](#) became the [American President](#), in 1913, there was a major change in official American policy concerning the Philippines. While the previous [Republican](#) administrations had envisioned the Philippines as a perpetual American colony, the Wilson administration decided to start a process that would gradually lead to Philippine independence. U.S. administration of the Philippines was declared to be temporary and aimed to develop institutions that would permit and encourage the eventual establishment of a free and democratic government. Therefore, U.S. officials concentrated on the creation of such

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practical supports for democratic government as public education and a sound legal system. The Philippines were granted [free trade](#) status, with the U.S.

In 1916, the [Philippine Autonomy Act](#), popularly known as the [Jones Law](#), was passed by the U.S. Congress. The law which served as the new organic act (or constitution) for the Philippines, stated in its preamble that the eventual independence of the Philippines would be American policy, subject to the establishment of a stable government. The law maintained the [Governor General of the Philippines](#), appointed by the President of the United States, but established a bicameral Philippine Legislature to replace the elected Philippine Assembly (lower house) and appointive Philippine Commission (upper house) previously in place. The Filipino House of Representatives would be purely elected, while the new Philippine Senate would have the majority of its members elected by senatorial district with senators representing non-Christian areas appointed by the Governor-General."⁵⁶

D. Defensibility of the Empires

The British, as dominant naval power, could easily defend its Asian possessions at least until the early 20th century. The Americans as a rising naval power could do likewise. France could not have defended its Asian colonies against Britain but, it was a major European military power which Britain would think twice about offending. Here the situation of the NEI was quite different. The Netherlands could not have defended the NEI against seizure by the British, Americans or French or, after about 1910 by the Japanese. What kept the NEI safe was the benevolent protection of the British navy. The temptation for stronger powers to seize the NEI to gain markets or access to resources was reduced when, in 1870, the Dutch instituted a 'Liberal Policy' opening the markets of the Netherlands East Indies to foreign imports and its resources for exploitation by foreign investors.

E. Benefits from the Empires to the Metropolitan Country –

i.e. National Interests Served by the Colonies

4.1 [British Raj](#)

British Material Self-interest in India

The material self-interest was economic and strategic. India was a captive market, for long prevented by a system of countervailing excise duties from protecting its cotton-manufacturing industry from the products of Lancashire. Even after the Fiscal Convention of 1920 had thrown out this system, and established that when the Government and Legislature of India, acting for the benefit of India and in response to Indian opinion, were agreed on fiscal policy, the Secretary of State would not exercise his overriding power on behalf of any British interest, it remained true that British control of Indian government conveyed substantial economic advantages. At least it prevented the development of Indian economic policy on autarkic lines which most British people honestly believed to be harmful to India—and which would certainly have been harmful to Britain. Strategically, India became the trunk of a systematic corpus of imperial defence whose limbs stretched from Hong Kong to the Middle East, from East Africa to the northern passes of Burma. Apart from the Indian forces themselves, it was an essential overseas training-ground and cantonment for the British Army. And for this India paid. Such benefits were not lightly yielded to political pressure.

A less tangible but nevertheless very powerful interest was the prestige and authority that Britain gained in world affairs from being master of an immense empire of which India was the heart. Without that empire and the naval power that cemented it she was but a medium-sized European country. With it, she was great among the greatest, boasting a world-wide Pax Britannica. Without India, the subordinate empire would be scarcely more than a string of colonial beads. Pride is less easily sacrificed than even major material interests.

Quoted from [Hodson](#) pp. 3-4.

"In the years before 1914 India's imperial commitment meant three things in practice: that India should be retained as a market for British exports. which meant that the

Government of India should not impose insurmountable barriers, especially tariffs, to the flow of British merchandise to India; that the Indian army be kept available for the imperial cause; and that the Indian administration should ensure that repayment of interest on guaranteed debt bonds was made smoothly and that adequate revenue and remittance was available for the Home Charges. Isolating the imperial factor in India policy allows us to pin-point the fundamental dichotomy of British rule in India. Each prong of its triple commitment cost the Government of India money.... As an India Office memorandum pointed out in June 1931: If a Federal Government were established in India, the aggregate charges under these three heads (Defence, Service of the Debt, and Salaries and Pensions) would, at a very conservative estimate, absorb three-quarters of the total revenues of the Federation, and a very large proportion of these payments would have to be made in sterling. This fact illustrates vividly the direct interest which the British Government must continue to retain in the financial administration of India, and explains why it is necessary to impose such measures of Parliamentary control as may be sufficient to ensure that these obligations are met. . . There is no escape from the conclusion that so long as the British Government retains obligations which absorb so large a proportion of the total revenues of India, it must retain a direct interest in the financial administration of the country. This by no means implies that financial administration must remain under close or detailed control, but merely that provision must be made to ensure that the financial stability and credit of the country will be maintained, as unless this can be ensured the obligations falling on the British Government could not be met. This, from the purely British point of view, is the primary object of the [financial] safeguards."⁵⁷

In practice British latitude was constrained.

- **India as a market for British exports** – The [Fiscal Autonomy Convention of 1922](#), a bid to win the support of industrial and political India, allowed the Government of India to set protective tariffs even if they hurt UK exports.⁵⁸
- **Sterling Charges on the Government of India** – The British Government ensured that the Rupee was maintained at the high rate of R.1=1s 6d in the face of strong Indian opposition. **This required an extremely tight monetary policy at a time of depression. It is clear now, and was clear then, that the interests of the Indian economy were**

being subordinated to those of the British tax payer who would have had to pick up the tab if the government of India could not meet its Sterling obligations.

➤ [British Indian Army](#) - The financial stress on the Government of India put severe limits on the Indian Army. In the period after 1918 military expenditures continued to be the largest item of government expenditure ([Sen](#) pp. 152-3). "... 35.7% of India's national expenditure was devoted to the military... compared to that of Britain itself (16.8%) and Canada (0.6%)"⁵⁹. In this context, there was a strong reaction when Imperial planners attempted to use Indian troops to cheaply garrison Britain's new empire in the Middle East. This led to a struggle between, on the one side, the India Office, the Government of India and Indian political opinion *vs.*, on the other side the [Imperial General Staff](#). In the end, the position of the Indian government was agreed to, *i.e.* that

"...except in the gravest emergency, the Indian Army should be employed outside the Indian Empire only after consultation with the Governor-General in Council. . . . The ...Indian army should not be required permanently to provide large overseas garrisons is supported. Units required for such purposes should be maintained in addition to the establishment laid down for the Indian Army, and the whole cost, direct or indirect, of recruiting and maintaining such units should be borne by His Majesty's Government, or by the dependency or colony requiring their services. This position held for the rest of the decade; the Indian army could still play a limited imperial role, but at London's expense."⁶⁰

As one author put it -

"How important was India to Britain in 1929? A third of the British army trained there, still free of cost to the British taxpayer. The Indian army, one of the largest standing armies in the world, was under complete British control, and protected strategically vital Middle Eastern oil and Malayan rubber. Indeed the area it patrolled, from Cairo to Peking, absorbed a third of Britain's overseas trade. India was the biggest customer for Britain's largest export industry, Manchester cotton goods. India accounted for

a fifth of British overseas investment. At a more personal level, many Conservative MPs had family connections there via the army or civil service. In the 1929 parliament fully a fifth of the Conservative MPs themselves had served in the colonies, or armed services or both. The Indian empire had played a central part in the Conservative imagination since Disraeli. Although from 1917 British governments had been committed to move by stages towards eventual self-government for India within the empire, the Conservative party, at least, had solid reasons for making the transition safe and slow. **They recognised that possession of India was essential if Britain were to remain a first-rate power."**

4.2 [French Indochina](#) (modern day [Vietnam](#), [Cambodia](#) and [Laos](#))

"What made the retention of the empire important was, above all, the sense of French greatness: losing it would be unpopular, even if it was not a popular endeavour.

'For us', the Free French leader Charles de Gaulle wrote in May 1942, 'the outcome of the war must be the restoration at one and the same time of the complete territorial integrity of the French Empire, of the heritage of France, and of the total sovereignty of the French nation.'⁶¹ The measures that the French had taken to hold on to Indo-China had not helped their cause. They had not been able to come to terms with Vietnamese nationalism. Fear, Milton Osborne suggests, 'drove the French to reject any significant liberalization of their rule ... the middle ground of genuine constitutional opposition of the sort which emerged in India was not available.'⁶²

"Had Gandhi tried civil disobedience in Indo-China, Ho Chi Minh observed, he 'would long since have ascended into heaven'."⁶³

Quoted from [Tarling *Imperialism in Southeast Asia: a fleeting passing phase*](#) p. 272 -273

4.3 [Dutch East Indies](#) (modern [Indonesia](#))

[As note above](#) Dutch interests in the NEI related both to prestige and economics.

4.4 [The Philippines](#)⁶⁴

American interests in the Philippines before the war were the following in steeply declining importance:

- **As a naval and air base close to Japan** which the USA considered a potentially hostile power. The position of the Philippines was such as to potentially block Japanese access to the South Pacific;
- **As a “civilizing mission”** preparing their [“little brown brothers”](#) for independence;
- **Commercial benefit.** This was quite minor. Although the USA did supply the bulk of imports to the Philippines it might very well have done so in any case. Unlike the case for NEI, FIC, present day Malaysia and India, there were no strong domestic lobbies which supported the maintenance of the Philippines as a dependency of the USA. In fact there were strong lobbies which were keen to see it independent. Two of these were US sugar growers who wanted Philippine sugar excluded from their domestic market and groups calling for the reduction or elimination of Asian immigration which wanted to impose the most restrictive controls on the entry of Filipinos into the USA.

E. Philosophies, Objectives and Realities of Government

5. Philosophies and Objectives

5.1 British Raj⁶⁵

“... the British made little effort at any time explicitly to construct an ordering system of ideology for their imperial enterprise. As a people, after all, the British had always eschewed grand political theories in favour of ones presumed to be derived from empirical observation, and, from John Locke

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onward, they insisted upon the value of experiential modes of understanding. As one seeks the sustaining ideologies of the Raj, therefore, much has to be inferred from theories devised to serve other purposes, as, for instance, in John Stuart Mill's *Considerations on Representative Government*. Much, too, that one might regard as theory was elaborated only to meet the needs of particular occasions, or in response to particular challenges, such as the 1857 revolt or the Ilbert Bill controversy of 1883. And much remained always embedded in practice. Assumptions about gender, and even those concerning race, although centrally important „ to British conceptions of India's people, were rarely the subject of/ systematic inquiry.” [Thomas R. Metcalfe, *Ideologies of the Raj*](#); (pp. x-xi)

[The first official statement of an objective for British rule was given by Secretary of State Montagu in 1917.](#)

5.2 French Indochina

“The bureaucracy of colonial government was split between proponents of assimilation and advocates of associationism. In other words, divided between those who believed in the acculturation of colonial populations to French republican rights and values and those who favoured a less ambitious style of indirect rule that minimised change in the prevailing social order while denying political inclusion to most colonial subjects. Neither policy was adopted throughout the empire. Nor was either alternative consistently applied in individual colonies. But the interwar period is generally considered to have marked the ascendancy of associationist pragmatism in imperial administration. We should be wary of viewing these doctrinal arguments too rigidly. As Alice Conklin has argued, French imperial practice in the late Third Republic was the product of several paradoxes. These, in turn, arose from the nuances in colonial administrative and judicial methods born of adaptation to local conditions. **A republican democracy withheld basic rights and freedoms from its overseas subjects, amplifying the exclusion of French women from the metropolitan electoral process by insisting that colonial peoples of both sexes were generally incapable of making informed political choices. A republican state founded on hostility to hereditary privilege relied on tribal chiefs and colonial monarchs to maintain order in vast swathes of the empire. Anticlerical republicans committed**

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to secular education defended France's continued reliance on missionary educators in rudimentary colonial school systems. French liberals attached to individual freedom and equal access to justice accepted the use of forced labour and a separate legal code - the *indigénat* - for the vast majority of colonial subjects. These contradictions were the stuff of argument between supporters of associationism and their opponents. Yet, for all that, this political community of republican imperialists concurred that French colonialism could be a constructive force for progress." [Thomas](#) p. 6

5.3 Dutch East Indies

In principle Dutch rule in the Indies aimed at developing the population's ability to govern itself with the aim of developing the Indies as a more equal, and autonomous, partner of the European Netherlands within the Kingdom of the Netherlands.

In practice, the government, proclaimed the need for an educated electorate before any concession of Dutch power could be permitted while starving the education system of funds thus ensuring that any transition of power would be over centuries rather than years or even decades. The Dutch government closely controlled the Indies through the government-appointed [Governor-General](#) who in turn controlled the country through a highly trained, overwhelmingly Dutch elite civil service. They ran a highly centralized, autocratic police state⁶⁶.

5.4 The Philippines

[See 3.4 above.](#)

6. Nature of Rule in Reality

A. The 'Colons' Factor

Ideally, one might hope that Europeans resident in colonies, in daily contact with at least some elements of the native population, would be more understanding of the realities and aspirations of the colonized. However, **in general, European residents ('colons' in French) tended to be the most resistant to the growth of indigenous capacities for development and the according of rights to native peoples.**

The influence of European residents was most extreme and unremittingly negative in the French empire⁶⁷; seriously negative in the NEI⁶⁸, especially after the [communist rebellion of 1926](#); occasionally negative and important in the Raj, mainly before 1930; and, of little account in the Philippines.

B. Dealing with Nationalists

The Americans closely allied themselves with wealthy nationalists in the Philippines.

The British repeatedly attempted to split the nationalists to encourage the formation of a large, powerful, stable and politically legitimate nationalist party willing to rule India under British approved rules in partnership with the British. If successful, this would have isolated radical nationalists opposed to constitutional methods and maintaining the British link. The radicals would either have to join the moderates or become an isolated fringe. The British were never able to get this strategy to work.

The French denied the legitimacy of nationalism in their colonies and would not talk to the nationalists.

The Dutch government mainly saw nationalism as a police rather than a political matter. They would not allow officials to talk to nationalists. They took the view that:

- The native population was uninterested in politics; the nationalists being a tiny, westernized, self-serving clique;
- The radical nationalists were unprepared to cooperate even had the Dutch been interested in such cooperation;
- The moderate nationalists, who were very interested in cooperating with the Dutch, were of little interest or importance.

6.1 British Raj

<i>Pillar of British Rule</i>	<i>Eroding Factor/Process</i>
Acquiescence of the vast majority of Indians	Gandhi/INC non-cooperation movements from 1919
Active partnership and support of key groups such as the land owners, the princes and the moneyed and martial classes	British policy on exchange rates and tariffs gained Congress the support of many Indian industrialists while the non-cooperation movement of Gandhi/INC attracted support of some of the land-owning and money-lending groups.
British in depth knowledge of the grass roots reality vital to maintaining control	Indian provincial ministers (from 1922), provincial autonomy (from 1937), Indian district officers (gradually from about 1920), urbanization (the British always understood and controlled rural areas better than cities).
British dominance of modern economic sectors.	Indian capitalists took over control of most of the modern sector during the 1930s.
British dominance of modern (Western) scientific, technical and administrative skills	In the early days of British rule the only scientifically trained personnel were British physicians who consequently undertook some interesting tasks. These were joined by military and then civilian railway and civil engineers. The British soon set up medical and

<i>Pillar of British Rule</i>	<i>Eroding Factor/Process</i>
	engineering colleges in India and encouraged the growth of English education. These, together with the experience gained by Indians in the British administration of India, and in the legal profession, and self-education by Indians literate in English, created a cadre of Indians with the skills needed to develop India on modern lines.
Support of the small, but important and rapidly growing English-educated urban classes	British racist behaviour, social contempt, denial of access to the ICS etc. had alienated much of this group before WW I. This group provided much of the leadership for the INC
Monopoly of key policy and administrative positions by the almost exclusively British Indian Civil Service which usually numbered about 1000.	Intake into Indian Civil Service was half British half-Indian from the early 1920s.
Monopoly of key police positions	Gradual Indianization from the early 1920s.
Exclusively British officered Indian Army.	Slow program of accepting Indian commissioned officers from 1918.
British military units stationed in India and paid for by the Indian tax-payer.	Prestige of these forces severely dented by British incompetence in the defence of Malaya , Singapore . and Burma . Burma had been part of the Raj until 1937. An empire that cannot defend its territories loses much of its legitimacy.
British control of the seas around India.	The British fleet would have been hard put to defend India in the context of a simultaneous war against Japan and Germany even before World War I but its total inability to do so in World War II was demonstrated to the world by the sinking of the Prince of Wales and Repulse on 10 December 1941, and the capture of Singapore

<i>Pillar of British Rule</i>	<i>Eroding Factor/Process</i>
	naval base by a numerically much inferior Japanese force.

British rule was highly bureaucratized and generally locked into the British concept of [rule of law](#). Censorship was generally mild and, even then, tended to be limited to the vernacular press.

A measure of the nature of British rule was the horror most British felt at the [Jallianwala Bagh massacre](#) in which almost 400 Indians were killed and many more wounded. This can be compared with the lack of interest in France when [very large numbers of civilians were killed](#) by French forces in cases of resistance to French rule in the colonies e.g. the [Sétif massacre](#).

6.2 French Indochina

French administration tended to be disorganized, confused (different government departments involved), highly repressive (see eg. [Foster](#)) and as economically exploitative as could be managed. A general feeling, among the French, in France and in the colonies, was that any native who did not see French rule as an invaluable gift must be either ignorant or miscreant against whom severe measures were justified.

6.3 Dutch East Indies

When involved in colonial wars within Indonesia the Dutch practiced the same level of [brutality](#)⁶⁹ as the Americans did in the [Philippine-American War](#); the British in the [Indian Mutiny](#); and, the [French whenever their military was called in](#). After pacification, the Dutch ran a highly organized,

tightly administered, generally humane (unless you were a [“coolie” labourer on starvation wages](#)) regime which concentrated on extracting maximum benefit for the Netherlands out of their Indonesian *milch cow*.

6.4 The Philippines

The USA allied itself with the upper class landowners working with them to establish the Philippines as a modern independent state by 1946. ([See 3.4 above](#)).

7. Policies Between the Wars Including Reform Attempts

7.1 British Raj

The Raj, like the British and French empires, seemed at its height at the victorious conclusion of the First World War in November 1918. However, as was the case for Britain and France, the war had led to economic and psychological exhaustion. Factors included: the cost to India of participation in WW I and its inflationary impact; the unwise enactment of the [Rowlatt Acts](#); the related Punjab disturbances climaxing in the [Jallianwala Bagh massacre](#); the impact of the [Spanish Flu](#); economic instability in the 1920s; and, pressure for [home rule](#) from 1916, the [Non-cooperation Movement](#) of the early 1920s and 1930s.

In these difficult conditions the British enacted two major democratizing reforms leading ultimately to Indian independence – the [Government of India Act 1919](#) (enacting the [Montagu-Chelmsford reforms](#)) and the [Government of India Act 1935](#). The latter was preceded by [the Simon Commission](#) and the [Indian Constitutional Round Table Conferences, London 1931-1933](#).

7.2 French Indochina

The [Popular Front](#) government tried to effect a minor reform of colonial policy in 1936 which was, however, defeated by the bureaucracy and *colons*.

7.3 Dutch East Indies

The Dutch established a powerless and racially unrepresentative⁷⁰ local parliament (the *Volksraad*⁷¹) in a 1916 reform. This met for the first time in 1918. In the closing days of World War I, in the context of fears of a possible Communist takeover of the Netherlands, the Governor General, without authorization from the Netherlands, promised the *Volksraad* real power⁷² and Indies autonomy⁷³. Once the panic had passed right wing governments ruled in the Netherlands⁷⁴.

The only major outcome of the promise was the launching of a committee to investigate needed reforms⁷⁵. This recommended autonomy for the Indies. The report was forwarded to the Netherlands which was involved in revising the national constitution. The recommendations for autonomy were rejected. The revised constitution reclassified the status of the Indies, [Curaçao](#) and [Surinam](#) as parts of the Kingdom of the Netherlands rather than as colonies. This enabled the Dutch to claim that **anyone advocating Indonesian independence was committing sedition**⁷⁶.

In the late 1930s the Dutch rejected with contempt, using spurious logic, the Soetardjo Petition⁷⁷ in which the *Volksraad* requested the reorganization of the Kingdom of the Netherlands.

Far too late, and from a position of weakness, the Governor-General announced, on June 16, 1941, that revisions to the constitution would be considered right after liberation⁷⁸. The holding of a round table conference aimed at the development of a reformed empire with full Indonesian

internal autonomy was promised in the [radio address by Queen Wilhelmina on 7 December 1942](#).

7.4 The Philippines

[See 3.4 above](#).

F. Second World War and Decolonization

8. Second World War

8.1 British Raj

The Viceroy, Lord Linlithgow, declared India to be at war with Germany without consulting Indian political leaders or the Central Legislative Assembly. Although constitutionally this was acceptable it was politically insensitive. The Congress ministries in the Hindu majority provinces were ordered to resign by the Congress High Command and did so. The key Muslim majority provinces, Bengal and Punjab, continued to be governed by Muslim political leaders. British bureaucrats, for the duration of the war, governed the Hindu majority provinces more absolutely than they had at any time in the previous half century. The Viceroy, governors and Indian Civil Service ensured maximal war production and, overall, a huge Indian war effort.

The British government made two initiatives to gain an interim political settlement and the restoration of political rule in the Hindu majority provinces –

- The “August Offer” in 1940 made just after the fall of France.

In the words of [Hodson](#) (pp. 84-85)

On 8th August the Viceroy issued a statement which became known as the August Offer. Lord Linlithgow declared:

It is clear that earlier differences which had prevented the achievement of national unity remained unbridged. Deeply as His Majesty's Government regret this, they do not feel that they should any longer, because of those differences, postpone the expansion of the Governor General's Council, and the establishment of a body which will more closely associate Indian public opinion with the conduct of the war by the Central Government. . . .

... There is still in certain quarters doubt as to the intentions of Majesty's Government for the constitutional future of India, and ... as to whether the position of minorities, whether political or religious, is sufficiently safeguarded. . . .

. . It has already been made clear that my declaration of last October does not exclude examination of any part either of the [Act of 1935](#) or of the policy and plans on which it is based. His Majesty's Government's concern that full weight should be given to the views of minorities in any revision has also been brought out ...

... **They could not contemplate transfer of their present responsibilities for the peace and welfare of India to any system of government whose authority is directly denied by large and powerful elements in India's national life. Nor could they be parties to the coercion of such elements into submission to such a Government.**

. . . There has been very strong insistence that the framing of the new constitutional scheme should be primarily the responsibility of Indians themselves. . . . His Majesty's Government are in sympathy with that desire and wish to see it given the fullest practical expression, subject to the **due fulfilment of the obligations which Great Britain's long connection with India has imposed on her** and for which His Majesty's Government cannot divest themselves of responsibility. It is clear that a moment when the Commonwealth is engaged in a struggle for existence is not one in which fundamental constitutional issues can be decisively resolved. But His Majesty's Government authorise me

to declare that they will most readily assent to the setting up after the conclusion of the war with the least possible delay of a body representative of the principal elements in India's national life in order to devise the framework of the new Constitution, and they will lend every aid in their power to hasten decisions on all relevant matters to the utmost degree. Meanwhile they will welcome and promote in any way possible every sincere and practical step that may be taken by representative Indians themselves to reach a basis of friendly agreement, first upon the form Which the post-war representative body should take and the methods by which it should arrive at its conclusions, and, secondly, upon the principles and outlines of the Constitution itself. . . .

Whatever might be said of the substance of this declaration, its structure and terminology were such as to make it as unattractive as possible in India.

- The [Cripps Offer](#) made under American and [Labour party](#) pressure as Britain was being comprehensively defeated in Burma and Malaya.

Churchill, who opposed India's desire for independence, probably had little interest in actually making a settlement as opposed to appearing reasonable to the Americans. However, there was probably little prospect of any settlement because of the demands of each of the key parties –

- The British were impressed with India's war effort under Linlithgow's leadership and were determined to maintain complete control of the Indian war effort, and the Indian Army for the duration of the war;
- The INC demanded immediate independence and majority rule though they would probably have settled for a

very large slice of power immediately including a large measure of control over the Indian war effort. There was a strong element in the Congress leadership which wanted to make a separate peace with Japan;

- Organized Muslim opinion demanded that any transfer of power into Indian hands include a Muslim veto and Muslim equality in the central government even though Muslims were only 25 percent of the Indian population.

The [Cripps Offer](#) effectively made Indian independence and partition soon after the war inevitable. Being realistic, the post-war [Labour government](#) set about seeking the best way to bring this about.

<i>Concessions to Self-Rule by the British Government</i>	<i>What Was Ceded</i>
Edwin Montagu's statement	Eventual responsible government for British India. Pace and form to be decided by British Parliament
" Dominion Status " announcement - 1929	See above
Government of India Act 1919	Dyarchy in provinces
Government of India Act 1935	Provincial autonomy and proposed central federal structure for all of India. <u>It gave the princes a veto on whether the central federal government would come into existence.</u> The princes refused to accede and the federal part of the act never came into force.

<p><i>Concessions to Self-Rule by the British Government</i></p>	<p><i>What Was Ceded</i></p>
<p>Linlithgow 10 January 1940 speech at the Bombay Orient Club,</p>	<p>For the first time it was formally conceded that the British Government's object was to grant India the '<u>full Dominion Status . . . of the Statute of Westminster variety</u>' and that the British government would do its best to 'reduce to the minimum the interval between the existing state of things and the achievement of Dominion Status'.</p>
<p>Linlithgow statement on 'War Aims' and 'War Effort' 18 October 1939</p>	<p>"His Majesty's Government will, at the end of the war, be prepared to regard the scheme of the Act as open to modification in the light of Indian views."⁷⁹</p> <p>This was significant since previously HMG had refused to reconsider the federal portion of the Act even though it had been rejected by almost all Indian political opinion.</p>
<p>"August Offer" of August 1940</p>	<p>Essentially replaced the veto of the princes on the adoption of responsible central government by a veto placed in the hands of the Muslim minority.</p> <p>" ... (HMG) could not contemplate transfer of their present responsibilities for the peace and welfare of India to any system of government whose authority is directly denied by large and powerful elements in India's national life. Nor could they be parties to the coercion of such elements into submission to such a Government."</p>
<p>Cripps Offer 1942</p>	<p>This in effect conceded India's right to write its own constitution for independence right after the war. It removed the princely and Muslim vetoes by giving provinces and princely states the right to opt out of the independent Indian union. This was a big step in making</p>

<i>Concessions to Self-Rule by the British Government</i>	<i>What Was Ceded</i>
	Pakistan a reality.

8.2 French Indochina

The [Vichy French](#) ruled Indochina 1940-45 under Japanese control. On 9 March 1945 the Japanese carried out an armed takeover killing, imprisoning or driving out the Vichy garrisons. They then “encouraged” the monarchs of Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos to declare their “independence” as allies of Japan. At the end of the war, [Ho Chi Minh’s Viet Minh](#) dominated [Democratic Republic of Vietnam](#) claimed sovereignty over all of Vietnam. In fact, it effectively controlled the north but had a weak hold on the south. [The British occupying force in southern Vietnam restored French rule in that region.](#)

Negotiations between the French and the Viet Minh, during which the French were willing to offer very limited autonomy, eventually broke down after a series of rogue initiatives by aggressive local French commanders⁸⁰. This led to France’s ultimate defeat in the [French Indochina War](#).

8.3 Dutch East Indies

Out of view of the population, the Dutch [air](#) and [naval](#) forces resisted the Japanese. However, in plain view, the NEI government surrendered to the [Japanese invasion](#) forces [without a land battle](#). This undoubtedly save many civilian lives but it shattered any respect the Indonesians may have had for Dutch military prowess. This had major long-term effects.

[Japanese Occupation of Indonesia](#) (For details see [Anderson](#), [Raben](#)) - The Japanese confined Dutch civilians and many Indo-Europeans to brutal detention camps. They banned the use of the Dutch language and made the [Indonesian language](#) the language of public business with a long-term aim, which they never had the opportunity to carry out, of replacing it with Japanese. In many cases Indonesian subordinates took over the jobs of their white supervisors and generally proved able to keep things running. The Japanese at first were hostile to Indonesians' nationalist aspirations but, as the tide of war started to turn against them they came round to the view that an "independent" but allied Indonesia could be a military asset. Toward the end of the occupation they started training an Indonesian army which became the army of the Republic of Indonesia after the [Indonesian Declaration of Independence](#) on August 17, 1945 *i.e.* shortly after the 15 August Japanese agreement to surrender. Officers trained by the Japanese, and inculcated with the Japanese militaristic, anti-western, authoritarian ethos played a major role in Indonesian history (See Lebra [1975](#), [1977](#))⁸¹. The last of these to hold power was [Suharto](#) who ruled Indonesia 1967-98.

As elsewhere, the Japanese occupation was brutal, economically incompetent and very destructive. Large numbers of Indonesians, with the encouragement of [Sukarno](#) and other collaborators, were either enticed or forced to work on Japanese projects ([Romusha](#)) where they were starved and abused to an extent making mere survival often impossible. [John W. Dower](#) cites a [United Nations](#) report stating that four million people died in Indonesia as a result of famine and forced labor during the Japanese occupation, including 30,000 European civilian internee deaths. [The 4 million Indonesian deaths, representing just under 6 percent of the population, can be contrasted with just over 200,000 Dutch casualties of the war representing a little over 2 percent of the population of the European Netherlands.](#)

Partly due to Indonesian hostility, the Dutch had virtually no knowledge of the situation in the Indies when the war unexpectedly ended in August 1945⁸².

When the British arrived in Batavia (Jakarta) in mid-September 1945 to accept the Japanese surrender and release prisoners of war and civilian detainees, they found Java more or less controlled by the self-declared Republic of Indonesia. (For details see [Drooglever](#), [Dennis](#), [Anderson](#), [Reid](#), [van der Post](#) and other sources in the bibliography)

Key Official Netherlands Government Statement and Agreements on the Future of Indonesia

- [Radio address by Queen Wilhelmina on 7 December 1942](#)
- [Dutch Proposals for Indonesian Settlement 6 November 1945](#)
- [Dutch Proposals for Indonesian Settlement 10 March 1946](#)
- the [Linggadjati Agreement](#)
- the [Renville Political Principles](#)
- [Dutch–Indonesian Round Table Conference](#)

8.4 The Philippines

[Tydings-McDuffie Act](#) under which the Philippines became a [Commonwealth](#).

9. Decolonization

Keay on Decolonization⁸³

Autopsies of empire, particularly by British writers for whom the subject is of great forensic interest, tend to focus on the shared experience of colonies scattered throughout the world. In that the entire British empire was wiped out in the space of a few decades, they understandably look for tell-tale lesions common to British colonial rule worldwide. Perhaps, for instance, the British electorate, enamoured of social spending at home, had come to recognise empire as an imposition, the pax Britannica as a 'tax Britannica'. Perhaps the failings of Britain's class-ridden society with its elitist educational system had finally betrayed the empire by precluding the innovative compromises that twentieth-century dominion demanded. Or perhaps reliance on the now largely obsolete concept of naval power had fatally reduced imperial clout.

These and many other causes for the demise of the British empire make good sense. But it was not only the British empire that succumbed in the space of a few decades. So did all the West's other colonial enterprises. There may, therefore, be some merit in dissecting not a particular empire but a particular arena of empire. Comparing the cadavers of British, Dutch, French and American empire in the Far East may focus attention on contributory causes of a regional nature and may reveal failures in the very concept of empire.

If there was one major surprise about decolonisation in the East it was the speed with which it came about. In the 1930s, although few expected empire to last indefinitely, a couple more generations still looked a safe bet. As late as 1950, with India, the Philippines and Indonesia already independent, Europeans and Asians in Malaya, Singapore, Vietnam and Borneo were still thinking in terms of decades rather than months. Decades, in the case of Hong Kong, would prove right; but for the rest it was as if some unforeseen force had taken over, depressing the accelerator of history and scattering empire to the winds.

The force in question seems to have been that cliché of the period, the 'revolution in communications'. Impossible to quantify and difficult to incorporate into a historical narrative, the twentieth century's catalogue of advances in long-distance transport, mass media and instantaneous communication would make the structures of formal empire look antiquated and superfluous. This applied, of course, throughout the world; but in the East the impact was particularly dramatic, partly because of the war and partly because of existing traditions of travel,

Keay on Decolonization⁸³

trade and migration around the west Pacific rim.

The war brought to the East the whole paraphernalia of a modern communications infrastructure, something which to this day some parts of the once colonial world lack (notably most of sub-Saharan Africa). Malayan and Javanese villages received their first radio sets courtesy of Tokyo's propaganda effort. Airstrips were built, under both Allied and Japanese direction, in places which even now scarcely justify an air service. Roads and rail tracks, like the notorious 'death railways' of Sumatra and Siam, were carved through the jungle. Wharves, dockyards and ferries opened up whole archipelagoes in the Philippines.

And then came American *matériel*. Vehicles, ships and planes, radios, telephones and radar flooded the East courtesy of the US war effort and then continued coming under a variety of aid and reconstruction programmes. Whole airlines sprang into existence using superfluous US army transports and whole automotive industries were jump-started by the maintenance requirements of US army vehicles. Later a country like Laos, though still awaiting a television service, would find itself inundated with television receivers. South Vietnam's airports would briefly become the busiest in the world.

The ease of contact, and the ability to exert long-range influence which resulted, might have been superfluous elsewhere. Not so in the Far East. To the peoples of the west Pacific rim, the island-girt Java and South China Seas have always formed an integrated trading basin, like the Mediterranean, criss-crossed by routes of migration and exchange. Vietnamese, Malay, Bugis, Chinese, Indian and Arab navigators have travelled and traded within and beyond the region since 2000 BC....

Under colonial auspices new products and new markets brought a dramatic increase not only in the region's external trade but also in its internal trade. American emphasis on the 'Open Door' in China, British obsessions with free trade and free ports, and the inability of the Dutch to withhold free access to their island world in the Indies encouraged a highly competitive and uniquely open trading climate. Migration also boomed, especially of Chinese and Javanese labourers to the plantation economies of Malaya and Sumatra. The Chinese commercial networks which dominate the region today were as much a product of empire as the great European- and American-owned 'hongs' of the China coast.

Keay on Decolonization⁸³

Ascribing the Far East's late twentieth-century economic 'miracle' to the liberation of its peoples from the tentacles of empire may, therefore, be simplistic. There seems to be a continuum in the history of the East to which, albeit for its own purposes, empire substantially contributed. In this sense the white men did 'come and go leaving all things as they were'.

9.1 British Raj

See [Independence and partition](#)

9.2 French Indochina

A very good outline of post-war developments in French Indochina is contained in [Tarling 2001](#) (pp. 272-279).

9.3 Dutch East Indies

The Van Mook Factor

Hubertus Johannes van Mook (1895–1965) was of Dutch parentage, born in the NEI. He was a member of the elite Indies civil service (BB) which ran the NEI with almost military rigor⁸⁴. From his student days during the first World War he believed that the NEI should be developed into a quasi-independent country whose natural rulers would be the permanently resident Dutch, the Indo-Europeans and the tiny class of educated natives⁸⁵.

When, van Mook took up his career in the BB he found a country deeply disturbed by war time pressures ruled by a Netherlands whose government was becoming more right wing and

controlling⁸⁶. **Van Mook fought against the economic exploitation of the NEI⁸⁷ and for his view of the future. To this end he was a founder of the *Stuw* group⁸⁸.** When appointed to the *Volksraad*, he used it as a platform for his views.

During World War II, he was Minister of the Colonies in the Netherlands government in exile in London and later Lieutenant [Governor-General of the Netherlands East Indies](#) based in Australia.

In September 1945 he became the top Dutch official in the NEI and may have been one of the few key Dutch decision makers to really work for Indonesian independence. However, he believed that independence could, and should, come only after the Dutch had first restored their rule, stamped out disorder⁸⁹ and followed all the forms and stages so dear to the legalistic Dutch approach. The refusal, and probably the inability, of the leadership of the self-proclaimed Republic of Indonesia, to play by his rules led to his practical actions and recommendations converging with those of the Dutch politicians, military leaders, colonials, investors etc. whose aim was the reestablishment of colonial rule perhaps with cosmetic changes. The bulk of the Netherlands political leadership embraced this position because:

- They were convinced that the Netherlands could not recover economically without the resources of the NEI;
- They considered that the Netherlands without the NEI would be a powerless and ignored tiny power in Europe whereas with the NEI they would be a significant economic and political force; and,
- Their legalistic mindset was highly offended by the “illegal” Indonesian declaration of independence and its “unconstitutionality” in terms of the Netherlands constitution of 1922 which was formulated without any input from the Indonesian people and against the recommendations of the Dutch NEI government’s reform recommendations.

To Van Mook the full, though transitional restoration of Dutch rule was an essential precondition for the restoration. He simply closed his eyes to the fact that the Republic had maintained order over much of its territory while Dutch settlers and Dutch and Dutch-led soldiers caused much of the chaos and actively provoked violence.

When blocked by Dutch military weakness and British authority from restoring Dutch rule in Java where the population was overwhelmingly anti-Dutch. Van Mook set up Dutch-supported puppet governments first outside Java and after the first [police action](#) (anti-Republic military offensive) on Java itself.

A very good outline of developments in Indonesia 1945-49 is contained in [Tarling 2001](#) (pp. 261-272). Also good, and available on the Internet is Dr. P.J. Drooglever's [SEAC in Indonesia; voices from the past?](#)

Some of the problems experienced were outlined in Steiner 1947 pp. 629, 630, 633, 634.

9.4 The Philippines

See [Independent Philippines and the Third Republic \(1946-1972\)](#)

G. Conclusions

Comparative Summary of Aspects of Colonial Rule

<i>Issue</i>	<i>Indian Raj</i>	<i>French Indochina</i>	<i>NEI</i>	<i>Philippines</i>
Conscious preparation for Independence	See table above From 1919 indianization of Indian Civil Service, Army etc. and provincial government under the from Government of India Acts of	The French denied the possibility of independence at any time.	See above	See above

Parallel and Divergent Aspects of British Rule in the Raj, French Rule in Indochina, Dutch Rule in the Netherlands East Indies (Indonesia), and American Rule in the Philippines by David Steinberg

<i>Issue</i>	<i>Indian Raj</i>	<i>French Indochina</i>	<i>NEI</i>	<i>Philippines</i>
	1919 and 1935			
Economic Benefit of Colony to Metropolis	Moderately important	Moderately important	Very important	Not important
Education	poor	Tiny elite only	Tiny elite only	Major effort
Health	poor	Serious effort	Serious effort	Serious effort
Indigenous Access to Top Admin. Posts	From 1919	no	Almost none	yes
Army	Slow indianisation from 1919	no	Limited number of Indonesian officers	yes
Divide and Rule	Yes but only serious during WWII	Major aspect for maintaining rule	Major aspect for maintaining rule	no
<i>"Colons"</i>	Minor importance	Major constraint to good race relations, advancement of indigenous personnel and eventually to decolonization.	Major constraint to good race relations, advancement of indigenous personnel and eventually to decolonization.	no

Table

Origin and Nature

Military and Civil Governance

Origin and Impact

<i>Issue</i>	<i>India</i>	<i>French Indochina</i>	<i>NEI</i>	<i>Philippines</i>
Military Culture	<p><i>Civilian government controls the military</i></p> <p>Linear continuation of the British Indian Army which was ethnically and religiously mixed and always stayed out of politics and was loyally subordinate to the civilian authorities. From 1918 Indians became commissioned officers</p>	<p><i>Communist Party controls the military</i></p> <p>Viet Minh, a communist dominated guerrilla army,</p>	<p><i>Military dominates civilian government</i></p> <p>Although there were some Indonesian officers in the Royal Netherlands East Indies Army (Koninklijk Nederlands Indisch Leger; KNIL), which fought against the Republic in the Indonesian National Revolution, the basis of Indonesian</p>	<p><i>Civilian government controls the military</i></p> <p>Copy/adaptation of American military ethos.</p>

Parallel and Divergent Aspects of British Rule in the Raj, French Rule in Indochina, Dutch Rule in the Netherlands East Indies (Indonesia), and American Rule in the Philippines by David Steinberg

<i>Issue</i>	<i>India</i>	<i>French Indochina</i>	<i>NEI</i>	<i>Philippines</i>
	<p>embued with the British military ethos.</p> <p>The British Indian Army served victoriously against Germany (North Africa, Italy) and Japan (Burma).</p>		<p>military culture was in the ideology of Japanese militarism inculcated into the young officers of the Japanese sponsored Indonesian army (PETA). The PETA became the army of the Republic and fought the Dutch 1945-49. In this they were greatly aided by sympathetic Japanese officers handing over about half the Japanese weaponry in Java contrary to the terms of surrender.</p>	

<i>Issue</i>	<i>India</i>	<i>French Indochina</i>	<i>NEI</i>	<i>Philippines</i>
Politics/Government	<p>1. Elections, cabinet system, legislatures etc. adapted from British Parliamentary practice</p> <p>2. Federal constitutional system similar to that in the USA adapted from Government of India Act, 1935</p>	Communist party control	<p>1. New Order 1966-98</p> <p>2. Attempt to establish democratic regime. 1998 -</p>	Attempt to replicate the American system.

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See also

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Part I constitutes the archive of Dr. Van Mook, first Minister of the Colonies and later Lieutenant Governor-General of the Netherlands East Indies. In this capacity Van Mook played a central role in the events of the time.

Part II consists of the papers of the Director of the Cabinet of the Governor-General and later the High Representative of the Crown, Dr. P.J. Koets.

Part III is particularly revealing in documenting the war period. It includes intelligence material on the Japanese occupation and information on allied military actions, all from the archive of C.O. van der Plas.

Part IV, the Van Roijen materials (1946-1962), mostly concern the question of Indonesian independence and the transfer of sovereignty to the Republic. They include telegrams,

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¹ "The Victorians set out, in addition, to order and classify India's 'difference' in accordance with scientific systems of 'knowing'. British progress could not be simply a matter of cultural pride. The study of India was thus made part of a larger scholarly enterprise in which the Victorians, as children of the Enlightenment, sought rational principles that would provide a comprehensive, and comprehensible, way of fitting everything they saw in the world around them into ordered hierarchies. The existence of empire, by imparting a sense of urgency to the process, spurred on this creation of knowledge, and at the same time the unequal power relationships of imperialism helped shape the categories within which that knowledge was constructed. No longer a product of mere assertion, in the manner of James Mill, Western pre-eminence was now demonstrated, or, more properly, assumed, as it underlay the scientific structures that grew up around it. Victorian science, like its historicism, thus necessarily if not always consciously, fitted India into a hierarchical relationship with Europe and provided the firm footing of legitimacy which the British sought for their Raj." [Thomas R. Metcalfe, *Ideologies of the Raj*](#), (p. 67)

² "At its heart ... liberalism can be seen as informed by a radical universalism. Contemporary European, especially British, culture alone represented civilization. No other cultures had any intrinsic validity. There was no such thing as 'Western' civilization; there existed only 'civilization'. Hence the liberal set out, on the basis of this shared humanity, to turn the Indian into an Englishman; or, as Macaulay described it in his 1835 Minute on Education, to create not just a class of Indians educated in the English language, who might assist the British in ruling India, but one 'English in taste, in opinions, in morals and in intellect'. The fulfillment of the British connection with India involved, then, nothing less than the complete transformation of India's culture and society. Its outcome would be the creation of an India politically independent, but one that embodied an 'imperishable empire of our arts and our morals, our literature and our laws'.

This liberal idealism was inevitably fraught with troubling implications. With neither racial nor environmental theories to sustain it, culture alone remained to distinguish Europeans from those overseas. As a result, the more fully non-European peoples were accorded the prospect of future equality, the more necessary it became to devalue and depreciate their contemporary cultures. The hierarchical ordering of societies on a 'scale of civilization' reflected not just the classifying enthusiasms of the Enlightenment, but was a way to reassure the British that they themselves occupied a secure position, as the arbiter of its values.... It was not some chance prejudice, but the liberal project itself, that led Macaulay in 1835 to scorn the 'entire native literature of India and Arabia' as not worth 'a single shelf of

a good European library'. Similarly, in looking forward to the eventual freedom of India, he had of necessity to insist that the Indians of the present day were 'sunk in the lowest depths of slavery and superstition...

By its very nature the liberal transformation of India meant the flowering on Indian soil of those institutions which defined Britain's own society and civilization. Among the most important of these ... the rule of law, the liberty of the individual, and education in Western knowledge. The triumph of liberalism was not, however, to be simple or straightforward. Invariably, contestation with other more conservative visions of empire, as well as the day-to-day exigencies of colonial rule, shaped the final outcome of the reform enterprise."

[Thomas R. Metcalfe, *Ideologies of the Raj*](#), (pp. 34-35)

³ Critically important in this creation of a history for India was not, of course, the mere fact of decline. What mattered, and what set the late-Victorian theorists apart from those, say, of the eighteenth century, was the description of this decline in racial, rather than environmental or cultural, terms. This alternative mode of explanation had far-reaching consequences. As the effects of racial degeneration could never be eradicated, India's peoples, even though Aryan in origin, had now to remain forever distinct, different, and inevitably inferior. Asserting 'difference' in such terms provided powerful theoretical underpinning for the larger post-Mutiny disillusionment with liberal idealism. Science and history together, so this ideology seemed to say, made all thought of reform pointless. Such ideas, in particular, reaffirmed the sense of Christianity, not as a faith to be shared with the world, but as a sign of England's intrinsic superiority.... Few of the British by the 1870s and 1880s expected what they called the 'ancient polytheism' of India to give way, as had occurred in the Roman Empire of antiquity, to Christianity. As Alfred Lyall put it, 'the seasons and the intellectual condition of the modern world are unfavourable to religious flood-tides'. In practice, Christianity was a faith meant for Europeans, to be housed in European-styled structures. In the India of the Raj, race and faith went hand in hand. India had to be accepted, and ruled, as it was." [Thomas R. Metcalfe, *Ideologies of the Raj*](#), (pp. 89-90)

⁴ "In both the Indies and Indochina, with their distinct demographics and internal rhythms, metissage was a focal point of political, legal, and social debate. Conceived as a dangerous source of subversion, it was seen as a threat to white prestige, an embodiment of European degeneration and moral decay." [Stoler](#) p. 515

"Although the race criterion was finally removed from the Indies constitution in 1918 under native nationalist pressure, debates over the psychological, physical, and moral make-up of Indo-Europeans intensified in the 1920s and 1930s more than they had before. A 1936 doctoral dissertation at the University of Amsterdam could still "explain the lack of energy" of Indo-Europeans by the influence of a sapping and warm, dank climate; by the bad influence of the "energy-less Javanese race" on Indo-Europeans; and by the fact that "halfbloods" were not descended from the "average European" and the "average Javanese."¹⁰ In the 1920s, the European-born Dutch population was visibly closing its ranks, creating new cultural boundaries while shoring up its old ones. Racial hate (*rassenhaat*) and representation were watchwords of the times. A renewed disdain for Indos permeated a discourse that heightened in the Depression as the nationalist movement grew stronger and as unemployed "full-blooded" Europeans found "roaming around" in native villages blurred with the ranks of the Indo poor. How the colonial state distinguished these two groups from one another and from "natives" on issues of unemployment insurance and poor relief underscored how crucial these interior frontiers were to the strategies of the emerging welfare state." [Stoler](#) p. 545

"Presumed Frenchness rested on two sorts of certainty: the evaluation of the child's "physical features or race" by a "medico-legal expert" and a "moral certainty" derived from the fact that the child "has a French name, lived in a European milieu and was considered by all as being of French descent." Thus, French citizenship was not open to all metis but restricted by a "scientific" and moral judgment that the child

was decidedly non-indigene. As we have seen in the case of Nguyen van Thinh dit Lucien, however, the name Lucien, the acknowledged paternity by Icard, and the patriotic ambiance of the household were only sufficient for the child to be legally classified as French, not for him to be treated as French by a court of law. Inclusionary laws left ample room for an implementation based on exclusionary principles and practices.” [Stoler](#) p. 533

“Internal to this logic was a notion of cultural, physical, and moral contamination, the fear that those Europeans who did not subscribe to Dutch middle-class conventions of respectability would not only compromise the cultural distinctions of empire, but waver in their allegiances to metropolitan rule.

Such fears were centered on mixed bloods but not on them alone. In the Indies, at the height of the liberal Ethical Policy, a prominent doctor warned that those Europeans born and bred in the colonies, the *blijvers* (those who remained), lived in surroundings that stripped them of their *zuivere* (pure) European sensibilities, which "could easily lead them to metamorphize into Javanese." A discourse on degeneracy with respect to the creole Dutch was not new in the Indies but in this moment of liberal reform took on a new force with specific moral coordinates. This discourse was directed at poor whites living on the cultural borderlands of the *echte* (true) European community, at some European men who married native women, at all European women who chose to marry native men, and at both European and Indo-European women who cohabited with, but chose not to marry, men of other nationalities.” [Stoler](#) p. 534

⁵ In fact, he made a major contribution to Indian constitutional history by demanding that, for the first time, the British government declare a goal for British rule. This led to the [declaration of August 1917](#) see [Robb, Peter G., *The government of India and reform: policies towards politics and the constitution, 1916-1921*, Oxford University Press, 1976.](#)

⁶ “Colonial Laws Validity Act (28 and 29 Victoria, C. 63), an Act passed by the British parliament in 1865 to remove doubts as to the validity of colonial laws. It laid down that a colonial law cannot be repugnant to the laws of England, and defined the meaning of "repugnancy. [Note by Claude Bélanger: Passed in 1865 by the Parliament of Great Britain, the Act reasserted the doctrine of Imperial Parliamentary Supremacy: all colonial laws repugnant to the provisions of British Statutes were invalid if the British law specified that it was applicable to the colonies. Under this principle, the Constitution Act, 1867, contained provisions by which Canadian Statutes would be reviewed by the Imperial authorities and, if necessary, disallowed. The power of disallowance gradually fell into disuse and finally, in 1931, the Statute of Westminster abolished the provisions of the Colonial Laws Validity Act.]. Source : W. Stewart WALLACE, ed., *The Encyclopedia of Canada*, Vol. II, Toronto, University Associates of Canada, 1948, 411p., p. 103.

⁷ “The following year (1934), ... the [Tydings-McDuffie Act](#) was finally passed. The act provided for the establishment of the [Commonwealth of the Philippines](#) with a ten-year period of peaceful transition to full independence. The commonwealth would have its own constitution and be self-governing, though foreign policy would be the responsibility of the United States, and certain legislation required approval of the United States president.^[18] A constitution was framed in 1934 and overwhelmingly approved by plebiscite the following year.” From http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/History_of_the_Philippines#United_States_colony

⁸ “In view of continued disquiet in the Party after the debate, Hoare, who was himself being groomed for the India Office, and had been due to speak in support of Baldwin if the debate had continued, arranged for an exchange of letters between Baldwin and MacDonald confirming that there was no intended change of policy.” There was now no doubt that the declaration, already denounced by some Conservatives as dangerous, was also meaningless. Nevertheless, many Conservatives were still worried about the terms of

reference of the conference, the Party was "badly shaken" and, as one of them noted, "Winston" was "promising serious trouble later on". There was nothing to stop the forces which had risen against Baldwin from waiting for an opportune moment to try again." Carl Bridge, [Holding India to the Empire: The British Conservative Party and the 1935 Constitution 1986](#), p 38

⁹ [Gwyer and Appadorai](#) p. 220.

¹⁰ "An especially informative insight into Lord Willingdon in December 1931, was written privately by Sir George Schuster, Government of India Finance Member to both Irwin and Willingdon. When the author interviewed Sir George some thirty years after Willingdon's death, the former colleague of the Viceroy re-affirmed then his views written earlier in 1931. Schuster thought Willingdon:

... a genuine liberal - and more liberal, far more genuine and far more courageous than Irwin - to tell the truth. He is delightful to work with and keeps everybody's tail up. He has not really much brain. He is very old. He is sometimes indiscreet. And yet underneath it all he has great courage, good British common sense, absolute honesty, and trusts his team. The result is that he has ready been a success so far and much better than men with fifty times his- brain power.

He believes in providing constitutional advance as fast as he can and in fact, driving the Indians faster than they may in reality want to go themselves." Quoted in [Bergstrom](#) p. 152

¹¹ Sitting next to Mr. Muggerridge after a Viceregal Lodge dinner, Willingdon, 'slightly tipsy', said: 'Halifax was very bad Viceroy, I'm quite a good one. Yet he'll be remembered and I'll be forgotten because he's managed to persuade people he's good'. (Malcom Muggerridge *Like it was*). So indeed it turned out.

¹² In Willingdon's words

"The whole trouble is that Gandhi looks upon himself as an equal and parallel with me in working the administration of the country and not without some reason. You see, the negotiations for this settlement were carried on by the then Viceroy and Gandhi on absolutely terms of equality, and the condition for Gandhi calling his civil disobedience campaign were agreed upon as between two opposing generals. That was the position when I arrived and had to take over. Well I won't admit Gandhi's equality with me, and he is continually trying to assert it, and I confess logically he has got some claim for his assertions owing to what had happened before between him and Irwin. And the fact that I look upon him as the head of a very inconvenient political party and treat him as such makes him very restive.

But there can't be two Kings of Brentford out here and he must be put back into his place, and while we are the best of friends I think he is feeling his position very keenly. You will see by what I have told you what I think of the settlement, and must own I rather wish Irwin had been here to wrap up the men he left behind him! Still it's all amazingly interesting and I am sure we shall get through. We may have to hit and hit hard which I shall hate but it won't be my fault if we do." Quoted in [Bergstrom](#) p. 118

¹³ "As Lords Irwin and Willingdon are frequently contrasted and compared, it is helpful to analyze Irwin's view of the Gandhi-Willingdon confrontation in 1931. Irwin had been relatively silent on Indian topics, but not long after the confrontation, he broke his silence by noting that Congress was responsible for the 'recent upheaval' and that their 'position is both unnecessary and unjustified'. He did not doubt that Gandhi's lieutenants in India had created a situation which he could scarcely control upon his return to India. Irwin labelled the charge that the Government of India had gone back on the policy enacted during his administration as 'a complete misrepresentation of the facts'. Irwin stressed that 'I do not suppose that if I had been in India today, I

would have acted any differently from the way Lord Willingdon has done'. His Massey Lecture - 1932 at Toronto, expressed the same sentiments. To Verrier Elwin, in 1932, Irwin noted that "If I were Viceroy today I would not, I think, make another pact with him (Gandhi)". [Bergstrom](#) p. 152

¹⁴ To quote [Rizvi](#) pp. 3-4

To those who knew Linlithgow intimately, the hallmarks of his character were reliability, industry and 'conscientious thoroughness'. It was not always easy to fathom him, and only those near enough to him could get a real insight in his character. To his colleagues in Whitehall, Zetland and R.A. Butler, he was 'wise, cautious Hopie', and 'an honest but rigorous man'. Lord Wavell, the Commander-in-Chief of the Indian army (and later Linlithgow's successor as Viceroy) had 'the greatest admiration for Linlithgow' as 'a wise, strong man and very human really'. But others who could not penetrate his natural shyness and 'cold exterior' obtained a somewhat different impression. Ian Stephens, the young Liberal editor of the Calcutta Statesman, could not initially find 'rapport with . . . [this] cold, cautious, self-assured aristocrat in fact a Tory'. He found Linlithgow 'outwardly . . . an inscrutable, rather unpleasant figure: stiff, unsmiling; physically very large . . . and in some indefinable way uncouth'. But as Stephens saw more of Linlithgow, he was able to discover the 'pleasing personal glimpses' and admitted that Linlithgow was 'perhaps an over criticized man'. Jawaharlal Nehru, never a good judge of human character, was perhaps unfairly critical: 'Heavy of body and slow of mind, solid as a rock and with almost a rock's lack of awareness'. At the same time he admitted Linlithgow's 'integrity and honesty of purpose'.

Although Lord Halifax's comment that Linlithgow 'did not really get on human terms with anybody' is unjustified, it must be acknowledged that Linlithgow had little 'gift for establishing personal relationship'. He was, it ought to be mentioned at the outset, a rather oldfashioned British aristocrat, with a public school boy's sense of duty, but lacking in 'political imagination' and 'sensitiveness'. But what he lacked in imagination, he made up in reliability: if he was cautious in movement, he 'planted his feet firmly'.

¹⁵ Quoted from [Thomas](#) pp. 347-349

Yet examination of popular imperialism, imperialist lobbying and colonial policy making indicates that decisions of lasting import to the empire were made with minimal ministerial, parliamentary or public discussion in France. The French population was neither mobilised in opposition to colonial reform, nor in support of it. Municipal imperialism, once a powerful influence on colonial economic policy and a stimulus to public support for empire, was weakened by the impact of the depression and changes in the international system that made remote colonies seem more a liability than an asset. On the eve of war France took refuge in the idea that colonial resources might cancel out the nation's economic and demographic inferiority next to Nazi Germany. This did not indicate a broader popular imperialist horizon, but a narrower one. Everything imperial was secondary to defence of the Rhine frontier. For the empire to hold, France had to hold first. A final question thus confronts us: how far did the French empire matter to inter-war France?

An essential paradox of French imperialism was that France's governing elite remained overwhelmingly Eurocentric in outlook despite the global reach of colonial rule. French governments rarely placed empire at the forefront of decisions made in economic or foreign policy. This assertion may jar. After the Great War the sharp decline of the franc, the urgent need to increase export volume, the imminent redistribution of territory under the peace settlement and the powerful tide of nationalist sentiment enhanced parliamentary and public interest in the colonies. The wartime contribution of colonial troops attained almost folkloric status, enhanced by the prominence of imperial regiments in the Rhine occupation – and the bitter German complaints against them.' French

gratification at the deployment of colonial regiments as occupiers in Germany was itself double-edged. Many were relieved to see them go, a sentiment captured in the phrase 'pas chez nous, chez eux' /colloquially, 'not in our backyard, but in theirs'].

The sky-blue Chamber of 1920-24 was fervently nationalistic. Even so, empire remained peripheral to National Bloc politics. Colonial modernisation and constitutional reform were rejected. Empire was there to serve, to be dwelt upon only when urgently required in the assistance of France. Colonial policy making was a specialist affair, a matter for those peculiarly drawn to the exotic attractions of the colonies or, as was commonly assumed, unable to win access to more esteemed branches of government. Between the wars the business of running the French empire was a political backwater. Important administrative changes occurred none the less. By the 1920s colonial policy formulation was centralised in Paris to a far greater extent than before 1914 when local colonial commanders frequently seized new territory in a chaotic process of frontier imperialism pursued in defiance of government instruction. In the inter-war period the growing bureaucratic complexity of strategic policy making made it harder for Parti colonial interests to wield decisive influence at Cabinet or departmental level.

On those occasions when significant parliamentary time was devoted to questions of empire, as, for example, during the extended debate over colonial development between 1921 and 1923, or in response to the rebellions in Morocco and Syria during 1925-26, most Deputies used discussion of colonial policy as a stick with which to beat the government of the day. "Imperial debate" in national politics usually connoted criticism of past government failure rather than consideration of future plans. But what of the millions of visitors that came through the turnstiles of the Vincennes colonial exhibition? A commercial success and a publicity festival, the exposition coloniale did not achieve its central objective. There was little sign after 1931 of a more deeply rooted popular imperialism in France. Far from bringing the empire to France as a tangible reality, colonial exhibitions highlighted the gulf separating imperial enthusiasts from the public at large. The Vincennes exposition was less a celebration of Third Republic imperialism than a desperate attempt to persuade the home population to take the empire seriously. On the rare occasions when a government –specifically, Leon Blum's first Popular Front Ministry in 1936 – proposed major colonial reform, opposition in the Chamber of Deputies and, even more so, in the Senate, undermined the government's programme. Popular Frontism in the empire unleashed social changes and political forces that colonial authorities struggled to contain for years afterward. Herein lies its importance, regardless of the frustration of reformist initiatives.

¹⁶ Thomas A. August, 'Colonial Policy and Propaganda: the Popularization of the "Idée Coloniale" in France 1919-1939', PhD thesis, University of Wisconsin-Madison, 1978, p. 68

¹⁷ Ibid., pp. 58, 198.

¹⁸ Ibid., pp. 196, 201

¹⁹ q. C. M. Andrew and A. S. Kanya-Forstner, *France Overseas*, London, Thames and Hudson, 1981, p. 246

²⁰ In English the Dutch mainly referred to the colony as *Netherlands India*, *Netherlands Indies* or *The Indies*. They virtually banned the use of the term *Indonesia* until the Queen's 1942 broadcast which used the term. Just before the Second World War the government agreed to use the term *Indonesian* to replace the derogatory term *inlander* (= 'native') though they refused to use the term *Indonesia* (see [van der Kroef](#)).

²¹ "Dutch income in and from Indonesia probably amounted to about 1.4 per cent of Indonesian domestic product in 1700 and rose to about 17 per cent in 1921-38 (see Table 1). Until 1870,

about 90 per cent of this Dutch income in Indonesia was remitted out of the country. After that the economy was opened up to private enterprise, the non-governmental Dutch presence grew, and a higher proportion of Dutch income in Indonesia went to local consumption and accumulation of asset claims. In 1921-38 about 62 per cent of it was remitted-about 10.6 per cent of Indonesian domestic product (see Table 2). In spite of the long and large net drain of income from Indonesia over more than three centuries, foreign claims on assets in Indonesia were about 150 per cent of Indonesian GDP in 1937." (H. G. Callis *Foreign Capital in Southeast Asia*, 1942, p. 36).

"Income remitted from Indonesia represented a 1 per cent addition to Dutch domestic product in 1700, about 5 per cent from 1840 to 1870 and rose to around 8 per cent in 1921-38 (see Table 3). From 1840 onwards this flow was the bulk of Dutch foreign income, whereas in the eighteenth century, when total income from abroad was proportionately just as high, the Indonesian contribution was much smaller.

"In India, where the literature on the colonial 'drain' is much more voluminous, the flow to the colonial power was relatively much smaller and the economy much less involved in international trade. In the interwar period, 1921-38 (at its peak), British income in India was about 5 per cent of Indian domestic product, and the remitted part was about 1.7 per cent (see Table 4). In the same period this income represented an addition of about 0.8 per cent to U.K. domestic product."

Quoted from Maddison pp. 645-646.

²² <http://www.populstat.info/Asia/indiac.htm>

²³ <http://www.parliament.uk/commons/lib/research/rp99/rp99-111.pdf>

²⁴ Quoted from H. V. Hodson, *The Great Divide: Britain-India-Pakistan*, Hutchinson of London, 1969, pp. 22, 31, 32.

²⁵ The principal religion in Vietnam is the so-called *Tam Giáo* ("triple religion"), characterizing the [East Asian](#) intricate mixture between [Mahayana Buddhism](#), [Confucianism](#), and [Daoism](#). The dominant religion of Laos and Cambodia is [Theravada Buddhism](#).

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²⁷ <http://www.ier.hit-u.ac.jp/COE/Japanese/discussionpapers/DP98.7/1.htm>

²⁸ <http://www.populstat.info/Asia/cambodic.htm>

²⁹ <http://www.zum.de/whkmla/region/seasia/laos191845.html>

³⁰

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Demographics_of_France#Historical_population_of_metropolitan_France

³¹ <http://www.ier.hit-u.ac.jp/COE/Japanese/discussionpapers/DP98.7/II-Patterns.htm>

³² <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cambodia#Demographics>

³³ <http://psephos.adam-carr.net/countries/l/laos/statslaos.shtml>

³⁴ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Malay_Archipelago

³⁵ The Ramayana became popular in Southeast Asia and manifested itself in text, temple architecture and performance, particularly in [Indonesia \(Java, Sumatra, Bali and Borneo\)](#), [Thailand](#), [Cambodia](#), [Laos](#), [Malaysia](#), [Myanmar](#), [Philippines](#) (Maradia Lawana) and [Vietnam](#)

³⁶ "Hinduism was at one time widespread in Southeast Asia. From around 600 BC it extended from India into Sri Lanka, Cambodia, Malaysia, Indonesia and the Philippines. In most of East Asia it was later obscured by Buddhism and Islam. However, it still prevails in Bali and parts of East Java, and since the late 19th century has been reintroduced to peninsular Malaysia." <http://www.omf.org.uk/content.asp?id=8531>

³⁷ <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Indonesia#Religion>

³⁸ Indonesia http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Islam_in_Indonesia

³⁹ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Indonesia#Ethnic_groups

⁴⁰ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Java_%28island%29#Demographics

⁴¹ [Kennedy](#)

⁴² Quote from [Shmutzer](#) P. X

[T]he aim for a national identity vacillated between the creation of a Great Netherlands citizenship or a Netherlands Indies citizenship, whose members would participate in a pluralistic society of liberty, equality, and fraternity; and the creation of national identities in a narrower frame, preserving the identity of each component group in the colonial society.

⁴³ Colijn's views from [Pender](#) p. 124

While Colijn agreed with the general condemnation of earlier liberal-minded colonial statesmen for having been too weak in dealing with Indonesian nationalists, his criticism was far more fundamental. In his pamphlet *Staatkundige Hervormingen in Nederlandsch-Indie (Constitutional Reforms in the Netherlands Indies)*, published in 1918, he argued that indigenous political development should start off at the grass roots level and that the establishment of the *Volksraad* had been entirely premature, as this institution had no roots in the people. Colijn also dismissed as unrealistic the attempts to superimpose on the Indies a modern unitary state on the European model. He argued that, considering the vast differences in cultural, economic, and social development within and between the various Indonesian islands, the only proper solution would be the establishment of a federation (see document 18). While, as his critics pointed out (see document 19), Colijn's ideas might, ideally speaking, have been correct, they were unrealistic because of the radical turn the Indonesian nationalist movement had taken. Any idea of federation would be rejected by radical Indonesian nationalists—and with some justification—as an attempt by the Dutch to postpone Indonesian independence to the far-distant future.

⁴⁴ <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Philippines#Geography>

⁴⁵ <http://www.populstat.info/Asia/philippc.htm>

⁴⁶ <http://www.ratical.org/radiation/CNR/PBC/table2F.html>

47 <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Philippines#Demographics>

48 <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Philippines#Religion>

49 http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/British_East_India_Company

50 http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/British_East_India_Company#The_end

51 http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/French_Indochina

52 "The Netherlands Indies. The Dutch have had political and economic responsibilities in The Netherlands East Indies since 1595. Through most of the intervening centuries their major concern was the Island of Java, but toward the end of the Nineteenth Century Dutch authority was fully established and exercised over the "Outer Islands" and the Twentieth Century has seen the rapid economic development of Sumatra and Borneo." *Far Eastern Survey*, Vol. 14, pp. 348-350 (December 5, 1945); J. A. Verdoorn, "Indonesia at the Crossroads," *Pacific Affairs*, Vol. 19, pp. 339-350 (December, 1946).

53 http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/History_of_Indonesia

54 The following is quoted from [Karnow](#) pp. 196-198

The U.S. conquest of the Philippines had been as cruel as any conflict in the annals of imperialism, but hardly had it ended before Americans began to atone for its brutality. Inspired by a sense of moral obligation, they believed it to be their responsibility to bestow the spiritual and material blessings of their exceptional society on the new possession—as though providence had anointed them to be its savior. So, during its half-century in the archipelago, the United States refused to be labeled a colonial power and even expunged the word colonial from its official vocabulary. Instead of establishing a colonial office, as the British did to govern their overseas territories, President McKinley consigned the Philippines to the Bureau of Insular Affairs, an agency of the War Department. Nor did Americans sent out to supervise the islands call themselves colonial civil servants, a term that evoked an image of white despots in topees, brandishing swagger sticks at cringing brown natives. In their own eyes, they were missionaries, not masters.

The venture had originally been infused with apostolic fervor when McKinley divulged his divine directive to "uplift and civilize" the Filipinos—a goal he had earlier advertised as "benevolent assimilation." Elihu Root, his secretary of war, codified the doctrine in his instructions to William Howard Taft to promote the "happiness, peace and prosperity" of the natives in conformity with "their customs, their habits and even their prejudices." Seconding that sentiment soon after becoming governor, Taft intoned: "We hold the Philippines for the benefit of the Filipinos, and we are not entitled to pass a single act or to approve a single measure that has not that as its chief purpose."

Compared to European colonialism, the United States was indeed a model of enlightenment. Americans were banned by law from acquiring large tracts of land in the Philippines—a sharp contrast to Britain's mobilization of coolies on Malayan rubber plantations or France's forced recruitment of native labor to cultivate huge rice fields in Vietnam. The Americans avoided such egregious schemes as the opium monopolies, maintained by the British, French and Dutch in their Asian dominions to raise revenues. Nothing they did to preserve order even remotely matched the repression of the French in Vietnam, who in 1930 executed nearly seven hundred native dissidents without trial. Even the supposedly benign British summarily imprisoned a hundred thousand Indians for civil disobedience during the same period. On the other hand, the Filipinos renounced

violent opposition to U.S. supremacy after Aguinaldo's defeat—precisely because they finally concluded that American rule would not be harsh.

Aware from the start that the Filipinos would judge them by actual deeds, the Americans launched practical programs to demonstrate their benevolence. They bought and redistributed the rural estates held by the Catholic friars, whose excesses had provoked Filipinos to rebel against Spain. To improve the economy, they constructed dams and irrigation facilities, expanded markets, developed mines and timber concessions, built roads, railways and ports. Their legal reforms gave the archipelago, for the first time in its history, an honest judiciary under native magistrates. They introduced a tax system to make the country self-sustaining, and renovated the financial structure, which had been a chaos of currencies. Unlike the Europeans elsewhere in Asia, who plundered their colonies for their own profit, they displayed deep concern for the welfare of the natives. Their expenditures on health helped to double the population from 1900 to 1920, and schools spurred a climb in the literacy rate from twenty percent to fifty percent within a generation. Fearful of mutinies, the Europeans forbade native troops from outnumbering their own soldiers and maintained their forces at the expense of the colonies. By the 1920s, more Filipinos than Americans were serving as army regulars and police in the Philippines.

The United States also accorded the Filipinos unusual latitude to govern themselves, even though its motives were less than idealistic. Taft encouraged the ambitions of the upper classes to subvert diehard native nationalists, and the Republicans back home endorsed liberal moves to deflect their Democratic critics. But whatever the reasons, Filipinos were running for local office even before the Americans had fully conquered the archipelago. They conducted elections for a national legislature as early as 1907.

But the U.S. performance in the Philippines was flawed. The Americans coddled the elite while disregarding the appalling plight of the peasants, thus perpetuating a feudal oligarchy that widened the gap between rich and poor. They imposed trade patterns that retarded the economic growth of the islands, condemning them to reliance on the United States long after independence. The American monopoly on imports into the Philippines also dampened the development of a native industry. At the same time, the unlimited entry of Philippine exports to the United States bound the archipelago inextricably to the American market. Economically at least, the Filipinos were doomed to remain "little brown brothers" for years—though many, despite their nationalist rhetoric, found security in the role.

Above all, the U.S. effort to inculcate Filipinos with American ethics proved to be elusive. Filipinos readily accepted American styles and institutions. They learned to behave, dress and eat like Americans, sing American songs and speak Americanized English. Their lawyers familiarized themselves with American jurisprudence, and their politicians absorbed American democratic procedures, displaying unique skills in American parliamentary practices. But they never became the Americans that Americans sought to make them. To this day, they are trying to define their national identity.

⁵⁵ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/History_of_the_Philippines_%281898-1946%29

⁵⁶ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/History_of_the_Philippines_%281898-1946%29

⁵⁷ [Tomlinson 1979 p. 20, 126, 127](#)

⁵⁸ [Tomlinson](#) 1979 p. 123-124

⁵⁹ [Cell p. 84](#)

⁶⁰ [Tomlinson](#) 1979 p. 117

⁶¹ q. Thorne, p. 133.

⁶² in W. F. Vella (ed.) *Aspects of Vietnamese History*, Honolulu, University of Hawaii Press, 1973, p. 167.

⁶³ q. Andrew and Kanya-Forstner, [Overseas](#), p. 246.

⁶⁴ Some background in [Philippines Country Study](#).

⁶⁵ As noted above, the early 19th century British Utilitarians foresaw without trepidations the likelihood of Indian becoming culturally European and naturally demanding political independence in a very distant and indeterminate future. The orientalist point of view, which was dominant about 1850-1917 saw the Indians as being racially incapable of ruling themselves. This, of course, was a situation that could not be amended without a change of population. An late representative of this point fo view was [Lord Birkenhead](#) who, on the rare occasions that prior clasims on his time for drinking and golf allowed, served as [Secretary of State for India](#) during the late 1920s. Birkenhead [wrote](#) 'To me it is frankly inconceivable that India will ever be fit for Dominion self-government.'

The First World War made it necessary to rally Indians behind the flagging war effort. To do so, in 1917, Edwin Montagu, the new [Secretary of State for India](#), made a [policy statement in parliament](#) which included the following –

“The policy of His Majesty’s government, with which the [Government of India](#) are in complete accord, is that of the increasing association of Indians in every branch of the administration, and the gradual development of self-governing institutions, with a view to the progressive realization of [responsible government](#) in India as an integral Part of the [British Empire](#).... I would add that progress in this policy can only be achieved by successive stages. The British Government , and the Government of India, on whom the responsibility lies for the welfare and advancement of the Indian people, must be the judges of the time and measure of each advance, and they must be guided by the co-operation received from those upon whom new opportunities of service will thus be conferred and by the extent to which it is found that confidence can be reposed in their sense of responsibility.”

I have elsewhere, traced Indian developments.

[Spear](#) (p9. 185-189)

A declaration of policy had been delayed for three years, but when it came it proved to be radical. For it envisaged internal self-government of the kind then enjoyed by the dominions of Canada, Australia, South Africa, and New Zealand. Moreover it was a bi-partisan document, for its author was a prominent Conservative, Lord Curzon himself revised it, its enunciator was a Liberal, and the cabinet which approved it a Coalition one. It set the pattern of political development for the next thirty years and made possible, in spite of all that passed during that period, the emergence of India into friendly independence. ...

The first principle of the new constitution was that of realization of self-government by stages.... But self-government did not mean independence. It was the reading of independence in dominion status at the Imperial Conference of 1926 which raised the issue in India and made the phrase 'Dominion status' a burning issue. The principle of progress by stages was secured by retention of parliamentary authority for any change and a vision for an inquiry into the working of the Act after ten years. This provision itself contained a suggestion of further change at that time....

When the Montford reforms are viewed as a whole... they marked a great departure. India had moved from the consultative to the first signs of the responsible principle, from select bureaucratic

control to the first hint of mass politics. India was now a political as well as a legal entity in a way it had not been before. Moreover, the new arrangements were clearly transitional; they looked forward towards the extension of democratic rights, towards full self-government on the responsible parliamentary model. There could certainly be no going back, the only conceivable change would be to go forward. And the provision for the ten years' inquest brought the possibility of change into the fairly near future. Indian politics were committed to development along western lines, and India herself conceived as an international entity. Between the views of the many who said that too much or too little had been given, or that the reforms were a disaster or a farce, the fact remains that India had been set on a new path and that a beginning had been made with the transfer of power.

However, it is true as [Read and Fisher](#) (p. 134) have pointed out -

As a promise of freedom, Montagu's declaration was decidedly tentative, hedged in by weasel words like 'gradual development', 'progressive realization', and 'responsible government'. An accompanying clause stated that the government alone would decide what 'responsible government' meant and when the Indians would be ready for it. But for Indian nationalists the declaration was a landmark, a clear promise of the dominion status they sought. No longer could their demands for Home Rule or independence be considered seditious.

⁶⁶ Quote from [Shmutzer](#) Pp. P149

The Dutch imperialism, though highly commercial, was in fact not really interested in the transmission of European religious and social institutions from the motherland to the natives. The average Dutchman did not, in fact, consider his legal or political system as necessarily superior to that of the natives. The Dutch colonial idea was, therefore, more dedicated to transforming the natives into a contented people who would worship "peace and quiet," respect the position of the guardian country, and accept the rational and impersonal relationship between guardian and ward. In short, he was more interested in creating an ideal climate in which to continue doing business. On the other hand, Dutch democratic humanitarianism carried the implicit convictions of equality of all races and peoples, and the moral obligation to strengthen and support their development to equal standards.

The subconscious recognition of the above realities had undoubtedly a disturbing and demoralizing influence upon Dutch leaders and their approach to colonial problems. Here, it is essential to keep in mind that the national ideology of the Dutch is based upon the independence of a people in spite of all efforts to the contrary from without. This ideology accounts, in part, for Dutch reluctance to impose their civilization upon the natives, and for the discomfort of so many colonial officials. The often wavering attitude of the colonial government takes its rise in the impossibility of reconciling basic Dutch ideology with the unavoidable necessities of a colonial administration. In its desire to give expression to its respect for the liberties and needs of the people in the East Indies, the Dutch government... moved to a re-adjustment of the administrative machinery by decentralizing the government and by creating the Volksraad.

⁶⁷ [Hegemony of the Colonies in Algeria](#)

⁶⁸ Quote from [Shmutzer](#)

A growing awareness of a political identity among the Dutch, native, and other inhabitants of the colony led to a feeling of belonging to a particular society (a nationalism of the Netherlands Indies), a feeling which was manifested by the diverse groups of the population, in their formulation of aims, desires, and demands for a measure of self-government and self-determination of the dependency.

But, instead of thus creating a harmonious relationship between the Netherlands and the colony, the position of the motherland came under increasing attack. Also, instead of creating a harmonious society within the colony itself, the differences between its component parts grew, finally giving way to a polarization into bitterly opposing camps. While this polarization emerged along economic and social lines, it also tended to coincide with the color line separating the Western and Eastern sections of the population....The former issue of a harmonious development, toward self-government was subsequently replaced by the issue of the justification of the authority of the Dutch government in the archipelago. equality, liberty, and fraternity. Under pressure arising from the obvious failure of the policy inspired by this neo-liberal ideology, and from the mounting political, social, and economic tensions, the successive Calvinist-dominated governments in the Netherlands from 1929 on reversed their position of supporting this policy. They henceforth emphasized law and order, a systematic education, and the development "from the bottom up" of economic and political responsibilities. Within the Calvinist political tradition, these governments insisted also upon an explicitly particularistic approach toward the creation, in the Netherlands East Indies, of a pluralistic society, a society which would be willing and able, in due time, to take its place in the commonwealth of civilized nations in the world. This particularism was to find its expression in a separate development of political representation, suffrage, legal systems, and in the suppression of all movements which were considered detrimental to the realization of this projected creative society.

Quote from [Shmutzer](#) p. 72

... the Europeans have made it clear that there do not exist thinking natives, that all of them are only inferior beings one can approach only with the utmost suspicion, and that it is all-important to keep them down....

⁶⁹ By [1904](#) most of Aceh was under Dutch control, and had an indigenous government that cooperated with the colonial state. Estimated total casualties on the Aceh side range from 50,000 to 100,000 dead, and over a million wounded. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Aceh#The_Aceh_War

⁷⁰ Quoted from Raymond Kennedy, "DUTCH PLAN FOR THE INDIES". *Far Eastern Survey*, Vol. XV, No. 7 (April 10, 1946), pp. 97-102

The ... Volksraad was democratic and representative, but only to a degree. Only thirty-eight of the sixty delegates were elected, and the remaining twenty-two were appointed by the Governor-General. The European population was greatly over-represented, for while Europeans formed far less than one percent of the total population, they held twenty-five, or over forty percent, of the seats. The Foreign Asiatics, with about two percent of the total population, were also favored in the legislature, having five, or almost ten percent... of the delegates. The natives held half of the seats, but they composed over ninety-seven percent of the population.... election of delegates to the Volksraad was carried out on the basis of an electorate severely restricted by income and property qualifications, which affected the natives almost exclusively. Moreover, the method of election was so indirect that true mass representation was far from achieved. Especially indirect was the electoral procedure for Indonesians....

The Governor-General could and did veto Volksraad legislation.

⁷¹ "The Volksraad (the People's Council) was created in 1918. Until 1927 it had only advisory powers, but in that year it was given co-legislative powers, which in practice meant that legislative measures normally required the approval of both the Volksraad and the Governor General. Deadlocks on the budget were resolved by the States General.

Other conflicts between the Volksraad and the Governor General went to the Crown for settlement. Only when the Volksraad failed to declare within a stated time whether or not it gave its concurrence to a bill submitted by him, or if urgent circumstances demanded immediate action, did the Governor General have the power to issue an ordinance on his own authority.

The Volksraad was composed of 60 members and a chairman, the latter appointed by the Crown. Under the provisions of the Indies Government Act, the membership was divided as follows: 30 Indonesians, 25 Europeans, and from 3 to 5 nonindigenous Asiatics. Of the Indonesian members 20 were elected, and of the Europeans and the non-indigenous Asiatics, 15 and 3 respectively. The remaining members were appointed by the Governor General after consultation with the Council of the Netherlands Indies. There were also provincial, municipal, and regency councils. In the regency councils the Indonesian members were in an overwhelming majority." Vandenbosch 1943

Quote from [Shmutzer](#) Pp. P74

... the great error of the Volksraad was in "having granted too much and lot not enough.- Too much ... because, although the natives were not sufficiently awakened to political realities, they had been given a voice in all state affairs: not enough because, even in the smallest administrative units, they had not been allowed to share the responsibility of power

⁷² Quote from [Shmutzer](#) Pp. Pp58-9

On behalf of the Indies Government, Commisioner Mr. Dr. D. Talma, declared on December 2, 1918:

The transfer of authority to the provinces or districts its organs of native authority and the central government (in which the native population will participate, and which will be responsible to it) can only be achieved when a large group of the population, of adequate development and moral vigor, is available to call their leaders to account, concerning the policies they are pursuing as public representatives, its well as a justification of their actions. The duty of the government to look after the interests of the population as a whole, stands out against a transfer of authority without conclusive guarantee that this transfer can be made without harm to the society. That small group of intellectuals consider themselves able to take over and judge the time ripe is not enough. There first has to be completed the school for responsible exercise of authority – which is to be opened with the creation of the promised councils.... It is a fact, however, that a re-organization of some significance is unthinkable without a substantial extension of the competence of the Volksraad; without a fundamental change in the character of this college, which has been re-organized from a purely advisory body into an integral part of the government with actual co- determination in and control upon the administration.... it is inevitable that the re-organization will bring on, not only a transfer of authority and influence to the local councils and the Volksraad, but also a shift in the relations between the motherland and the colony....

⁷³ Quoted from [Pender](#) p. 122-3

The ruling Liberal coalition was far more concerned with accommodating to some extent the growing pressure of Indonesian nationalists at this time for a greater degree of participation in government. In 1916 the Liberal Minister of Colonies submitted a proposal to parliament for the establishment of a *Koloniale Raad* (Colonial Council), which was to have a multi-racial membership and advisory powers. This was approved by parliament, and the council, called the *Volksraad* (People's Council) was officially instituted in May 1918 by the progressive Governor-General van Limburg Stirum. Members of the *Volksraad*, who enjoyed full parliamentary privileges and immunities, were to

be partly elected and partly appointed. The *Volksraad*, which could be consulted on all matters of state by the colonial government, was responsible for the preparation of the annual budget in conjunction with the Governor-General, although final approval still rested with the Dutch Parliament.

Any hopes the Dutch might have held about pacifying radical nationalists by instituting the *Volksraad* were dispelled almost immediately after the opening of the first session when *Sarekat Islam* leaders such as Tjokroaminoto severely criticized the colonial system. Again during the second session of the *Volksraad* on 14 November 1918 radical Indonesian members strongly condemned the colonial government for distinctly favouring the interests of European capital, and rebuked Europeans in general for their attitude of racial superiority towards Indonesians. While these speeches could obviously only accentuate the existing feelings of uneasiness in the colony, European fears about an impending revolution in the Indies were raised to a hysterical pitch when rumours reached the colony about a *coup d'etat* in the Netherlands led by the Socialist leader Troelstra (see document 15:1). Communist-influenced European soldiers and sailors in the Indies held demonstrations and the Indonesian Communist leader Darsono incited Indonesians to follow the Russian example. In the *Volksraad* on 16 November the Dutch Socialist Member Cramer pledged his full support for the Indonesian nationalist cause and on his instigation the *Radicale Concentratie*, a front of radical Indonesian and European members, was formed.

The immediate reaction of Governor-General van Limburg Stirum was that the *Volksraad* would have to be transformed into a full parliament in case the Socialists came to power in Holland. And on 18 November he stated in the *Volksraad* that he envisaged important political changes in the colony and a transfer of responsibility from the colonial government to the *Volksraad*, the extent of which could as yet not be fully determined. On 2 December van Limburg Stirum informed the *Volksraad* that a commission would be established to advise on constitutional reforms (see document 15: 2, 3).

The Socialist *coup* in Holland fizzled out. And the Dutch Government—which after the elections of May 1918 had again come into the hands of the rightist parties—as well as the vast majority of Europeans in the Indies, were highly critical of van Limburg Stirum's handling of the situation and of what they termed rash and irresponsible promises of Indonesian self-government (see document 16). The time of the more progressive colonial reformers, who were sympathetic to the Indonesian nationalist cause, was clearly running out; moreover many Europeans who previously had been "ethically" inclined now began to get second thoughts when confronted with the rapid and turbulent tide of radical Indonesian nationalism. By 1921 van Limburg Stirum and his small band of trusted advisers had been replaced by a group of more conservative and reactionary men who exchanged the earlier policy of *rapprochement* to Indonesian nationalism with one of stark repression. Many colonial Dutchmen and conservative politicians in Holland were apparently convinced that only a small segment of the top layer of indigenous society had been infected by the disease of "Communism" and that in any case the nationalist leadership did not truly represent the voice of the Indonesian masses. This reactionary spirit is well portrayed in the private letters of the progressive Creutzberg, who became vice-president of the *Raad van Indie* (Council of the Indies) in 1924, and de Graeff, a more liberal-minded governor-general (1926-31).

⁷⁴ . Letter of the Minister of Colonies (Idenburg) to the Governor-General (van Limburg Stirum), 11 December 1918 from Pender pp. 128-9

From your telegrams—and from press reports ... I have noticed that the current

situation in Europe has also had a great impact on the Indies. And looking at it superficially I would say "too much". I would not be surprised that agitators have played an important role and that the situation has been greatly misrepresented. Certainly the whole world is moving into what one likes to call a "democratic" direction. But surely there are differences in the degree of urgency ...

I am convinced that in the Indies we must avoid giving in to fashionable delusions, not only because this cannot be right theoretically, but also on practical grounds, because this must lead to chaos in the Indies. What is happening in Western countries lives more or less in the people and is a product of centuries of historical development. Neither the history nor the development of the Indies took place along these lines, and even if it did it has been very weak and incomplete. An uncritical adoption of Western ideals—or do I have to say slogans?—does not achieve what is aimed at in the West where it has a certain right to exist), but the result will be an oligarchy of the worst kind, that is, of incapable people. We must be firmly opposed to this. **If the participation of the people is wanted, this should not be restricted to a few, but this right should be given to many and not in matters which are only understood by a few, but in matters on which they can give a judgement, more or less. I am of the opinion therefore that the democratic development of the Indies must be channelled through the village councils and the regency councils, which must gradually be given greater responsibilities and allowed to influence provincial government as well as the *Volksraad*, if this is wanted. But I believe that it is a wrong policy to press already for an extension of the powers of the *Volksraad*.**

It was with interest that I noticed from your telegram that you have set up a commission for political reforms. My first impression was that such a commission should have been instituted in this country ... But on reflection **I understood that your commission is meant as a type of lightning conductor** and as such—apart from disadvantages—can have advantages.

If there is still an opportunity, perhaps the Commission for the Revision of the Constitution [instituted on 20 December 1918] will take account of the work of your commission, although **I doubt very much whether the Netherlands Government will be prepared to make proposals at this stage which in fact would surrender the whole of the Indies to a small group of intellectuals and semi-intellectuals, who so far have shown very little evidence of altruism and a willingness to sacrifice themselves for the general benefit.**

Of course ministerial "responsibility" to the *Volksraad* is out of the question; at least I refuse to co-operate in this. First of all "responsible" ministers can only be considered in the provinces—after the provincial councils have first been established and are working well, and then only carefully and gradually. These [provincial councils] are even considered necessary in British India, and consider how much further British India has advanced in this field, and how much greater its right is to participate in government through the sacrifices of at least some of its people in the war ...

⁷⁵ Commission for Constitutional Reform from Pender pp. 124-5

However, the *Herzieningscommissie* (Commission for Constitutional Reform), which had been instituted by van Limburg Stirum in 1918, in its report of 1921 rejected Colijn's proposals and advocated the creation of a unitary government with wide powers in internal affairs, although it did not press for full self-government. The commission also recommended that suffrage should be extended to all Netherlands subjects irrespective of race, providing that they complied with certain standards of

education and economic prosperity.

The Minister for Colonies, de Graaff, dismissed the commission's proposals as "*studeerkamerwerk*" ("an academic exercise") and argued that the most urgent need was for administrative decentralization. And although, owing to the strong pressure of progressive opinion in the Dutch Parliament, the Netherlands *Grondwetherziening* (Constitutional Reforms) of 1922 laid down that in principle the Indies should be allowed to take care of their internal affairs as much as possible, and the name "colony" was officially abandoned, in practice very little notice was taken in the actual reform measures introduced by de Graaff in 1925. Admittedly die *Volksraad* was given co-legislative power and in 1929 Indonesians were granted a majority of seats, but without the introduction of the principle of ministerial responsibility to the *Volksraad* these measures were largely meaningless, as the final power still lay with the Dutch Parliament.

De Graaff, taking advantage of the swing towards conservatism in Dutch politics, managed to have his earlier proposals for administrative reform accepted by parliament, and Java was now divided into a number of semi-autonomous provinces, regency councils, and municipal councils. The Outer Islands were also divided into provinces, but administrative and political decentralization at the lower level was—unlike in Java—to be based on *adatgemeenschappen* (ethnic group communities). This was much closer in line with Colijn's ideas than the administrative decentralization of Java based on the Dutch model.

Although Colijn and his followers did not deny that Indonesia should eventually be granted independence, they saw this as a far-off prospect. Only after the Netherlands had completed its difficult and slow-grinding task of bringing the Indies to a sufficiently high level of modern civilization would the colony be allowed to go on its own.

Quote from [Shmutzer](#) Pp. 86-8

Uneasy feelings were also increased when Colijn and his supporters publicly opposed a unitary government for the East Indies, and held that the Netherlands had an enduring function as the supreme authority over the several islands of the archipelago.

Much of the dissatisfaction is understandable if one keeps in mind how all hopes were raised by the declarations of ... 1918, and the subsequent suggestions of the Reforms commission ... in 1921; hopes ... which were not realized. Even the early draft of the new fundamental laws in 1922, anything but

Satisfactory in the eyes of Indonesian politicians, at least promised autonomy for the governor General, a delegation of all powers of the Minister of the Colonies – except those especially reserved to the government of the Netherlands, a limitation of intervention by the Crown in specific cases, and an elected representative assembly in the colony.

The new Constitution of 1925, however, did not realize even those promises. It directed the Governor General to follow instruction from the Crown; it reserved all powers to the Minister of the Colonies, except those especially delegated; it referred conflicts between the Governor General and the Volksraad to the Crown for its final decision; and the representative character of the Volksraad was done violence to by increasing the European membership to a majority at the expense of that of the natives. It was clear that the chief idea, that of greater independence of the Dutch East Indies, as an integral part of the Commonwealth, was given no adequate expression. The Indies, which were to be left to settle their own affairs, were not even consulted before the new basic laws were adopted. It turned out, therefore, that instead of leaving the Indies to settle their own affairs, the Netherlands Parliament administered the Indies in even more detail than before.

⁷⁶ In 1929 the need to revise the constitution was again raised and the Dutch response reveals their dead end, head in the sand, thinking (Quote from [Shmutzer](#) Pp. 150-155) -

Questioned as to its opinion, the Crown Council replied that the majority of its members considered a revision unnecessary, even inadvisable, since the country needed a period of political stabilization, undisturbed by any new demands or repeated changes:

Apart from the frets which would seem to point to the contrary, consideration of a revision of the Indies Constitution would be motivated by a strong demand of voiced public opinion. In native political circles, such an opinion is not disclosed. Certainly the ultra-leftist nationalist and related groups regard the political rights, which are conferred upon the native population, to be of little or no value. But this judgment is given expression more in non-cooperation than in a positive action for the extension of these rights. The relative programs of the more moderate nationalists are not considered by them to be of such importance that they are worth more specific notice. On the other hand, European public opinion and the European press voice much concern over the political future of the East Indies, in particular over the role to be played by the Volksraad.... A revision would be the source of new expectations and of new disappointments in the political sphere. No illusion should be entertained that native political groups would quietly watch the labor of a government commission for the revision of the Basic Laws. It would be a stimulus for them to unify themselves in actions leading to further desires, desires leading only to further disappointments, inasmuch as the near future will not bring them political revisions of real importance —such as an increase of native influence in the government of this country.

This opinion of the Crown council's majority was not shared, however, by member Ch. J. I. Welter, who judged that the political development had come to a dead end without offering any promise of progress or further perspective. In his opinion, the main question was less whether the actual political organization worked satisfactorily or not at that particular moment, than whether this political organization was capable of serving a people increasingly aware of itself, and whether it would be able to give satisfaction in the highest possible degree to their political and national aspirations under Dutch authority and leadership. Welter declared that he was convinced that in a very short time the thinking part of the native population would realize that the basic laws did not offer them a possibility for the real satisfaction of their political hopes. Disillusion in this respect could not be avoided, said Welter, and this feeling would be expressed in embitterment and further resistance to Dutch authority....

Welter pointed, in particular, to the new election laws, in which representation in the Volksraad was based on particular sections of the population instead of being based upon programs, convictions, and principles submitted to popular approval, as had been done previously. Here, the Volksraad, born of the desire to express the association of the population of the Indies, was being made to represent the desires and interests of different groups separated by race, nationality, political, social, and economic backgrounds....

It had to be realized that under the regulations of the existing constitution, a further political development would be impossible... any political change had to be at the expense of Dutch authority under these circumstances. It was necessary, in fact, to get out of this deadlock. The longer one existed the more sharply would these controversies be felt; the more resistance against Netherlands' authority increased, the more difficult a change in direction would become argued Welter, He reproached his fellow members for resigning themselves to the idea that a conflict between Indonesian political development and Dutch leadership was an inescapable fate, instead of pondering what actions to take to avoid such a conflict, or to postpone it to a time as far distant as possible....

Immobility, in the name of peace and order, was preferred to the dynamism and change necessary to adjust the governmental organization in line with the vast and rapid changes which had occurred in the social relationships within the dependency. This immobility was to cause additional friction in political and economic affairs.

Quoted from Raymond Kennedy, "DUTCH PLAN FOR THE INDIES". *Far Eastern Survey*, Vol. XV, No. 7 (April 10, 1946), pp. 97-102.

The censorship laws of the Indies have been almost unbelievable in their repressiveness, and the restrictions on free assembly and free speech have been almost as bad. Any person or group advocating independence, for example, has been liable to prosecution for sedition, and with the passage of time there was no softening of the rules. Just before the great debacle, in 1910, a government spokesman in the Volksraad declared officially that anyone who raised the issue of independence would be subject to legal punishment. Use of the word "Indonesia" was forbidden, as was singing of the "revolutionary" anthem, *Indonesia Raya*. Persons who violated the laws against "seditious" activities were either imprisoned or banished to remote parts of the Indies. The notorious prison camp on the Upper Digoel River in New Guinea held hundreds of political exiles at the outbreak of the war.

77 "Since 1931, the Indonesians had thirty representatives in the Volksraad, equal to the combined European and Foreign Asian contingents. Soetardjo's petition was the first attempt to utilize the increased Indonesian numbers to effect political change through the council.... The initial coolness towards the petition amongst the Indonesian political public was followed by partial support, indicating that the nationalist parties were realizing that a cooperating tactic required gradualist political methods. In Holland, on the other hand, Soetardjo's attempt at cooperation met with disdain: the Dutch showed no reciprocal signs of moving towards the nationalists...."

As presented to the Volksraad in 1936, the Soetardjo Petition requested the government in Holland and the States-General to call a conference of representatives of the Indies and the Netherlands. These representatives, acting on a footing of equality, would frame a plan for granting autonomy to the Indies within the limits of article 1 of the constitution, such autonomy to be implemented by means of gradual reforms within ten years. Article 1 of the constitution was an innocuous-looking sentence which merely stated that the Dutch realm consisted of the Kingdom in Europe, Surinam, Curacao and the Netherlands Indies. What this article implied was a legally debatable point, but the sponsors of the petition construed it as indicating that the four parts of the realm stood on an equal footing, subordinate only to the interests of the realm as a whole. To this request the proposers appended an explanatory statement appealing to the need for greater unity between Holland and the Indies. In their view, such unity could be achieved only if the Indonesians, who had recently been dissatisfied and indifferent, were inspired by a plan to establish a relationship which fulfilled their needs.

In August 1936 the signatories of the petition stated that according to their view of the future political form of the Indies, the country would possess the full right of self-government except for matters which were of common concern to both parts of the realm, e.g., international relations. They suggested that when working out a plan, the conference might well adopt the idea of a Rijksraad to regulate these imperial issues." Although the petition was to prove a unique event in the history of the Indies, the proposers themselves were careful to emphasize its antecedents. In the pamphlet which they issued in 1937 to publicize their petition, they pointed to similar proposals by nationalists in 1918

An interesting aspect of the official reaction to the Soetardjo Petition is the extreme slowness with which it was deliberated at the top level, indicating indifference and the

absence of any conviction that the matter was urgent or important.... The new Governor-General perhaps had the excuse that it took him some time to find his feet, but obviously he did not give high priority to the petition. His report on the matter shows a remarkable ability to ignore anything disturbing in the advice he had received." Although he began by admitting that there was widespread feeling in the Indies that the country's development was outgrowing its constitutional structure, that the European population felt that the Dutch government exercised too much influence on the conduct of the Indies administration, and that the politically-conscious part of the native population wanted leadership in its own hands, he then proceeded as if these facts were irrelevant to the petition.... Even if the government attempted to set out a political plan, it would give no satisfaction and would merely cause confusion. Calling a conference or commission would give the damaging impression that the government was admitting weakness, and at the same time it would arouse wild hopes which could only be disappointed. The Governor-General clearly thought the petition could be rejected with impunity.... He did not think it worthwhile ... to offer alternative reforms. In his opinion a Rijkssraad, for example, would not be useful, and its composition would create problems....

In November 1938 the Royal Decree on the Soetardjo Petition was finally sent out to the Volksraad. It rejected the petition on several grounds. Article 1 of the constitution could give no support to Soetardjo's request because it "gave no indication of the state of autonomy of the Netherlands Indies." The Dutch policy towards the Indies was to increase the control of its inhabitants over internal matters, and according to this principle a number of important reforms had been promulgated within a short period. Existing constitutional and legal provisions offered room for further advance. But political autonomy must grow as "the naturally ripening fruit" of the social and economic development of the country; otherwise it was "artificial." Like the Governor-General, the Minister had ignored any stirrings of unrest in the Indies, both because he believed them insignificant, and because to acknowledge them "could be seen as a sign of weakness."^{8°} The final decision yielded not an inch, not even ... to open up any perspectives." From [Abeyasekere 1973](#) pp. 82, 83, 101, 104.

⁷⁸ [Schiller](#)

⁷⁹ [Gwyer and Appadorai p. 491.](#)

⁸⁰ Micaud, Charles A. "POST-WAR GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS OF FRENCH INDO-CHINA", *The Journal of Politics* Vol. 9, No. 4 (Nov., 1947), pp. 731-744.

At the Brazzaville Conference, early in 1944, principles and plans were elaborated that were to reconcile the interests of the colonial peoples with those of the mother country. An official declaration on December 8, 1943, promised a new status to the people of Indo-China and the declaration of March, 1945, guaranteed administrative and economic autonomy to an Indo-Chinese federation of five states within the framework of the French Union. These concessions were not, however, to jeopardize the unity of the Empire, considered as one body with Paris as its head. No responsible French statesman ever advocated a loose association of independent states on the type of the British Commonwealth.

Such a solution would have been foreign to French experience and psychology. Accustomed to a highly centralized government at home, the French have naturally applied this principle of centralization to their colonies. The *République une et indivisible* was not to teach colonial peoples how to become independent. On the contrary, dependencies were to be drawn progressively closer to France, as integral parts of an empire dominated by the mother country. Principles of assimilation and centralization also correspond to the French sense of mission: "A

people of missionaries have spread their faith, or their non-sectarianism, and always their language, far and wide. Firmly convinced that they were the bearers of civilization and progress, they have imposed their ways of living in their colonies. Even in the African and Asian lands, under their protectorate they have made themselves the sole masters of the central administrative services, and their functionaries, great and small, act according to the tried formulas practiced in France."

If we add to this concept of centralization the French love for constitutional structures designed to guarantee the safe evolution of life's undisciplined forces, it is not surprising that the French should be skeptical of the British approach.... "It is a fact," said Premier Ramadier ... "that in the middle of the twentieth century a nation of traditional size is condemned to be a satellite unless it becomes the center of its own constellation. . . . France alone would be an enslaved France and this is why the problem of the Union has become the problem of the very liberty and existence of our country." To maintain the Union, the colonial peoples must entrust France with the authority to captain the ship. Constitutional provisions must be made to define and legalize future relationships and prevent a fatal disintegration. To the Viet Nam's demand for independence M. Bollaert could answer : "We shall remain. The French political parties are unanimously resolved that France shall not be dispossessed. The Constitution . . . makes the French Union, of which Indo-China is an integral part, an institution of the Republic. The French Union thus gains a constitutional basis which precludes any notion of abandonment."

The Constitutional Assembly attempted to reconcile the vital interests of France with the claims of the colonial peoples. The federal principle was out of the question; complete assimilation—the sending of deputies to the National Assembly by all the peoples of the Union—was not desired by those who feared, as a deputy remarked, that forty million Frenchmen might be colonized by sixty million natives. Nor was it desired by the peoples of North Africa, Madagascar and Indo-China, who wanted not assimilation but self-government. A combination of the formulas of assimilation and federation could, however, provide a satisfactory solution. According to the new statute, overseas departments and territories (the former colonies) would send deputies to the National Assembly as well as delegates to the Assembly of the Union. The associated states (the former protectorates) would send representatives only to the Council of the Union and to the Assembly of the Union. Since both bodies are purely advisory, this "embryonic" federation allowed the French Government to continue guiding the destiny of the Union in all spheres of common interest, particularly foreign policy and union defense. As Pierre Cot told the Constituent Assembly : "You say that you are building a federation. Well, no! Let us not have the hypocrisy to say so, we are not building a federation. For a federation implies equal states. In a federation everyone has equal rights and equal duties."

All parties, including the Communist, have insisted on France's continued "presence" in Indo-China. Her departure would create a dangerous precedent; other colonial peoples would then insist on being made independent. For the French, Indo-China is the key to the preservation of the Union and of France's position in the world. Yet the methods to be followed and the extent of the concessions to be granted vary greatly from extreme Right to extreme Left, and lack of agreement on these questions has seriously impeded the ability of the coalition government to find a solution acceptable to the majority of Frenchmen—not to mention the Annamite nationalists.

For the Rightists it would be senseless to negotiate with treacherous leaders who are communist as well as nationalist and whose only hope is to force out the French and make their country a vassal of Moscow. The cessation of hostilities cannot be considered until an anti-communist coalition of more reliable leaders is formed in Viet Nam—a coalition with which France can deal. This reluctance to deal with the present Viet Nam Government is not, however, the monopoly of the Right.... The Socialist Minister for France Overseas, M. Moutet, also told the Assembly that the government was willing to negotiate but not with men who wanted to drive her out by all possible means; he doubted whether the whole nation was behind Ho....

While the Left seems willing to make "generous and bold" proposals to the Viet Nam Government, the Right and Center parties are anxious to maintain France's former position in Indo-China more or less intact.

In December, 1946, Admiral d'Argenlieu declared that "France is not disposed to negotiate on the following points which she considers vital to her: the maintenance and the development of her present influence and of her economic interests, the protection of the minorities of which she has charge and the means to insure the security of strategic bases." He also stated that while France agreed to play the role of adviser to the state governments, she was to be the "guide" of the federal government. His successor, M. Bollaert, has also affirmed that France intended to "maintain her position on the federal level."

Such declarations seem to indicate that the policy of the French Government is similar to the policy formulated by the declaration of March, 1945, in which the ministers in the federal council of Indo-China would be responsible to the French Governor-General rather than to the elected Assembly. If so, the powers to be reserved by the federal government of Indo-China could not in practice be distinguished from the powers to be reserved by the French Union, i.e., the French Government, whether these powers were exercised from Paris or on the spot through a governor-general.

Actually the degree of independence to be given to the federal government hinges on the fate of Cochin-China. If it becomes an integral part of Viet Nam the overwhelming superiority of that state over Laos and Cambodia would preclude a satisfactory equilibrium and would jeopardize France's position unless the governor is given broad powers—a solution unacceptable to the Viet Nam leaders. Significantly, M. Moutet declared in March, 1947, that Tong-king, Annam and Cochin-China would have to find a formula guaranteeing their respective autonomy ... a declaration which is hardly compatible with the agreement of March 6, 1946. On another occasion he emphasized France's responsibility toward a federal government that would deal with those interests shared by the member states: "We have a duty toward the masses in all these countries. We cannot give up our role of protector, even to the new government; on the contrary. But it is understood that we shall not continue to govern directly."

...Are French assets to be protected against a policy of collectivization by the Viet Nam? Will Viet Nam be allowed to welcome foreign investments that may threaten the French position, or to establish its own tariffs? ...

"The members of the French Union hold in common the totality of their resources to guarantee the defense of the whole Union," states Article 62 of the French Constitution. "The Government of the [French] Republic assumes the coordination of these resources and the direction of the policy necessary to organize and implement this defense." ...

The close integration which the French consider necessary and which would preclude the right of secession, may not be possible unless a federal system is adopted in which the representatives of the various peoples of the Union share with the French deputies the right to legislate for the whole Union. If, on the other hand, a loose form of association is accepted by the people of France, an unequivocal pledge of self-government will have to be made in exchange for the Viet Nam's acceptance of a coordinated foreign policy.

⁸¹ We should note that Myanmar ([Ne Win](#) 1962 – 1988) and Korea ([Park Chung-hee](#) 1963-79) also had military dictatorial regimes headed by Japanese trained officers.

⁸² Quoted from [Dennis](#) p. 75

Throughout the war information on the NEI was scanty and, as later events showed, often completely unreliable. Special Operations Executive (SOE), the British organisation charged with undercover activities in occupied territories, coordinated the work of Helfrich's Corps Insulinde which operated as an intelligence service, employing fewer than a hundred men. According to Helfrich's chief of staff, Rear Admiral L.G.L. Van der

Kun, its lack of success was the result of the British policy of doing nothing to disturb the Japanese on Sumatra for fear that they would respond by strengthening their forces there." In addition to this British brake on the Corps Insulinde's activities, there were other factors that prevented it from achieving very much. Its senior staff was inadequate to the task, it lacked sufficient submarine transport facilities to land significant numbers of agents, and even if it had been provided with those facilities, it was unable to recruit enough competent agents. Those who were landed ran into strong hostility from the indigenous population, which ought to have signalled to the Dutch that their eventual return might not be greeted with complete favour, but it seems not to have produced in Dutch circles any questioning of their oft-repeated claim that apart from a few unrepresentative political activists, Dutch rule was largely accepted, indeed welcomed, by the great majority of the people.

⁸³ Pp. 5-7

⁸⁴ [Yong](#) p. 23

Coupled with this kind of attitude was the pride with which the Dutch colonial officials (including Van Mook) could point to their administrative achievements: a well-functioning production system, an honest civil service, a growing economy that had borne the brunt of the last world depression and so on.¹⁰⁴ Steeled by such confidence, the average colonial civil servant was wont to believe that he was in the best position to rule the Indies, given his past experience and performance. Willy-nilly, Van Mook was a product of his time. It was as R. Emerson had said:

The white man's burden finds its counterpart in the contention that those who know best should be the custodians of power.

The Japanese Occupation was to destroy whatever visions the colonial civil servants had of their continued service in the Indies.

⁸⁵ Following is quoted from [Yong](#)

pp. 10-11

Van Mook organised the first Congress of Students of the Indies in November 1917. The aim of the Congress was reflected in an analogy he tried to draw: a house was being built in the Indies with ancient Dutch bricks, Indies marble and Chinese granite. However there was no cementing material to bind all these ingredients together. One must be found "so that very quickly, a palace that could result would not instead be a jail, or worse still, a ruin". The Congress was one way by which to find that cement. Three representatives were chosen to deliver keynote speeches at the Congress: Baginda Dahlan Abdoellah, an Assistant Lecturer at Leiden representing the Indies students in the name of the Indische Vereeniging (Indies Association) and Han Tiauw Tjong, representing the Chinese in the Indies in the name of the Chung Hwa Hui (Chinese Association), and himself representing the Dutch students interested in the Indies. The choice of speakers to present their respective viewpoints fitted in nicely with Van Mook's idea of a multi-ethnic East Indies society.

The Indies delegate argued that the native Indies' people constituted the indigenous population of the East Indies and as such should have the fullest voice in the administration. He traced the rise of the nationalist bodies like Budi Utomo, the Sarekat Islam and the Indische Partij and how all these organisations aimed at increasing the voice of the people of the Indies in government. He pointed out that the Dutch response - the establishment of the Volksraad (People's Assembly) - was inadequate as the assembly was so circumscribed in powers that in fact the people of the Indies were denied substantial participation in government....

Van Mook set out three main propositions in his speech. Firstly he claimed that Dutch colonial rule resulted in benefits for the Indies. Law and peace (*orde en rust*) were established and thus

provided a firm basis for development. He cited the example of Bali which had recently (1908) been brought under Dutch rule. ...

The second proposition that Van Mook made was that the independence of the Indies had been the aim of the Dutch long before the introduction of the Ethical Policy. He was not far wrong for independence was already on the cards in 1819 when G.K. van Hogendorp (the man who spearheaded the liberation movement in the Netherlands in 1813 at the close of the Napoleonic occupation) made a clear statement on the subject in the States-General (Netherlands Parliament) that reflected adequately the views of Van Mook even till as late as 1950:

Yes, we shall one day lose the sovereignty over our colonies; but that day is still distant, and when it comes it will bring us a profit equal to that of our present ownership. Our descendants, grown wise by the experience of what is happening before our eyes, will no longer make war upon those overseas territories when they are prepared for independence, but will readily grant them their liberty and so enter into new relationship of friendship and commerce with them, which will fully outweigh the advantages that we now enjoy.'

The third proposition was of equal importance to the later political views of Van Mook. He argued that the people of the Indies did not constitute a nation...

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... it is important to note that Van Mook by the time of the above-mentioned congress of 1917, had sympathies for the creation of an ethnically mixed East Indies society. ...

Founded in 1912, the Partij had aims that shared a degree of reement with Van Mook's vision of the future of the Indies society. The Indische Partij was the first political organization that called for "the development of national consciousness among all residents of the Indies toward the land from which they received their living".... The founder of the party, E. F.E. Douwes Dekker, was influenced by mestizo revolution of Aguinaldo in the Philippines at the end of the nineteenth century. Initially Douwes Dekker even hoped that after the independence of the Indies had been secured, leadership of the new state would rest with Indo-Europeans or under the joint leadership of the Indo-Europeans and educated Javanese. Such aims naturally struck a welcome chord in Van Mook's heart for herein was guaranteed a role for the "Indies Netherlander".

It would be useful at this stage to identify the main elements in Van Mook's view of the future of the Indies. Firstly, the future East Indies society would consist of the indigenous people, Indies Dutch, Chinese and others who considered themselves citizens. The problem was to look for the cementing links it would bind all these people together. Secondly the Dutch in the Indies would have to work for the well being of the country with the ultimate aim of independence. The interests of the Indies would have to be promoted while the necessity for independence from colonial control was implicit because it would allow the unhindered formation of the East Indies society free from outside interference....

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...(It) is plausible to suggest that he would have liked to see it developed on the lines of the mestizo republics of South America. For example in Brazil, the American Indian, the Negro and the European mestizo had established a multi-ethnic society. Yet in the 1930s in Indonesia, such ideas were singularly unrealistic. The difference in population size between the various ethnic groups, the gulf between the Muslims and Christians, and most important, the rise of "limited" nationalism of the "native" Indonesians made any suggestion of the creation of a multi-ethnic society of the South American type impractical.⁹³ However, given Van Mook's ambitions, it is also possible to defend the view that he envisaged the creation of a huge new country in which someone with his abilities and ambition would have had far more scope than in the small densely populated Netherlands. How he would be able to maintain the upper hand in a decolonized Indonesia would remain problematic. One of his critics (Colonel A.G. Vroman, a former aide of

the last Governor-General before the Japanese Occupation) argued that the logical end of Van Mook's policy of decolonization would have been the creation of a Rhodesian-type situation with the white minority (led by Van Mook) using authoritarian means to defend a privileged position that had originated in the pre-1942 period. This is a possibility that should not be dismissed.

How did the Indonesians respond to Van Mook's idea that the Indies Dutch should be given a role to play in the Indies of the future? In this respect it is important to note that there was no opportunity to test any such response to his ideas before 1942. All he had were criticisms from the colonial government which was probably offended by Van Mook's implicit claims of "omniscience" and also probably harboured suspicions that he was not of pure Dutch blood but was instead a member of the Indo-European group which generally occupied a lower rung in the social ladder than the "pure" Dutchman. Part of the explanation why Van Mook was isolated from the Indonesian thought world was his association with the Department of Economic Affairs (1934-41). Considering that most Indonesians were new to the subject, it is plausible to argue that Van Mook thought the Indonesians could not be treated otherwise than as children of the primary schools who would eventually gain more knowledge later. His attitude was best summed up by P.J. Koets as "Quiet, little man, let me fix it for you." Moreover, Van Mook sincerely believed that the work of the Department of Economic Affairs was a great success." This conviction contributed to his self-confidence that what he was doing was right and there would be no need to test his ideas with the native population.

It is also relevant to note that despite the image Van Mook tried to project as a defender of the interests of the Indies, there was no record that the Indonesian nationalist leaders appreciated this role. It would be more correct to say that in the eyes of those Indonesians, Van Mook probably did not appear to differ from other Dutch leaders in the 1930s. While on the one hand he advocated autonomy, he did not go on record as having condemned the tight political control exerted over the colony that was increasingly a hallmark of colonial policy in that decade. His views on the progress of the Philippines towards independence

⁸⁶ Quoted from [Yong](#) p. 13

Van Mook returned to an Indies that had experienced important political changes. In 1918, the Volksraad was established to enable selected nationalist leaders to voice their views in an official body. There were also plans for the devolution of powers to councils set up at municipal and regency levels. Political organisations were also given the freedom to expand membership. Strikes were also frequent in the early 1920s. The degree of freedom for political organizations to function was considered ample by Van Mook who thought that the colonial government was even opposed to taking action against "such undisguised pro-violence organizations as the communists".

Alongside these opportunities for political organization was the increasing trend towards a more reactionary attitude vis-a-vis the nationalist movement in the Indies. Beginning with Governor-General D. Fock (1921-26) who instituted stringent economy measures (thus reducing expenditure on public welfare projects), the reactionary trend picked up momentum especially after the communist revolts of 1926-27. Opponents of the hitherto relatively liberal Ethical Policy were quick to adopt an "I told you so" attitude. In 1927, M.W.F. Treub wrote a pamphlet *Het Gist in Indie* to show the causal relationship between the revolts and reform measures. To H. Colijn, the reforms carried out before 1926-27 were too far advanced for their time. In 1929, Dutchmen who felt that their hitherto secure and privileged position in the Indies society was threatened, formed the *Vaderlandse Club* (Fatherland Club.) As an antidote, the Club stressed the need to strengthen the bonds that tied the colonies to the motherland in order to protect the interests of the latter "in the first place" and then that of all the ethnic groups in the Netherlands Indies, especially those of the Dutch. In 1930, the Club membership reached 9000 – an indication of its popularity. Political conservatism in the colony was to increase in the years after 1930 with the internment of some prominent Indonesian nationalist leaders.

⁸⁷ Quoted from [Yong](#)

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...The main theme in most of Van Mook's speeches in the Volksraad centred on the need to adopt measures to ward off the worst effects of the depression on the Indies and its native population.

For example, in August 1931, Van Mook called for measures to protect the Javanese peasants who had rented their farmlands to the sugar planters. The depression led to a fall in sugar prices and in order to firm up those prices, the Dutch colonial government signed the Chadbourne Agreement in March 1931 whereby the Indies was allotted an export quota. By the end of 1931, sugar production in the Indies had fallen from 3 million tons per year to between 2 or 5 million tons. This meant the closure of 30 to 60 of the 180 sugar factories in Java. However most of the sugar planters had concluded long term contracts with the Javanese peasants for the renting of their land for sugar cultivation. Long term contracts ... were preferred because the former suited the extensive irrigation needs of sugar cultivation. With the imposition of an export quota, many sugar planters terminated their contracts altogether without the peasants knowing that they could object. Van Mook argued that the peasant landowner who had previously been guaranteed a cash income on a long term basis now suddenly found himself without any income although a piece of uncultivated land was returned to him. Central Java, there were also sugar planters who renegotiated their long term contracts which guaranteed 78 guilders per bouw (7000 square metres) of land for short term contracts that paid only 45 guilders per bouw." The landowners could of course take the sugar planters to court but this complicated procedure was well nigh impossible for the simple peasants. Moreover the sugar planters who were mainly Europeans could only be sued in European courts. Van Mook's proposed solution was to get a civil service official to explain to the landowner his rights each time a cancellation of contract occurred. The

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government dismissed the solution, arguing that as long as no force was used, the cancellations were valid and did not warrant official intervention. Moreover the crisis was viewed as temporary.

In 1931, Van Mook criticised the imposition of an excessive burden on the Indies in sharing imperial defence costs. The Indies, he asserted, bore sixty per cent of these costs. The Indies paid the greater portion of the pensions in the defence establishment even though there were naval personnel, for example, who spent only part of their active service in the Indies. In 1931, it was estimated that the Indies had been paying 135 million guilders per year for pensions while the Netherlands only paid 90 million guilders. Van Mook also maintained that the Netherlands unfairly passed over other defence costs to the Indies. When the warship *Zeven Provinciën* was transferred for service in Indies waters in 1932, repairs that should have been carried out first were postponed till after it arrived in the Indies which then paid the bill for repair works. The bill amounted to half a million guilders. An attempt was made in the Volksraad to get the Netherlands to bear half the repair costs but this was refused by the Netherlands States-General (Parliament).

Van Mook alleged that the "open door" policy for investments led to the establishment of big industries that were dominated by the nonindigenous interests. Far from stimulating Indonesian private enterprise, these largely European-owned industries established an impregnable monopoly. Assisted by government measures like the penal sanction (which provided labour for industries), the construction of roads and water-works, the establishment of experimental stations, the position of the European-owned industries had been greatly strengthened.

In trade policy too, Van Mook tried to defend the interests of the Indies. In 1932, he pressed for the establishment in the Netherlands of a small office that would be specially devoted to the business of important international economic affairs of the Indies. In his view, this was necessary because the Indies and the Netherlands were two "entirely different economies" and the interests of the former could not be determined by the latter. Yet this point, he complained, was ignored and in 1934 he was still asserting that decisions affecting not only trade policy but also the vital interests of the Indies were made by people who were not representatives of the Indies.

Underlying Van Mook's defence of the interests of the Indies in the Volksraad was the implicit criticism that the Dutch in the Netherlands viewed relations with their colony primarily in terms of finance or economics and less from the standpoint of devotion and attachment to their colony. This last attitude was only found in the Dutch who had long been resident in the Indies. This view of Van Mook was not openly stated at the time when he was in the Volksraad but in 1948 when he reviewed Dutch-Indonesian relations through the years, he voiced these sentiments:

For the Netherlanders who have worked here [Indonesia] for a long time, it is different. In our minds, we have identified with the interests of this country and its inhabitants and

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on the basis of this outlook, we must cooperate to protect these interests and must not act as defenders of the interests of the Netherlands against the Indonesians in the first place.

This stand clearly reflected the attitude of Van Mook in defending the interests of the Indies.

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While Van Mook felt that there was a grave miscarriage of justice in the trial and imprisonment of Soekarno in 1929 because the latter did not really plan violence, he asserted that Soekarno should have known that his propaganda would play into the hands of the colonial "conservative diehards". IN While he condemned the judgment passed on Soekarno, his objections were focussed almost entirely on the legal problems of the case and did not question the wisdom of the colonial government's response to the emerging nationalist movement led by Soekarno. There is no recorded discussion on how best to accommodate the rising nationalist aspirations of the 1930s. He made no known attempt to try to understand the political ideology of Soekarno. To Van Mook, Soekarno was merely lacking in political insight and responsibility. The element of "realpolitik" was missing in Van Mook's objections.

⁸⁸ Quoted from [Yong](#)

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... Van Mook and other like-minded people teamed up in January 1930 to form the *Stuw* (Stimulus) movement.

The name of the movement suggested the kind of role it intended to play in the Indies society. The first issue of its organ explained that the "Stuw" was a dam, a conservation of energy which otherwise would be lost or dissipated. Just as a dam would increase the level of a river, the association's role was to increase the interest of everybody in the "greater prosperity" and "higher development" of the Indies. A dam's function was also to regulate the stream which might otherwise seek "a wrong way out". It also prevented overflow and destruction.... The primary aim of the Stuw movement was

To bring about the association and co-operation of all Dutchmen who are convinced that it is their duty as Netherlanders to take their share in a further realisation of Holland's colonial task, which will only be fulfilled when an Indies Commonwealth shall take up a place of its own among the independent people of the world, able and prepared both to meet international obligations and to recognise and protect the rights and the interests of non-indigenous inhabitants. The society finally aims at the forging of lasting links between the Netherlands and this Commonwealth.

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... The Stuw leadership noted:

We see in the non-Indonesian blijver [resident] as much as in the Indonesian himself, a future member of the Indies Commonwealth, having a part in it in proportion to his political and social significance. In no sense do we disguise the fact that an extremely difficult relationship exists, which presently is not developed in a favourable manner.

Inter-ethnic relations were so bad that the Stuw movement, for all its liberality, remained exclusively Dutch. The founders of the Stuw felt that, given the state of Dutch-Indonesian relations existing at that moment, it was not timely to extend its membership to the non-Dutch. In any case the Indonesians paid scant attention to the Stuw vision of an independent Indonesia. The Indonesian press was very reserved over the Stuw not least because the independence it envisaged was heavily qualified.

The Indies Commonwealth would only be established if three requirements were met. Firstly international obligations must be fulfilled. The Stuw movement did not explain what these obligations were, but in the light of Van Mook's later views and activities, they probably included the creation and maintenance of a stable, orderly government that would gain the Commonwealth international recognition. Secondly, the rights of minorities must be protected. These need no elaboration. They coincided with Van Mook's views of a multi-ethnic East Indies society. Thirdly, a bond between the Netherlands and the Commonwealth must be forged. However, this link was only to have a cultural and economic character. Both the Netherlands and Indies Commonwealth would be free to decide on the nature of the political relationship. Therefore, according to the Stuw, ideally the links between the Commonwealth and the mother country paralleled those between the Dominions and Britain in the British Commonwealth of the mid-1920s. The constituent bodies in the latter organization only shared a common allegiance to the Crown but maintained equality of status and free association. However, it is not possible to be more specific on the prospective relations between the Indies Commonwealth and the Netherlands because the Stuw did not elaborate upon these.

But what was clear was the fact that for the moment, independence was not to be realised immediately. The Stuw leadership argued that it was just as meaningless to speak of the Indies free from the Netherlands as it was to struggle for permanent Dutch supremacy." It was therefore not surprising that in the organ of the Stuw, references were made (especially by Van Mook) not to the Britain-Dominions relationship but to the example of the Philippines where the Americans had conceded a large measure of self-rule to the Philippines but still maintained supervisory powers. Van Mook saw that this arrangement whereby Washington was still competent to act as arbiter was the most suitable. He adhered to this position consistently. Even till 1941, evidence could be adduced to show that Van Mook was still thinking in terms of continued Dutch leadership. In that year he wrote:

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However it must be borne in mind that apart from any considerations of sentiment, the Netherlands Indies needs the link with the Netherlands and that for an active development of the Netherlands-Indies as a country, the Netherlands element for leadership and link is indispensable.

[Yong](#) p. 19

Van Mook's views on administrative reform are relevant because they revealed his concern for firm and efficient functioning of the administration, an obsession that could have been responsible for his persistent reluctance to accept the idea of full independence immediately for the Indies. Good administration was "the indispensable condition for the rapid development and emancipation" of colonial territories, he stated again and again. The proposals on a collegiate form of government in which the Directors of departments would not be mere civil servants but would be drawn closer to the decision-making authority (the Governor-General) in the Indies were basic to his attempt at reconstruction of the post-war government in 1948....

The proposals of Van Mook and those of the Stuw in general failed to evoke a positive response. In 1931, the new Governor-General was B.C. de Jonge whose inaugural speech in the Volksraad in that year revealed that a time of tight and restrictive colonial control had dawned in the Indies. ... He went on to stress the importance of the big industries to the Indies economy -as employers,

as a source of tax and as exporters. The interests of the Indonesians were clearly relegated to a second place....

As a result of the adverse reaction of the colonial government towards the Stuw, new members were not encouraged to join the movement. The Stuw remained small and at the end of 1933 their publication was discontinued. ... In 1935 when the new Volksraad convened, neither he nor any other Stuw member was appointed to that body....

⁸⁹ [Yong](#) p. 22

While Van Mook felt that there was a grave miscarriage of justice in the trial and imprisonment of Soekarno in 1929 because the latter did not really plan violence, he asserted that Soekarno should have known that his propaganda would play into the hands of the colonial "conservative diehards". IN While he condemned the judgment passed on Soekarno, his objections were focussed almost entirely on the legal problems of the case and did not question the wisdom of the colonial government's response to the emerging nationalist movement led by Soekarno. There is no recorded discussion on how best to accommodate the rising nationalist aspirations of the 1930s. He made no known attempt to try to understand the political ideology of Soekarno. To Van Mook, Soekarno was merely lacking in political insight and responsibility. The element of "realpolitik" was missing in Van Mook's objections.

Put simply, Van Mook was little different from the civil servants of his time. A breed of men dedicated to the creation and maintenance of an efficiently functioning bureaucracy in a peaceful stable state, they had little time for leaders like Soekarno who were considered demagogues and unrepresentative of the masses. The world view of the civil servant in the Indies in the 1930s has been well described by B.R. O'G. Anderson:

For the conventional colonial official, the world divided normally into two: praters and werkers. Praters (talkers) were especially the politicians, parliamentarians, idealists, "reds" and ideologues. Werkers (doers) were busy and practical men of affairs, who kept their mouths shut, "ran a tight ship", had a strong sense of hierarchy and knew their place down to the last e. The division was in many ways a conventional pejorative distinction between administrators and politicians. Furthermore Dutch officialdom clearly defined their Great Society as consisting of Rust en Orde (Tranquility and Order), which was constantly being threatened by "chaos".... Any reading of Dutch colonial literature astounds one with its obsessive concern with a (supposedly fragile) *orde*. Society (in all serious matters) divided between law-givers and law-takers, the regulators and the regulated. The politician was an intruder and an outsider, to be kept firmly in his place. The essential danger was always that the hierarchy would be disturbed by "lower" elements making claims to power in the name of communal, revolutionary and/ or democratic forces. The good political state is *stabil*, the bad *labiel*.

⁹⁰ See [Pender](#) p. 5 ff

⁹¹ See [Pender](#) p. 61 ff