SAN FRANCISCO: 50 YEARS ON
Part Two

Professor Roger Buckley, International Christian University, Tokyo:

‘Hong Kong and San Francisco: Anglo-American Debate on East Asia and the Japanese Peace Settlements’

Professor Valdo Ferretti, University of Rome ‘La Sapienza’:

‘Yoshida’s Ideas on China after the Dulles-Morrison Agreement and its Relevance for Anglo-Japanese Relations’

Professor Neville Meaney, University of Sydney:

‘Look Back in Fear: Percy Spender, the Japanese Peace Treaty and the ANZUS Pact’

Emeritus Professor Ann Trotter, University of Otago:

‘San Francisco Treaty-Making and its Implications for New Zealand’

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Preface

An all-day symposium was held at the Suntory and Toyota International Centres for Economics and Related Disciplines on 10 July 2001 in order to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the San Francisco Conference of September 1951. It attempted to reassess that conference and the peace treaty with Japan which emerged from it both from international and national perspectives. This attracted a distinguished panel of speakers and a large distinguished audience. The symposium was held in conjunction with the Japan Society, London.

The eight papers are being issued in two parts. Part I consisting of papers dealing with the United States, Japan and Britain has already been issued.

In Part II we deal with related issues. Professor Buckley deals with Anglo-American differences over the China question, the outcome of which was that neither the People's Republic nor the government of Taiwan were invited to attend the conference. Professor Ferretti deals with the thinking of Prime Minister Yoshida at and after the conference, with particular reference to his desire for good relations with Britain.

Alongside the Peace Treaty and the American - Japanese Security Pact there was signed the Australia - New Zealand - United States (ANZUS) Pact. Professor Meaney and Professor Trotter discuss the ANZUS Pact from the standpoint of their respective countries, Australia and New Zealand.

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Abstracts

Buckley describes how Britain took the independent step of recognizing the People's Republic of China, a step which led to problems about China being invited to the San Francisco conference. After China's entry into the war in Korea, Hong Kong's trade was squeezed through trade embargos imposed by the United States and its exposed security system was vulnerable, had it not been for the presence of the US 7th fleet in the Taiwan Straits.

Ferretti shows that the leading ideas of Yoshida Shigeru on relations between Japan and the People's Republic of China did not change after the failure of the Dulles-Morrison Agreement as he continued to pursue normalization with the PRC. He had the idea of joining the Colombo Plan and entering the markets of Southeast Asia by establishing a preferential bilateral axis with Britain but this was ultimately rejected by Britain at the time of Yoshida's visit to Europe in 1954.

Meaney describes External Affairs Minister Percy Spender's views on the need for a Pacific Pact. When it became clear from discussions with Dulles early in 1951 that the treaty with Japan would not be punitive or restrict her rearming, Australia called for some sort of security agreement with the United States. This came to fruition as the ANZUS Pact which was signed and ratified more or less simultaneously with the San Francisco treaty.

Trotter discusses New Zealand's reaction to the Australian initiative over the need for a security pact. While she had considerable reservations, most notably over relations with Britain, she appreciated the need for security guarantees and joined the ANZUS Pact.

Keywords: San Francisco Peace Treaty; People's Republic of China; Korean War; Hong Kong; US 7th Fleet; Taiwan Straits; Colombo Plan; American-Japanese Security Pact; ANZUS Pact; Yoshida Shigeru; Percy Spender; John Foster Dulles; Herbert Morrison; Southeast Asia; Japan; Britain; Australia; New Zealand; United States.

HONG KONG and SAN FRANCISCO: ANGLO-AMERICAN DEBATE on EAST ASIA and the JAPANESE PEACE SETTLEMENTS

Roger Buckley

Writing to Winston Churchill in March 1955, President Eisenhower noted 'an apparent difference between our two governments that puzzles us sorely and constantly. Although we seem always to see eye to eye with you when we contemplate any European problem our respective attitudes towards similar problems in the Orient are frequently so dissimilar as to be almost antagonistic'.[1]

At no time was this unfortunate legacy more apparent than during the period between 1949 and 1952, when events in northeast Asia centred on three highly complex and closely interrelated issues. These were, of course, the appropriate strategy for conducting war in Korea, a raft of issues relating to the emergence of the People's Republic of China and policies towards post-occupation Japan. It was virtually impossible for officials in London or Washington to attempt to draw up papers on the region without having to reckon with this troika of issues and, in addition, anticipate both immediate differences on Asian policy and take careful note of the major domestic political consequences implicit in every move, particularly in the case of the United States and its approaches to east Asia after 1949. To give merely three random examples taken from the Truman papers of the dangers lurking in the background: the president received a huge correspondence that included a message from Mary Pickford on the anniversary of the atomic bombing of Hiroshima, strong endorsements from Governor Jim Folsom of Alabama, who wrote entertainingly after the publication of the 1949 White paper on China that 'for the first time to my knowledge the State Department is able to see further West than the Hudson River', while the administration took good care to cultivate Congressman Mike Mansfield of Montana over all things Japanese.[2] Each and every shade of opinion on how the authors thought the United States should deal with rival Chinese governments, win the war in Korea and control Japan emerge to almost swamp the White House.[3] In the particular case of what might be the appropriate course of action towards the Chinese civil war in the years after Japan's surrender, the range of opinion covers the entire political spectrum from sending volunteers to fight alongside Chiang Kai-shek, to dividing China into two separate states and on to recognizing the People's Republic of China as the lawful government of the land.[4]

On what might be termed 'the Big Three' questions for Asia, it is probable that President Truman was correct to minute wryly that Allied progress over the Japanese treaty appeared to be one issue where Anglo-American differences were not insurmountable. In contrast to the British position over the PRC and London's attempts to restrain MacArthur and limit the war in Korea, Anglo-American differences over the Japanese peace settlements were more muted. It is also likely that in terms of pressing international import, the construction of what some have termed the San Francisco 'system', ranked third on the immediate American political agenda behind the horrors of Korea (recently referred to as not so much the forgotten war but physically as the coldest war) and the controversies surrounding China. In retrospect, however, the long-term consequences of San Francisco would have an even greater impact on American foreign policy in the Pacific over the next half century than either the China question or the Korean War. The construction of the multiple settlements associated with the Japanese peace treaty were to prove the lynchpin of American political, military and economic involvement in the region from the early 1950s to the present and on, surely, for at least another generation.

For the British Labour and Conservative governments of the time the eventual peace treaty with Japan was seen as a necessary, if highly belated, event. Both front benches exhibited a bipartisanship that contrasts with the ferocious political battles between the Truman administration and its Republican opponents. The British approach tended to be low key, at least in public. Correspondence from Ambassador Franks, admittedly when he was already long retired, indicates that he was far too busy tackling Korean crises to have had any particular recollection of earlier input over the Japanese settlements.[5] Indeed, the British official approach to San Francisco appears to have been to limit open debate wherever possible, in order not to inflame those elements in Britain who preferred a Carthaginian to a compassionate peace. Opponents among ex-servicemen, civilian internees and Lancastrians far outnumbered those few who were prepared to speak up in favour of a liberal set of arrangements that looked to the future rather than the immediate past.[6] Portions at least of the British press, however, should be excluded from these criticisms.[7]

Explanations for the relatively benign Anglo-American dealings that culminated in San Francisco are perhaps fourfold. Secretary Bevin had laid down broad, general lines of policy towards Japan that anticipated a generous peace settlement. It had

also been long recognized that Britain's junior status in the occupation's lengthy interregnum would limit any over-large contribution to the eventual peace arrangements, where it was inevitably the case that the United States would dominate. Third, events in China and on the Korean peninsula by the autumn of 1950 had become far too pressing and, finally, no British government was likely to have the energy to add yet another dimension to the already lengthy list of Anglo-American quarrels abounding in northeast Asia. In a sense San Francisco 'slipped' through the net. The peace process was largely a bureaucratic exercise where ministers did not intend to press the Truman administration too hard, given that the region was ablaze, British interests effected by Japan were less than vital and further controversy ought to be avoided in order to maintain the broader Anglo-American partnership.

Antipathy to post-war Japan was a view that united virtually the whole of the Asia-Pacific - indeed it is almost impossible to find any Asian government that had a good word to say for the San Francisco peace terms. The majority of the states that signed the peace treaty had only marginal interest in the region and were there largely at the insistence of Washington in order to swell the numbers. This 'packing' could hardly disguise the fact that the treaty was an American-engineered arrangement, though technically under joint Anglo-American sponsorship, where John Foster Dulles most ably gained his way. Dulles worked like the successful lawyer that he had long been through lengthy, thorough debate and extensive correspondence where each and every statement was drafted to protect his and America's position. The old and very tired refrain of 'dull, duller, Dulles' is certainly apparent though in his dealings with the Foreign Office. Dening could hardly disguise his impatience at one platitudinous lecture from Dulles on the future of the Asia-Pacific, but for some one who had never previously exhibited much interest in the region, aside from describing Chiang Kai-shek as a Christian gentleman, his accomplishments are considerable. Dulles' assessments of other governments were often accurate. In November 1950, for example, Dulles had written to General MacArthur, following private talks with Far Eastern Commission members that 'we judge that their [UK] principal concern is with the impact of Japanese commercial competition during the post-Treaty period'.[8]

It may be worth recalling that the peace treaty with Japan was seen by Dulles as the most important of no less than five sets of negotiations that he was involved in

simultaneously. When he wrote to President Truman in early October 1951 to hand back his commission, he proudly stated that all his tasks were over. For Dulles these had been, as listed by him, first, the peace with Japan, second, a mutual assistance treaty with the Philippines, third, a security treaty between Australia, New Zealand and the United States, fourth, the US-Japan security treaty and, fifth, an exchange of notes between Secretary of State Acheson and Prime Minister Yoshida 'pledging Japan to permit and facilitate the support, in and around Japan, of forces engaged in United States action in the Far East'.[9] Dulles further informed Truman that the above mutual assistance and security treaties, in company with the retention by Washington of the Ryukyu and Bonin islands, would provide for what Truman had ordered in his statement of 19 April 1951 as 'natural initial steps' to 'strengthen the fabric of peace in the whole Pacific Island area, where security is strongly influenced by sea and air power'.[10]

Debate over Hong Kong forms one important part of Anglo-American relations in the Asia-Pacific during the first post-war decade. It was an issue that stood somewhere between the 'successes' that the US achieved during the occupation of Japan and Britain gained after its return to liberated Malaya, and the 'failures' encountered by Britain and the United States when they attempted to resolve their many differences over China and Korea. It is hardly coincidental that the 'successes' for both nations occurred when each government could adopt a largely unilateral approach, both in its dealings with its client and outside governments, while the 'failures' resulted from a constant, almost daily, set of bruising circumstances where each nation needed the other but found the solution of their respective differences almost at times impossible. Hong Kong, it will be suggested, falls into neither the Japan/Malaya nor the China/Korea category.

Events in post-1945 Hong Kong serve as a reminder of the close linkage between China questions, the war in Korea and, though this can be overlooked, the full range of treaties associated with the Japanese peace settlements, as defined in Dulles' letter to Truman of October 1951. Hong Kong both needed the support of the United States for regional security and trade firmly established through the San Francisco settlements and yet suffered greatly from American policies towards the People's Republic of China during the Korean War and in the ensuing decades of the Cold War in Asia. The end result was that Hong Kong's history was considerably more influenced by the actions of successive administrations in Washington than some

accounts of the territory's rebirth and later achievements may have suggested.[11] Explanations for first the survival and then the growth of Hong Kong must confront not only the respective policies of the British and Hong Kong governments, but also the behaviour of the United States, China and Japan. Constant attention to domestic economics without some note of international relations will result in a lop-sided story for post-war Hong Kong, much as it does for those once heroic accounts of Japan's rise to economic greatness.

From the outset Hong Kong needed the United States. The reestablishment of the territory as a British possession would have been all but impossible if the Truman administration had objected strongly to the initial British moves in August 1945. The White House's ruling that British personnel could accept the surrender of Imperial Japanese forces in Hong Kong, despite the vigorous objections of Chiang Kai-Shek, suggested that Truman was more sympathetic than his predecessor to the return of the European powers to the region. American cordiality continued as the territory began its reconstruction era. General MacArthur, for example, assisted in encouraging trade between Japan and Hong Kong and the colony helped itself through the activities of a small staff attached to the British mission in Tokyo. These commercial opportunities, however, were followed in the late 1940s by far more important and potentially damaging American policies towards the emergence of the People's Republic of China. Hong Kong was once again a subject of cabinet discussion, Chiefs of Staff meetings, Anglo-American debate and substantial research by the National Security Council in Washington. The future of the territory was once again viewed as highly uncertain. Parallels began to be drawn between December 1941 and 1949. Anxieties focussed both on the possibility of direct military invasion by the PLA and the equally dire possibility of internal subversion and mass demonstration that could bring the colony to its knees without the necessity of Chinese troop deployments.

The prospects facing Hong Kong, already being placed under considerable social pressure from the influx of Chinese refugees fleeing from the north, played some considerable part in the Attlee government's decision to recognize the PRC. Although Secretary Bevin put a brave face on the difficulties that confronted Hong Kong in his reply to the United States that 'the authorities in Hong Kong were now confident of their ability to face armed aggression, economic blockade or subversive activities from within', the Truman administration was not persuaded. Reports to the

National Security Council in July and October 1949 tell a very different story. The Joint Chiefs of Staff warned in the summer that 'it would be unwise for the United States to contribute forces for the defense of Hong Kong and Macao unless we are willing to risk major military involvement in China and possibly global war'.[12] Detailed examination led the military to reckon with seven possible courses of action, varying from the wish 'to combine with the British, if they so request, in contributing to the defenses of Hong Kong' to the preferred option of maintaining 'a passive wait-and-see attitude'.[13] Secretary of State Acheson reported to the NSC two months later that the American government had been careful throughout discussions with London to avoid even the slightest hint of US military support for the defence of the territory. Hong Kong might have the consolation of 'moral support in the event of an unprovoked military attack on Hong Kong by the Chinese Communists and that in this circumstances the U.S. would support an appeal to the United Nations' but this, of course, was of little practical value.[14]

The British political position was further undermined by the State Department memorandum on 'British views respecting Hong Kong' that was distributed to the NSC on 27 September 1949. In an important statement that greatly weakens the frequently maintained assumption that the cabinet wished to recognize Beijing in order to safeguard its rule in Hong Kong, Bevin was reported as saying:

> 'The British Government would be willing to discuss the status of Hong Kong only with a united, stable, and friendly Chinese government. It does not expect to discuss the matter with the Chinese Communist government, which may be presumed shortly to be established, as it does not consider that such government would be friendly to Great Britain even though it might subsequently be recognized by Great Britain. The legal position of the Hong Kong leased territory is unassailable until 1997, when the leases expire'.[15]

Bevin's reading to Acheson in September 1949 of his opinion that 'we intend to remain in Hong Kong', at least until 'a friendly and stable Government of a unified China' comes into being hardly accords with the assumption that the cabinet calculated that an early recognition of Beijing might offer immediate protection for the territory. Bevin's almost Churchillian defiance was apparently merely met with the bland remark by Acheson that 'this seemed sound and reasonable'.[16] Yet, assuming that Bevin's statement was something considerably more than simply the bravado implicit in Hemingway's posthumous 'True at First Light' title, this would appear to limit any cabinet expectations of even medium-term reconciliation with Beijing. The

foreign secretary had argued both for the recognition of the PRC and still cautioned against anticipating any prospect of this providing much tangible relief for Hong Kong from such diplomacy.

London would have been further concerned for the safety of Hong Kong if it had learned of the deliberations of the National Security Council in mid-October 1949. The body was told starkly by the Secretary of Defense, on the advice of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, that Hong Kong would not receive US military assistance in the event of border incursions and that furthermore any recourse to the United Nations by London would be of little use, since, despite Article 42 of the Charter, 'there being no United Nations security forces'.[17] Nine months later and Washington would suddenly find itself interpreting international law with regard to the Korean peninsula in a decidedly different manner when the familiar 'horses for courses' rubric came into play. Washington's senior planners had categorically ruled out support for the British, if called upon to contribute to any defense of Hong Kong; nor, incidentally, was the Commonwealth any more forthcoming when Australia, New Zealand and Canada were sounded out by British officials. The Canadian prime minister was reported to have responded in disbelief at the anachronistic thinking of the Attlee government over its attempts to persuade other friendly powers to rush to the possible defense of its territory. Given the experience of Canadian troops in the days prior to the surrender of Hong Kong in December 1941, it would have been political dynamite to even consider support for any such action by Ottawa.

Secretary of Defense Louis Johnson announced that, 'While little surprise would be felt if the Chinese Communists did not take any military action against the British in Hong Kong, there are grave doubts that the Colony could withstand determined Communist attacks there over any considerable period of time, or even a Chinese Communist boycott or blockade which effectively denied entry of necessary subsistence'.[18] It is particularly ironic that the nation that would shortly impose such a trade embargo against the territory should in fact be the United States. In the difficult months that lay immediately ahead, it would be Washington rather than Beijing that almost brought Hong Kong to its knees through the imposition of the type of measures that in the autumn of 1949 it reckoned were the characteristic ploys of Communist states.

The British position over Hong Kong was decidedly weak once the People's Republic of China came to power. Although memoranda in London repeatedly stated that the new government in Beijing had more pressing issues of reconstruction and reformation to tackle than concern itself with the capitalist bunion on the south China coast, this was surely little but an oft-repeated article of faith by the British and Hong Kong authorities. Confirmation of British anxieties was seen by the decision of the cabinet to order the despatch of reinforcements to beef up the garrison to a level that was held to deter the PLA but not to boost strength to the extent that it might provoke a direct Chinese response. Such calibration was altered almost immediately afterwards, however, by the decision of the Attlee government to commit British forces to northeast Asia in the opening days of what would become the long and bloody war in Korea.

Even prior to June 1950, Hong Kong faced innumerable difficulties to the extent that its post-liberation era might be defined as 'defensive' imperialism. The military garrison, as we have seen, was rarely up to strength, its economic reconstruction was far from assured, Governor Grantham had vetoed attempted reforms of its thoroughly 19th century political arrangement[19] and the advent of the People's Republic of China on its vulnerable land and sea borders only added to this very obvious sense of uncertainty. While the expatriate-led administration could justifiably argue that the territory had demonstrated greater recuperative strengths than its many left-wing critics maintained, there was a limit to what these officials could do in the face of a new China and massive regional tensions.

The twin keys to Hong Kong's survival as a foreign enclave, where virtually the entire population was composed of disenfranchised Chinese, had to be security from outside forces and an opportunity to trade with the minimum of regional restrictions. From 1949 through the early 1950s, Hong Kong was a territory under siege. In the months immediately prior to the advent of the PRC, the colony's Department of Supplies, Trade and Industry had had to admit that the 'whole question of rice importation and distribution is extremely difficult in present uncertain circumstances'.[20] Rationing was in force and fuel was hard to come by, though, as might have been anticipated from a long-established and experienced entrepot, there was a vigorous black market in scarce consumer goods and pharmaceuticals that enabled the wealthy and unscrupulous to avoid overmuch disruption to their daily livelihood. Yet once the Korean War had begun, Hong Kong found itself being

squeezed through trade embargoes demanded of it by a vocal United States and a rather more reluctant Britain. Washington insisted that all attempts be made by the Hong Kong authorities and their masters in Whitehall to cut off the importation of strategic goods intended for transhipment to China proper. The suspicion, however, quickly grew in the United States that the territory was less than efficient in operating measures that had been agreed to by both the American and British governments with the result that influential voices claimed that Hong Kong's disloyalty was highly damaging to the United Nations' war effort in Korea.

The problem had already been noted in general terms in perceptive CIA reportage on the review of the world situation in the days immediately following Mao's accession to power in October 1949. When it came to analysing the position of China, the very first problem to be identified was the divergence of opinion within the 'nations of the North Atlantic Community' over 'the best course to follow in regard to recognizing the new regime'. The CIA noted that, although ' for the present the UK appears willing to follow the lead of the United States, extensive UK economic interests are pressing for de facto recognition and restricted trade'.[21] Clearly all parties understood that any future diplomatic recognition was intended to promote trading relationships and that it was equally obvious by October 1949 that the US government would have to pay a considerable price for its presumed policies of ignoring Beijing and supporting Taipei. Opposition from Britain was merely the beginning of Washington's difficulties, where it was felt that to enforce what was termed an American ' policy of non-friendship ' towards the new regime in China, in concert with smaller, non-Communist states in the region, would necessarily require 'assurances of protection by larger powers, preferably by the US'.[22] Such statements strongly suggest that the erection of what would become known as the off-shore security structure initialled at San Francisco was undoubtedly under active consideration two years earlier.

In the few, short months between the birth of the PRC and the beginnings of conflict in Korea, it is apparent that the higher echelons of the United States government were taking steps to review what the National Security Council in April 1950 defined as 'the present world crisis'. In an analysis that would be ordered declassified by Henry Kissinger in 1975, the background paper noted that the Russian and Chinese revolutions had been of 'extreme scope and intensity' and that with the recent decline of the British and French empires 'power has increasingly gravitated' to the

United States and the Soviet Union.[23] These developments were seen to have smashed the Euro-centric balance of power system, 'over which no state was able to achieve hegemony', and replaced it with a bipolar world that risked 'the ever-present possibility of annihilation'. Washington planners feared the enhanced strength of the USSR and its new -found Chinese ally to the extent that it was concerned that ' no coalition adequate to confront the Kremlin with greater strength could be assembled'. The National Security Council's authors warned that 'the issues that face us are momentous', and might involve the destruction 'not only of this Republic but of civilization itself'.[24] Terminology of this nature may perhaps have worked its spell on Samuel Huntington and his prose.

Such apocalyptic writings prior to the outbreak of the Korean War are a reminder of the huge gulf in perceptions that divided the United States from its major ally on the politics of east Asia. While the NSC spoke of Moscow's 'new fanatic faith' that 'seeks to impose its absolute authority' over the rest of mankind, the British government argued that open, equitable dealings with Beijing might prevent the establishment of a true Sino-Soviet alliance and have the potential to prepare the way for a future fracturing of relations between what the United States planners depicted as two twin anti-Christs. Clearly there was little that the authorities in London, to say nothing of their counterparts in Hong Kong, could do but attempt to shelter from the storms associated with a contest of this magnitude. Once individuals in the United States saw the advent of Mao Tse-tung and the war in Korea as part of a contest for global domination that had to result in a resounding American victory over the forces of darkness, it would be enormously difficult for outsiders to make substantial headway.

Throughout the early 1950s there were major setbacks for London in much of its dealings with the region. Although the Attlee cabinet had disregarded the views of the United States and moved rapidly to recognize the People's Republic of China, the anticipated dividends simply did not accrue. Beijing reckoned that Britain was still too close an ally of the US and complained that over issues such as the transfer of the KMT's seat at the United Nations to the PRC it was not receiving the support that it felt entitled to expect. Equally, the expectation that there might also be assurances from the PRC over the fate of British personnel and their commercial interests was unforthcoming from the new Chinese government. The fact that the PRC may have had a legitimate grievance over the decision of the Hong Kong courts, under pressure from the United States, to hand over to Taipei the ownership of civil aircraft

impounded in the territory that were claimed by both Chinas only worsened Sino-British contacts.[25] The imposition of heavy taxation, special levies and the threat of expropriation of the sizeable British financial and trading concerns still attempting to do business[26] were hardly the consequences that the cabinet had envisaged when it moved to recognize the PRC in January 1950. Evidence that Britain's determination to maintain 'a foot in the door'[27] could work both to the advantage of London and Washington by countering the Sino-Soviet alliance is decidedly hard to find. Breaking ranks with Washington had not led to any easier dealings with Beijing. Sir Esler Dening, the ambassador-designate, for example, failed to be granted a visa by the PRC in the summer of 1950 and was obliged to cancel his proposed secret visit to China, which was intended to tackle the log jam of problems. For the next years the British bid to establish full Sino-British diplomatic relations remained 'a policy unrealized'.[28]

Worse was to follow for Hong Kong once the PRC intervened in the Korean war in the autumn of 1950. While it could be argued that the fact that the PLA was committed to a major offensive on the Korean peninsula reduced the immediate threat to the security of Hong Kong, the imposition of substantial trade restrictions simply replaced one difficulty with another. Official statistics tell part of the story. Hong Kong's own Department of Commerce and Industry calculated that by the end of 1952 there had been an extraordinary reduction in trade when compared with the previous year. Imports were now down by 22.4% and exports by 34.6%[29] For a small, vulnerable territory almost bereft of domestically grown or reared food and with only a rudimentary light manufacturing base, this was a threat to Hong Kong's very existence. Since unfettered trade had been the rationale for the colony since its inception and the local government had traditionally avoided interference in such matters, the consequences were highly disturbing.

The Truman administration fully understood the importance of gaining tight export controls on Hong Kong. The British government, while obviously wishing to assist its territory, was obliged to balance its support for Hong Kong against wider Anglo-American priorities. Top secret (and still partly classified) National Security Council reports in November 1952 noted both 'the British colony of Hong Kong and the Portuguese colony of Macao have been economically useful to Communist China as sources of Western goods. Although this usefulness to their present status does not appear sufficient to insure the safety of either colony, the Peiping regime has as yet

given no indication that it intends to seize them in the near future. Hong Kong's trade and exposed position undoubtedly exert an inhibiting influence on UK policy toward Communist China'.[30] The NSC acknowledged that Hong Kong's trade had clearly declined since mid-1951, and, while attributing this fall, in part, 'to the imposition of export controls', sensed also that the Chinese authorities had 'on their own initiative' reduced purchases.[31] American disappointment at the prevalence of smuggling between Hong Kong, Macao and the mainland certainly contributed to the 'hard-line' approach adopted by US planners. Specific policies were approved over licensing toward Hong Kong and Macao in February 1952 that, seemingly without much consultation with the British side, since London is not even mentioned in the report to President Truman, intended to limit US exports. The NSC ordered that all but 'essential minimum short-term requirements for local consumption and for the continuation by Hong Kong of mutually beneficial transhipment or resale of United States commodities to non-Soviet bloc areas' be forbidden.[32] Categories of rated items were then drawn up in Washington, though US consular officials in the territory cautioned against automatically assuming that the Hong Kong authorities were in a position to enforce compliance. What is evident is that the American administration had no particular sympathy for Hong Kong and remained suspicious that the territory was a weak link in the US ring fence that was intended to severely restrict the acquisition of strategic goods by its Asian foe.

Hong Kong's predicament was more influenced by the British government's recognition of the PRC and the fighting in Korea than by the specific details of the San Francisco peace treaty. Although some have claimed to see singular achievements, the underlying balance sheet records few British successes in east Asia during the period between 1949 and 1953. Secretary Bevin's attempt to display an independent policy towards Beijing must be judged a failure in that it managed both to antagonize the United States, while unable to achieve its stated goal of establishing a more cordial environment for Sino-British relations. Any hopes of rapprochement with the new China effectively disappeared for the next half decade once Chinese intervention in the Korean War had led to huge casualties and immense bitterness on both sides.[33] Yet Truman's decision to deploy the Seventh Fleet in the Taiwan straits in order to separate the PRC from Taiwan, contributed, paradoxically, to the external protection of Hong Kong, since the new commitments made by the United States with regard to the defense of Taiwan acted to deter

Chinese moves along its southern borders. The Chiefs of Staff, concerned about the thinness of British cover in the middle east and Europe after the Korean War had begun, looked long and hard at Hong Kong's position without being able to do much to support the view that the territory represented 'a Berlin' in east Asia that should not be permitted to fall.[34] The military planners also equivocated over the fate of Taiwan in the case of an invasion of the island, preferring to stand aside and concerned at the impact that American military action might pose for Hong Kong itself.[35] Truman's orders to the Seventh Fleet to patrol the Taiwan straits were a godsend not just for the KMT leadership but also for the Chiefs of Staff. The simultaneous imposition, however, of export controls on a Hong Kong long accustomed to the lax, Victorian world of laissez faire, was highly damaging to its trading position. The territory suffered both materially and in terms of overall morale.

Yet the signing of the Japanese peace settlements offered some consolation to the territory amidst the doom and gloom of trade embargoes and the fear, whether justified or not, of potential invasion from the north for the second time in a decade. Indeed, what mattered most for Hong Kong was, in essence, what was left out at San Francisco. Despite pleas from some quarters in Britain and the Commonwealth, the Japanese peace treaty very largely ignored pleas for trade restraints and commercial restrictions. Hong Kong benefited from the absence of what voices in the Board of Trade and the Ministry of Transport were pressing on the cabinet until the last minute. Herbert Morrison, to give him some credit, did pointedly ask the minister of transport in late June 1951 if his attempt to support the British shipping industry 'should be made a breaking point on the whole Treaty'.[36] Esler Dening warned Clutton in Tokyo that 'our main troubles with Japan after the treaty comes into force are going to be in the economic field. There can be no doubt that Japanese economic competition is going to present a very serious problem, and that the interests concerned here are very worried about it'.[37] It was Clutton incidentally, who defined Yoshida as an old man leading a poor country, though this particular old man would live on to witness the most rapid development of any major economic state in human history. Yet the fact remains that these complaints from traditional manufacturing sectors were not permitted to determine the cabinet's position that had been set out at extreme length in December 1950. The basic point made then was that the government's aim 'should be to secure a treaty which will permit the development of a peace-loving Japan with a viable economy'.[38] The explanation for

the rejection of controls on Japanese industries such as textiles, pottery and its shipbuilding capacity was, at heart, the need to be seen to be co-operating with the United States. For that reason the expectations voiced at the Canberra Commonwealth conference of 1947 on the limiting certain war-potential industries had to be abandoned. The Foreign Office's background paper to the cabinet acknowledged that 'in view of our own weakness' it was necessary 'to accept the United States Government's judgement on Far Eastern security'.[39] It followed, of course, that the Truman administration could largely get its way over economic clauses to the peace treaty. The cabinet was , therefore, told that 'the United States Government did not favour the prohibition by the Peace Treaty of war industries in Japan since they had been largely destroyed', and Washington was 'unlikely to favour control of Japan's war supporting industries (which were essential to her peace-time economy) or of Japanese emigration'.[40]

Hong Kong thus gained through the failure of some quarters to temper Japanese reconstruction. The territory, in fact, along with all other British Asian possessions, had long needed close economic ties with Tokyo. While public opinion in Hong Kong, Malaya and Borneo was in no mood to forgive or forget Japanese wartime behaviour and, unfortunately, there was to be no compensation or reparations payable for the Japanese occupation of the region, the colonial authorities had worked quietly and successfully to encourage trade and investment from Japan.[41] It was widely recognized in the Colonial Office that there was simply little alternative to the pursuit of such policies, since no other nation, certainly not Britain, could provide the range of consumer goods at the appropriate pricing that were required to get the Asian economies going again.

If Hong Kong might be said to have been let off the hook by the United States' ruling that Japan be granted a liberal peace, there remained considerable anxiety among its officials and business leaders over the international politics of the region. Here, as noted earlier, there was little or nothing that the territory could do beyond demonstrating its commercial, financial and industrial competence to each and every individual or government that wished to use Hong Kong's services. The territory trusted that regardless of the Cold War in east Asia and the enforcement of trade embargoes, there might still be opportunities for Hong Kong to prove itself. Much of its manufacturing and financial expertise had after all arrived in the colony after decamping from Shanghai in 1949 and would quickly thrive anew in its hospitable

enterprise culture. Yet the territory was obviously unable to influence American policies more than marginally, though it was shrewd enough to encourage the US Seventh Fleet to use its anchorage and to permit a large-range of US intelligence operations that ranged from consular staff on China watch to more clandestine activities associated with giving succour to KMT elements intent on landing on the shores of southern China.

The territory's weaknesses mirrored those exhibited on a far larger scale by Britain itself. Over the troika of issues suggested at the outset, it is difficult not to see a general pattern of declining British influence during the years of near constant Anglo-American tension from 1949 to 1953. The Fifties proved to be the final decade of British power in the Asia-Pacific and once Malaya had been granted its independence in 1957 there remained little more than the stewardship of Hong Kong in Britain's keeping. The anger shown by many on the right in the United States at British meddling in the Korean War and the corresponding delight at the lack of response by Beijing to the recognition of the new China, the publication of the Yoshida letter to satisfy senatorial opinion and failure to widen the ANZUS treaty remain, perhaps, the most noteworthy of British disappointments. The Japanese peace treaty granted to a somewhat unappreciative Japan its re-entry into international society along American lines, while the associated security pact and administrative agreements gave Washington precisely the basing agreements that it had aspired to in the lengthy negotiations with Ambassador Dulles to ensure that the Pacific remained an American lake. Instead of the emergence of a newly sovereign Japan with, as London had hoped, its own policies towards the PRC and more open to British influences, San Francisco confirmed the basic directions of the occupation era. Yoshida liked to joke that SCAP's GHQ stood for 'go home quickly' but, of course, the GIs have stayed on in sizeable numbers and Japan's foreign policy has exhibited far less of the independence and initiative that Britain had anticipated in 1951. The San Francisco settlements were made very largely in the USA and form the beginnings of a close US-Japan partnership that worked rapidly to elbow aside all other Western claimants. These American-designed peace and security arrangements have endured for half a century both to confound the critics and justify today's celebrations.

Endnotes

[1] Eisenhower letter to Churchill, 29 March 1955, Foreign Relations of the United States,1955-1957,vol ii, China, p. 418. Eisenhower also promptly added: 'I know that you could make the same observations regarding us; possibly this fact troubles you and your associates just as much as it does us'.

[2] See, for example, Truman papers, Official File, Boxes 757 and 759, Truman Library, Independence, Mo.

[3] Truman attempted to keep abreast of this huge postbag. His distinctive style when responding to critics is much in evidence.

[4] China questions form the largest segment of this correspondence.

[5] Franks correspondence with author.

[6] See Buckley, *Occupation Diplomacy: Britain, the United States and Japan, 1945-1952* (Cambridge,1982) and 'Joining the Club : the Japanese Question and Anglo-American Peace Diplomacy, 1950-1951', *Modern Asian Studies*,19,2 (1985) Also Peter Lowe ' Herbert Morrison, the Labour Government, and the Japanese Peace Treaty,1951' in *Britain, the United States and Japan's Return to Normal,1951-1972* (STICERD, LSE, March 1993).

[7] See Buckley 'Gambling on Japan: the British Press and the San Francisco Settlements,1950-1952', Bulletin of the Graduate School of International Relations, International University of Japan, no 2 (December, 1984).

[8] Dulles to MacArthur, following private talks with FEC members, 15 November 1950, Dulles Papers, Princeton.

[9] Dulles to Truman, 3 October 1951 (Press Release), Box 686,Truman papers. Technically Dulles ended his duties with his letter of 1 March 1952, when he stated that 'ratification of the Japanese Peace Treaty and the three Pacific Security Treaties which you commissioned me to negotiate' had been completed. See Dulles to Truman, 21 March 1952, Box 686,OF/197(Misc), Truman papers.

[10] Ibid.

[11] Some versions of events may have possibly over-emphasized the extent of US security commitments to Hong Kong. From the 1940s through the 1960s the US evidence strongly suggests that no American administration was prepared to volunteer assistance in the event of a military crisis. SEATO was designed to exclude Hong Kong. For the State Department position as understood in the 1960s, see Foreign Relations of the United States, vol xxx, China,1964-68, p. 56. Among the many works that examine Hong Kong's international position see Qiang Zhai, *The Dragon, the Lion, and the Eagle: Chinese, British, American Relations,1949-1958* (Kent, Ohio,1994) and James Tuck-Hong Tang, *Britain's Encounter with Revolutionary China, 1949-54* (Basingstoke,1992).

[12] Secretary of Defense 'A report to the NSC on British views respecting Hong Kong', 17 October 1949, NSC 55/2 in PSF NSC Meeting, 26 July 1949, Box 206, Truman papers.

[13] Secretary of Defense to NSC on 'Implications of a possible Chinese Communist attack on foreign colonies in South China'.

[14] Ibid.

[15] Report of Bevin-Acheson meeting of 13 September 1949,contained in Acting Secretary of State to NSC on 'British Views Respecting Hong Kong', PSF NSC 55/1,Box 206 Truman papers.

[16] Ibid.

[17] Secretary of Defense Memorandum for the Executive Secretary, NSC, 17 October 1949, NSC/2.

[18] ibid, reporting comments of NSC mtg of 27 September 1949.

[19] See Steve Tsang, *Democracy Shelved : Great Britain, China and Attempts at Constitutional Reform in Hong Kong, 1945-1952* (Hong Kong,1988).

[20] Report by Acting Director, Department of Supplies, Trade and Industry, monthly report, December 1948, Hong Kong Record Service,No 170, D & S No 1/551(1). Over the position of the return of Hong Kong documents to the Public Record Office, I am grateful for information from Dr Edgar Flaker, archivist, PRO, Kew. It is my understanding that responsibility for all Hong Kong Public Records Office files rests with the Foreign Office and that a considerable amount of material has yet to be released.

[21] CIA 'Report on the World Situation', 19 October 1949, NSC Mtg 47,16 October 1949, PSF Box 206.

[22] Ibid.

[23] NSC/Discussion, 20 April 1950, PF mtg 55, Box 20.

[24] Ibid.

[25] For a summary of this highly complicated saga see Peter Lowe, *Containing the Cold War in Asia* (Manchester, 1996).

[26] The situation had been difficult enough under the KMT and worsened after 1949 once the PRC had been established.

[27] 9 December 1949, CAB(49)299.

[28] See chapter seven, Zhong-ping Feng, *The British Government's China Policy,1945-1950* (Keele, Staffordshire, 1994).

[29] Trade report by Director, Department of Commerce and Industry for December 1952, HKRS No 170, D & S No 1/554(3).

[30] NSC report on Hong Kong and Macao' (top secret), 1 November 1952. Hong Kong was estimated to face 60,000 PLA troops plus 150,000 'in nearby areas'. Macao appears to have been criticized more than Hong Kong over smuggling activities.

[31] Ibid.

[32] NSC to President on 'United States Export Licensing Policy toward Hong Kong and Macao', 6 February 1952, NSC 122/1.

[33] The Chiefs of Staff described Britain's secondary role as that of tagging along behind Washington. Major strategic decisions, inevitably given such unequal troop numbers, were largely an American responsibility.

[34] The original author of the highly astute phrase asserting that Hong Kong represented a 'Berlin in Asia' is unknown.

[35] As early as 27 July 1950 COS members noted 'we had been against sending land forces to Korea, we had been obliged to succumb to political pressure to send them and it might be that the same situation would be repeated over Formosa'. COS (50) 117 Mtg.

[36] Secretary Morrison comments in meeting at House of Commons, 20 June 1951, in FJ 1022/632(FO371/92560).

[37] Dening to Clutton, 28 June 1951, FJ1022/642(FO371/62560). Dening also warned that Britain was 'not, so to speak, Japan-conscious'. George Clutton was acting head of the UK Liaison Mission in Tokyo.

[38] C.P. (50) 323, 19 December 1950,memorandum by Bevin.

[39] Annex A 'Background Paper' to Bevin memorandum, ibid.

[40] (ibid) It should be noted that the Foreign Office annex concluded with the statement: 'It is desirable that at an appropriate stage, before a formal Peace Conference is called, an invitation to take part in the Peace Treaty negotiations should be extended to the Central People's Government of China. An approach in this sense to the United States Government at present would be inopportune, but the importance of doing so in the future should be borne in mind'.

[41] See Junko Tomaru, *The Postwar Rapprochement of Malaya and Japan, 1945-61: The Roles of Britain and Japan in South-East Asia'* (Basingstoke, 2000).

YOSHIDA'S IDEAS ON CHINA AFTER THE DULLES-MORRISON AGREEMENT AND ITS RELEVANCE FOR ANGLO-JAPANESE RELATIONS

Valdo Ferretti

From the time that Yoshida Shigeru was ambassador to London before the Pacific War his view of China was closely linked to his inclination to orientate Japanese foreign policy according to economic goals and to promote collaboration with the Anglo-Saxon powers. Yoshida had a China-first approach to international matters, which basically understood his tendency to act with Britain as far as Japanese financial and commercial penetration on the Asian continent was concerned[1]. Such outlook, concentrated as it was on the 'prosperity of China', seemed to be close to the moderate wing of the ruling class, represented by business spokesmen like Yuki Toyotaro and Ikeda Shigeaki[1], but differed from the pro-western faction of the Foreign Ministry as the latter's attention was mainly directed at Europe.This position may explain Yoshida's welcome to the Munich conference of 1938[2], which led him to think that if British appeasement policy had led to a settlement with Germany, it could smooth frictions with Japan as well , or his China centred reaction to the extension of the Anti-Comintern Pact to Italy in 1937, when he confessed to his father-in-law Makino Nobuaki his fear that Anglo-Chinese economic cooperation could now be directed against Japan[3].

After the communist take-over in 1949 and China's involvement in the Korean War, Yoshida had to face a difficult course when Japan was led by the United States to participate in the blockade of the PRC .Also the loss of the Chinese market could jeopardize one of his principal aims, the economic recovery of Japan, while the general perspective of the Prime Minister did not even take into consideration renouncing the western alliance.

It is well known that after Yoshida became the Prime Minister of Japan in 1948, he tried to escape the dilemma , trying to play on the cleavage between British and American policies, on the eve of the so-called Dulles-Morrison agreement[4]. At the time of the peace conference London intended to protect its own interests in East Asia by appeasing China (to which diplomatic recognition had been granted at the

beginning of 1950) in the hope of restraining the Chinese leaders from Mao's 'lean to the one side' policy towards the Soviet Union[5]. Once he was left free to recognize the Beijing Government, as Britain had done, and to sign the peace treaty with it, Yoshida sensed that Japanese trade with the continent might begin again. It goes without saying that such a design was doomed to failure because of American pressure, somehow inspired by Taiwan itself[6]. In any case, as a British Foreign Office minute read ,

> 'it would[.......]be unrealistic to suppose that Japanese trade with China could be restored to the scale of the late '30s [.......].She now has to deal with a China which is not only independent of her, but also determined to get rid of its "colonial" economic status by a process of industrialization'[7].

Therefore the economic development of Japan had in any case to depend on other markets, which were actually focused on South and Southeast Asia, belonging to countries still subject to colonial rule or who had recently achieved independence often within the frame of the British Commonwealth.Opening the latter to the Rising Sun's trade and investments had to be tinged with political colours and implied once more some kind of entente with Britain which still exerted an important role in that area[8]. Thus Tokyo relations with China and the United Kingdom became issues related to Japanese economic expansion toward South and Southeast Asia.As a *Gaimusho* paper later observed, Britain was trying to get closer to PRC by making use of trade, bringing about China's insertion into international society and determining in the long run the latter's admission to the United Nations.According to this document the Chinese threat to Japan would also fade in that way.As a consequence for Japan trying rapprochement to communist China[9] was ultimately considered convenient. This scenario made topical the standing Yoshida had held vis-à-vis the Dulles-Morrison agreement in the years after 1951.

Such a perspective was implicit in the ill-fated *Marshall Plan for the Far East*, proposed by Yoshida in the United States in November 1954 at the end of a long official journey to Canada and the principal European countries[10], which was his last diplomatic initiative as Premier .It probably represented the most comprehensive project outlining a general programme for Japanese foreign policy after the Second

World War, thus allowing us to see it as the culmination of other initiatives sketched after the return of Japan to full independence.

The contents of the ‘Marshall Plan for the Far East’ are well known.It will suffice to remember here that its gist was to create a capital fund, provided by the United Kingdom, the United States and Japan in order to foster the economic development of South-east Asia and to check the spread of communism. The growth of South-east Asia was supposed to keep the region in the western political area and to ease the development of Japan. Yoshida thought of an authority designed to administer the plan, to head which he suggested the British High Commissioner to South East Asia, Sir Malcolm MacDonald .

The choice of Macdonald has not merited much attention however among scholars, who have been satisfied in general with the statement made in the Yoshida memoirs that the Japanese Prime Minister had known him since the 1930s and highly esteemed or liked the Scottish diplomat[11]. Scarce or no interest has been shown in Macdonald’s views on Japan’s commerce with China, containment vis-à-vis the PRC, communism etc., which largely coincided with Yoshida’s notions. Even less attention has been paid to the fact that he was the first western politician to visit Japan after the San Francisco peace treaty and that it constituted an occasion for an exchange of views with Yoshida, in which the British ambassador to Tokyo, Sir Esler Dening, a protagonist of the Dulles-Morrison agreement, also took part.

Since 1949[12], before the Korean War, MacDonald and Dening had shown to share the opinion ‘that there is no sign that the Chinese communists intend [........] to carry their aggression over into the bordering territories’, sharply distinguishing between the need to contain communism as such and the idea that danger coming from China represented only ‘continued infliltration, subversion and propaganda’.

During MacDonald’s visit to Japan in July 1952 he echoed Dening’s views [13] that ‘there was no future in Chiang Kai-shek’ and that the red regime in China looked well established, though it was ‘inimical to the free world’.

MacDonald in his report to the Secretary of State had stressed the opportunity to 'keep in office' Yoshida, whose influence, he wrote, 'is strongly pro-British'. He claimed, 'I doubt whether the condition of contentment which we desire in Japan can be maintained indefinitely unless there is a considerable measure of trade between Japan and China'. As to East Asia, he emphasized the opportunity to lead Japan to buy raw materials like iron or rubber from Malaya and from the sterling area. 'Any extension of trade which increases the standards of living and purchasing power will be a stimulus to a further expansion in international trade' he wrote, by stressing that the 'Chinese market [.........] is denied to them by the policy of the western democratic powers; and this argument will become an increasingly powerful weapon in the hands of the Communist if we cannot provide adequate substitute for the Chinese market'. Sir Malcolm supported the demands also, that he had already heard from Foreign Minister Okazaki and from Japanese businessmen, that Tokyo join the Colombo Plan[14].

Two years later, on the eve of Yoshida's voyage, all the subjects touched on in MacDonald's report were still relevant, but the geopolitical framework had changed. The Korean war had ended and the Geneva conference on Indochina had marked the resurrection of China as a great power, who looked as if she accepted the rules of pacific coexistence and was able to play an independent diplomatic role. It is still difficult to focus on how Japanese diplomacy reacted to such a new change of scenario, but Japanese observers probably realized that Beijing was becoming a factor of stability in Asia and that, if not the USA, Britain had positively appreciated its role at the table of the conference[15].

It seems reasonable to conclude that in 1954 Yoshida could look at MacDonald as at a trustworthy champion of the terms on which he intended to revive a special relationship with the United Kingdom. At that time anti-Japanese feelings were strong at the peak of the British Government[16], but MacDonald probably impressed Yoshida for his closeness of views to Dening. The Japanese Prime Minister may have seen MacDonald's attitude as promising in the light of his project to bring to life again the Anglo-Japanese alliance, his nostalgia for which he did not conceal later in London with British ministers and officials[17].

Nevertheless in respect to the time of the Dulles-Morrison agreement, the project of 'Marshall Plan for the Far East' presented at least one apparent diversity: the lack of properly political clauses like the diplomatic recognition of PRC or an explicit mention of the problem of China's admission to the United Nations. It goes without saying that if such a scheme might be detected in Yoshida's intentions, we could catch in his designs an attempt at mitigating the American attitude towards China by playing on similarities between Japanese and British schemes. Before showing that probably things stood like that, one may also note that in such a case one more reason could explain MacDonald's candidature, as the latter in the 1950s seems to have been a partisan of the recognition of the Beijing[18] government from the western countries and ultimately a severe critic of the containment policies represented by SEATO[19].

The contents of Yoshida's conversations with the European politicians during his travels of 1954 however are revealing about his attitude on the Chinese question. Matsui Akira, a high ranking official who accompanied the Prime Minister, in a short memoir which appeared in 1991[20], showed that the occasion when he opened his mind most was the interview he had in Rome, on October 18th, 1954 with the Italian premier Mario Scelba and the Foreign Minister, Gaetano Martino, though he touched on the matter more rapidly with other European leaders as well. Since then other sources on the same episode have been made available. The original documents on Yoshida's trip have been released at the *Gaimu Gaiko Shiryokan* in Tokyo and I myself found in the Historical Archive of the Italian Foreign Ministry a long handwritten minute, which from its rough draft, looks as if it were put down in writing during or immediately after the conversation itself[21], perhaps by one of the two Italian officials (the General Director of Political Affairs Del Balzo and the ambassador to Tokyo D'Ajeta) who attended the meeting. It adds one interesting detail at least to the corresponding Japanese text, contained in a dispatch of twelve days later of the Japanese ambassador to Rome Harada Ken[22] .

Yoshida, whom the Italian politicians asked his opinion about the situation in the Far East and Chinese-Russian relations, claimed that the alliance between Russia and China intended to separate Japan from the United States. It was not solid however. 'The entente between Russia and China', he said, 'is far from complete [.........] as

long as Russia and China will be together the cold war will continue'. 'The Chinese', he allegedly stressed, 'feel themselves to be the pivot of the world, thus being led to xenophobia'[23]. He stated that they did dislike unequal relationship with the Soviets and did not feel inferior to them. The Geneva conference had led Yoshida to doubt whether Russia supported China's début among the great powers and he suggested that by playing on the commercial interests of Communist China the western powers could try to detach Beijing from Moscow[24].

Yoshida also commented on the policies of the Anglo-Saxon powers vis-à-vis the PRC. According to the Japanese sources, he stressed that British and American policies were different because the USA wanted to encircle China, while the gist of British strategy was recognition. All testimonies report however, on his perception of that diversity, marking his claim that he was going to discuss this problem in Washington and London. Yoshida added he considered the English position a mistake as 'you can not collaborate with a communist government'. He remarked that Japanese recognition of the PRC was to be excluded also as long as Chinese propaganda was striving to influence and trouble Japanese public opinion. At the end of the conversation, Matsui reports that 'an exchange of opinions took place about the recognition of communist China, promotion of foreign trade and communist China's admission to the United Nations'[25].

The Italian premier observed that the contacts Yoshida looked for in London and Washington could be relevant to both Italy and Japan in connection with the issue of their own admission to the United Nations (a major one among the themes Yoshida wished to deal with in Rome, but where the standing of the Italians was opposite to his own). After Scelba asked to be informed about, and to get on with dialogue with, Japan in future, Yoshida replied promising to keep contact through the Italian embassy in Tokyo. Moreover the minute preserved in Rome adds at that point some lines absent in the Japanese texts. It reads :

> 'As to China he [Yoshida] wants to correct [his previous statements].May be it would be opportune if China took part in the United Nations.The standing of Japan is not negative.What is most important is to divide China from Russia'.

By these words it looked as if the Japanese Prime Minister went even beyond the pro-PRC attitude shown at the time of the Dulles-Morrison agreement, albeit showing that he continued to prefer the British to the American standing. His ultimate purpose was to break the Chinese-Soviet alliance and to establish again trade with his continental partner, not to isolate the PRC from the international community.

In October 1954 the *Asahi Shinbun* charged Yoshida with trying to build[26] an economic *entente* with the western powers by joining the Colombo Plan and flanking the defence structure of the Manila treaty (from which SEATO was derived). Moreover to hold such an opinion seems difficult to me today, as the South East Asia Treaty Organisation was pointing to China as an adversary, while for Yoshida it looked instead as if the true enemies were Russia and communism as a revolutionary movement, but not Beijing with which he intended to establish normal relations. He wished China and Russia would be separated and this was his principal problem. Probably not by chance, during the first stop of his 1954 trip he met MacDonald in Ottawa[27] late in September and Yoshida himself told Antony Eden that their conversation had centred on how to separate the two communist giants from each other[28].

If Yoshida thought of a front with London in order to influence the American standing on the Chinese issue,his approach with the British was to end in failure however, even before Dulles rejected the 'Plan' the following month[29]. The atmosphere surrounding his visit to England mirrored the cool relations still existing between the two countries.On meeting the Secretary of State and other officials on October 27th, Yoshida stressed Japan's need for trade with China, laying emphasis on the fact that it was his aim 'to detach China from the Soviet Union'. Eden conceded that the hard commercial war waged by the western countries had made stronger the Soviet-Chinese alliance and that the bloc between the PRC and Russia would be weakened if trade with China were promoted. He firmly stated however that nothing could be done. He maintained that China had not aggressive intentions but explicitly asked Yoshida not to give the impression to the Americans that a common line existed between Britain and Japan.

Obstacles existed in Britain at that time, as the *Gaimusho* realized, to any attempt to revive a preferential axis between Japan and England, which were rooted in commercial differences[30]. Specially there was the idea that Japan was the most dangerous rival to British trade in Asia[31] and to the British textile industry, as resistance to accept the Rising Sun in Gatt[32] or to a lesser extent in the Colombo Plan[33] was making clear.

These were the main reasons which made it difficult to revive the old Anglo-Japanese alliance in terms suitable to the 1950s. Objectively speaking, views on China on both sides coincided almost completely and both diplomacies wanted to stabilize the Far East by normalizing relations with the PRC. They both assumed that Communist China would probably respect the principles on pacific coexistence announced by Zhou Enlai before the Geneva conference on Indochina of 1954 and would also appreciate opportunities of trade with the west if it did not feel threatened. The task of splitting the alliance between Beijing and Moscow also looked an attainable goal to experts in both countries, though Yoshida appeared to be more optimistic than the British in this respect. More general factors however intermingled and the Japanese Prime Minister’s dream waned for ever.

Endnotes

[1] Cfr. specially his letter, Yoshida Shigeru to Makino Nobuaki, 10/4/1937, in, Yoshida Shigeru Kinen Jigyo Zaidan (ed.), *Yoshida Shigeru Shokan*, Chuo Koronsha, Tokyo, 1994, pp.645-647. It is worth noting that in this letter Yoshida's fear of Chinese Communism was manifest already.

[1] Cfr. specially Matsuura Masataka, 'Nicchu Senso Shushu Kozo to Kachu Tsuka Kosaku'*, Kokusai Seiji,* vol.97, May 1991, pp.103-118, and, from the same author, 'Saiko·Nicchu Senso Zenya- Chugoku Heisei Kaikaku to Kodama Hochudan o megutte', *Kokusai Seiji*, vol.122, September 1999, pp.151-161. For the activity of the above group another work of Matsuura Masataka is important as well, *Nicchu Sensoki ni Okeru Keizai to Seiji. Konoe Fumimaro to Ikeda Shigeaki*, Tokyo Daigaku Shuppankai, Tokyo,1995.

[2] Murashima Shigeru, 'Yoshida Shigeru Chu-Ei Taishi to Miunhen Kaidan', in Yoshida Shigeru Kinen Jigyo Zaidan (ed.), *Ningen Yoshida Shigeru,* Chuo Koronsha, Tokyo, 1991, pp.326-345.

[3] Yoshida Shigeru to Makino Nobuaki, 21/9/1937, in, Yoshida Shigeru Kinen Jigyo Zaidan (ed.), *Yoshida Shigeru Shokan*, cit., pp.648-50.

[4] Hosoya Chihiro, 'Japan, China, the United States and the United Kingdom,1951-1952. The Case of the Yoshida Letter', *International Affairs* (London) Spring 1984, pp.247-258.

[5] P.Lowe, *Containing The Cold War In East Asia. British policies towards Japan, China and Korea,1948-53,* Manchester University Press, Manchester and New York, 1997, pp.99 ff.

[6] Cf., Yin Yan-Jun, 'Yoshida Shokan to Taiwan', *Kokusai Seiji*, vol.110, April 1995, pp.175-188.

[7] Minute of C.H.Johnston, 29/8/1952 , PRO FO371/956 FJ 1633/25/G.

[8] Cf. Tanaka Takahiko, 'Anglo-Japanese Relations in the 1950s: Cooperation, Friction and the Search for State Identity', in, I.Nish and Yoichi Kibata (eds.), *The History of Anglo-Japanese Relations,1600-2000*, vol II, *The Political-Diplomatic Dimension, 1931-2000*, Macmillan, London, 2000, pp.201-234, sp.pp.206 ff.

[9] *Eikoku Kankei* / Chukyo Mondai, *Gaimu Gaiko Shiryokan* (hereafter *GSK)*, A.O.1.3.7-21.

[10] For a recent appraisal taking account of new Japanese archival sources, Tanaka Takahiko, op.cit, pp.208-12.

[11] Yoshida Shigeru, *The Yoshida Memoirs*, *The Story of Japan in Crisis,* Houghton Mifflin Company, Boston, 1962, pp.103-4.