

RALEIGH LECTURE ON HISTORY

RACIAL ASPECTS OF THE  
FAR EASTERN WAR OF 1941-1945<sup>1</sup>

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It would seem appropriate to devote an essay which commemorates Sir Walter Raleigh to a subject whose dimensions place it in the category of 'world history' and whose ingredients include comparisons between Western Europe and Asia.<sup>2</sup> It is very much in our own day, however, that issues concerning race relations have come to the fore,<sup>3</sup> which no doubt explains why various references to such matters that were made in the present writer's study of the Far Eastern War, *Allies of a Kind*,<sup>4</sup> have tended to be singled out for comment. Some of this comment, even so, has tended to divorce the subject from its historical context. The intention of this new essay, therefore, is to clarify these racial aspects of the Far Eastern War by drawing them together as a single theme, and by viewing them within a framework which extends back into the years before Pearl Harbour. In addition, it

<sup>1</sup> The author's warm thanks are due to Professors Ronald Dore and James Joll, who were kind enough to read and comment upon drafts; to Professor Akira Iriye, for discussions on the subject stretching over many years; and to Dr Albert Kersten, for collaboration within Dutch archives. The research upon which the essay is based has been possible only as a result of support from the Social Science Research Council, while preparation of the Lecture itself was greatly facilitated by a Resident Fellowship at the Netherlands Institute for Advanced Study.

<sup>2</sup> See, for example, the contrast between Western Europe's security and stability on the one hand and the ruining of Asia by 'overflowing multitudes' on the other, which Raleigh put forward in his *Discourse On The Original And Fundamental Cause Of Natural, Arbitrary, And Unnatural War. The Works of Sir Walter Raleigh, vol. 8* (Franklin, New York, 1829), 256.

<sup>3</sup> Although of course such issues have a lengthy history. See, for example, the 1961 Raleigh Lecture by C. R. Boxer, 'The Colour Question in the Portuguese Empire, 1415-1812', *Proceedings of the British Academy, vol. XLVII* (London, 1962).

<sup>4</sup> C. Thorne, *Allies of a Kind: the United States, Britain, and the War Against Japan, 1941-1945* (London and New York, 1978).

provides an opportunity to bring to bear on the question material which has been gathered, since the completion of *Allies of a Kind*, in Asia, Australasia, Europe and North America.

A number of cautionary and qualifying observations need to be made at the outset, however, for they are essential when it comes to establishing that context and perspective referred to above. First, when reviewing the Second World War and some of its racial aspects, it must be borne in mind how great have been the changes since then in the entire international scene and climate of opinion.<sup>1</sup> Such changes, of course, enable—and no doubt encourage—the historian to bring out more clearly a theme which was not always seen or, at least, publicly acknowledged during the war years themselves.<sup>2</sup> (Theodore White, for example, looking back on his work then as journalist in China, recalls that ‘The ethic of the time forbade one from reporting in terms of race.’)<sup>3</sup> This advantage, however, must be matched by an awareness of, say, how much more widespread in the Western world of the early 1940s were certain assumptions about racial matters which would be regarded as deplorable if voiced aloud today. Indeed, a distinguished soldier and historian who served in India and south-east Asia during the Second World War has suggested to the present writer that ‘in the sense the word now has, most people were racist in 1939–43 . . . We were still certain of the utter superiority of Western civilisation.’<sup>4</sup> It is a judgement which may not allow sufficiently for the range of attitudes to be found between those of, say, a Churchill and a Cripps in London, or those of a Henry Stimson and a Henry Wallace in Washington; but the underlying point is a valid one, and if it appears correct to describe the views of a Churchill or a Stimson by the modern term ‘racist’,<sup>5</sup> the historical context must at the same time be borne in mind.

<sup>1</sup> On the related subject of international inequalities of wealth and well-being, Willy Brandt observes in the recently-published report, *North-South*, that ‘a new epoch in man’s history began when the majority of nations now in existence achieved their political independence in the period following the Second World War’; and that ‘the concept of global responsibility for economic and social development . . . in state-to-state terms does not go back much more than one generation’. Independent Commission on Development Issues: *North-South: a Programme for Survival* (London, 1980), 8, 17.

<sup>2</sup> For a broad survey, see H. Tinker, *Race, Conflict, and the International Order* (London, 1977); also R. E. Park, *Race and Culture* (New York, 1950).

<sup>3</sup> T. White, *In Search of History* (New York, 1978), 156.

<sup>4</sup> Colonel Hugh Teye to the author, 8 Feb. and 19 Nov. 1980. And see, e.g. P. Addison, ‘The Political Beliefs of Winston Churchill’, *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society, Fifth Series*, vol. 30 (London, 1980), 39–40.

<sup>5</sup> See *Allies of a Kind*, 6. The definition being employed is that advanced by

A second word of caution arises from this. In much of what follows, we are dealing with people's attitudes and perceptions: with ideas about race. These notions will not be tested on each occasion for their anthropological validity; but it will be evident how crude they often were and in what a variety of ways the term 'race' was employed. In fact, classification by race was jumbled up with the division between 'white' and 'coloured', and also with the opposing of an entity labelled 'Asia' or 'the East' on the one hand to that of 'the West' on the other. Only very occasionally does one come across such definitions being examined during the war years (Stanley Hornbeck of the State Department had a somewhat muddled exchange on the subject with Pearl Buck, for example).<sup>1</sup> As for this present essay, it is sufficient to observe the confusion that was involved, and simply to note at the outset that, anthropologically speaking, 'phrases like "Asian man" or "Asiatic society" are', in Dr Iyer's words, 'almost meaningless . . . and are artificial concepts rather than concrete entities'.<sup>2</sup>

However insubstantial such concepts might be, they could none the less provide the basis of strong convictions about the significance of the Far Eastern War, as will be seen below. Even so—a qualification, this, which common-sense alone would suggest—it must not be inferred that because, for example, Ahmed Soekarno had been emphasizing since the late 1920s that the Indonesian struggle for independence had to be seen as part of 'the greatest . . . problem: Asia against Europe',<sup>3</sup> his fellow-countrymen awoke each morning during the war years to an acute awareness of their identity as 'Asians'. 'For the average Indonesian', wrote another nationalist leader, 'the war was not really a world conflict between two great forces. It was simply a struggle in which the Dutch colonial rulers finally would be punished by Providence for the evil, the arrogance, and the oppression they had brought to Indonesia.'<sup>4</sup> Contemporary Professor Tinker (op. cit.): 'We have a *racial* factor when one group of people, united by their own perception of inherited and distinctive qualities, are set apart from another group with (supposedly) separate inherited and distinctive qualities. We have a *racist* factor when one group claims a dominant position, justified by the supposed inferiority of the other group.'

<sup>1</sup> Material in the Hornbeck Papers, box 40 (Hoover Institution, Stanford).

<sup>2</sup> R. Iyer (ed.), *The Glass Curtain Between Asia and Europe* (London, 1965), 3 ff. See also, e.g. R. Dawson, *The Chinese Chameleon* (London, 1967), 90 ff.

<sup>3</sup> B. Dahm, *Sukarno and the Struggle for Indonesian Independence* (Ithica, New York, 1969), 62-3, 69.

<sup>4</sup> S. Sjahrir, *Out of Exile* (New York, 1949), 219. Also, interviews with Dr Anak Agung Gde Agung, who became Prince of Bali during the war years, and was subsequently Foreign Minister of the Indonesian Republic.

evidence of various kinds—for example, papers found on dead or wounded Japanese soldiers in the south-west Pacific<sup>1</sup>—together with interviews with a variety of participants in the war underlines the degree to which it was local views of the conflict that tended to predominate.

Moreover, it must be noted that even among those who did articulate opinions of a wider kind, a single individual was quite capable of holding at one time both strongly anti-racist beliefs in the context of, say, Nazi anti-Semitism in Europe, and assumptions that were essentially racist where colonial issues beyond Europe were concerned. Or again, a single person—Jawaharlal Nehru, for example—could express widely differing views on the nature and significance of the war according to the audience he was addressing.<sup>2</sup> A drastic change of circumstances, such as the one brought about by the Pearl Harbour attack itself, could likewise lead to a radical, though unacknowledged, change of opinion concerning the characteristics of an entire government or nation.<sup>3</sup> More openly, the Burmese nationalist leader, Aung San, came to argue that the whole issue of race relations had to be seen

<sup>1</sup> 'Beliefs of the Average Soldier in the South West Pacific Area in 1942': report of 1 June 1943, External Affairs files, EA 84/6/1 part 1, National Archives, Wellington, New Zealand. On the essentially local, rather than nationalist, outlook of large sections of the people of China during the war, see Lloyd Eastman, 'Facets of an Ambivalent Relationship', in A. Iriye (ed.), *The Chinese and the Japanese* (Princeton, 1980).

<sup>2</sup> Compare, on the one hand, J. Nehru, *Toward Freedom* (New York, 1942), 345 ff., on his conviction, from the Spanish Civil War onwards, that a world-wide conflict involving fundamental political issues was taking shape, together with his letter to Roosevelt (12 Apr. 1942) assuring the latter of India's desire to join in the war against Japan for 'the larger cause of freedom and democracy' (All India Congress Committee Papers, FN-31β; Nehru Memorial Library, New Delhi); and on the other hand, Nehru to Gandhi, in both January and February 1940, on his strong aversion to 'seeing India entangled in this imperialist war' (J. Nehru Papers, Correspondence, vol. 26, Nehru Memorial Library), and his draft preamble to a set of 'Simple Principles of Non-Cooperation' (23 and 27 Apr. 1942; AICC Papers, Working Committee Drafts, FN-31β): 'Japan's quarrel is not with India. She is warring against the British Empire. If India were freed, her first step would probably be to negotiate with Japan.'

<sup>3</sup> Thus, for example, Father James Drought, who had intervened unofficially (and unhelpfully) in the negotiations between Tokyo and Washington before Pearl Harbour on the basis of his conviction as to the integrity and good-will of the Japanese leadership, was writing in 1942 that aggression had 'always been the aim' of that same leadership, who harboured 'the deep, planned malice of an evil soul'. R. J. Butow, *John Doe Associates: Backdoor Diplomacy For Peace, 1941* (Stanford, 1974), 79 ff., 340.

in a new light when, during the aftermath of the war, he sought to unite the various peoples of that country:

'In the past', he admitted then, 'we shouted slogans: "Our race, our religion, our language!" Those slogans have gone obsolete now. What is race after all? What are its tests? We have in Burma many indigenous peoples: the Karens, the Kachins, the Shans, the Chins, the Burmese and others. In other countries, there are many indigenous peoples, many "races" . . . In America, though the peoples may speak a common language, they spring from many stocks . . . Thus "race" does not have rigid values . . .'<sup>1</sup>

In addition to these preliminary words of caution concerning the attitudes of people during the war, a final note of warning must be sounded regarding the nature of that conflict as seen in retrospect. For there are strong arguments as to why it should not be described simply as a 'racial' struggle, and why it cannot be analysed and understood in those terms alone. In its immediate origins, for example, strategic issues of a political, military, and economic kind, relating to east and south-east Asia and the western Pacific, far outweighed any consideration of the colour of the skins of those involved. In the crucial, decision-making conferences that were held in Tokyo in the autumn of 1941, the main preoccupation was not with 'yellow' versus 'white', but with how Japan was to 'survive' in the face of American and British pressure, and with what was seen as the consequent need to win 'a sphere for the self-defence and self-preservation of our Empire'.<sup>2</sup> And if the Japanese leaders were also influenced by strategic developments in the existing, European war,<sup>3</sup> even more so did considerations concerning that Anglo-German struggle, as it had become by the summer of 1940, weigh with Roosevelt and his senior colleagues in Washington when they were shaping American policies in the Far East.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Maung Maung, *Aung San of Burma* (The Hague, 1962), 123.

<sup>2</sup> See, e.g. the text of the survey prepared for the Imperial Conference of 6 Sept. 1941, and the record of the crucial Imperial Conference of 5 Nov. 1941, in N. Ike (ed.), *Japan's Decision for War* (Stanford, 1967), 139 ff., 208 ff.

<sup>3</sup> See, e.g. the observation of the President of the Privy Council, Hara Yoshimichi, at the meeting of 5 Nov.: 'We have come to where we are because of the war between Germany and Great Britain.' And on the encouragement derived in Tokyo from German successes, see Ike, *op. cit.* 157-9.

<sup>4</sup> In so far as a single quotation can serve to recapture this aspect of the complex process whereby US policy hardened against Japan between the summer of 1940 and December 1941, the following extract from a private letter from Roosevelt to Francis B. Sayre (US High Commissioner to the Philippines) illustrates the point: 'There is a very close connection', the President wrote on

Furthermore, the actual course of the Far Eastern War involved alliances and groupings which cut across even the crudest of racial or colour categories, so that it is indeed all the more remarkable that there persisted, as we shall see, genuine convictions (as well as propaganda) to the effect that what was taking place was essentially a revolt of 'Asia' against 'the West'. Not only was Japan aligned with Germany and Italy, for example, and China (Nationalist and Communist) with the Western Allies, but in numerous instances people of a single nationality were to be found on both of the opposing sides. What to Subhas Chandra Bose, former President of the Congress Party, was sincerity on Japan's part when she proclaimed that she was waging a 'holy war' on behalf of all Asia, was to the equally nationalist Indian newspaper, the *Bombay Chronicle*, 'nauseating hypocrisy'.<sup>1</sup> Where the former Kuomintang leader, Wang Ching-wei, collaborated with Tokyo, vast numbers of his fellow-countrymen migrated to China's interior rather than submit to the invader.<sup>2</sup> Meanwhile, for Ho Chi Minh in Indochina, white French and yellow Japanese alike were the enemy;<sup>3</sup> and when, from among those French, *L'Action Française* hurled diatribes against the leaders of 'les Mongols d'aujourd'hui', it was referring, not to Tokyo, but to Moscow.<sup>4</sup> Even if one takes the case of Japan alone, there had

31 Dec. 1940, 'between the hostilities which have been going on for three and a half years in the Far East and those which have been going on for sixteen months in . . . Europe . . . For practical purposes, there is going on a world conflict, in which there are aligned on one side Japan, Germany and Italy, and on the other side China, Great Britain and the United States. If Japan, moving further southward, should gain possession of the region of the Netherlands East Indies and the Malay Peninsula, would not the chances of Germany's defeating Great Britain be increased . . . thereby?', Francis B. Sayre Papers, box 7 (Library of Congress, Washington DC).

<sup>1</sup> *Bombay Chronicle*, 10 Dec. 1941.

<sup>2</sup> See, e.g. J. H. Boyle, *China and Japan at War, 1937-1945* (Stanford, 1972); F. Schurmann and O. Schell, *China Readings: Republican China* (Harmondsworth, 1968), 256 ff; the relevant essays in Iriye (ed.), *The Chinese and the Japanese*.

<sup>3</sup> See, e.g. W. J. Duiker, *The Rise of Nationalism in Vietnam, 1900-1941* (Ithica, NY, 1976), 256 ff.

<sup>4</sup> *L'Action Française*, 15 June 1941. The belief that Russia, having been led in a European direction by Peter the Great and his successors, had reverted to her Asiatic origins and nature in 1917 had been propounded by Henri Massis among others. See his *Défense de l'Occident* (Paris, 1927), 14-15, 69, 107. During the Second World War, Stalin was sometimes described in private by Western leaders as 'Oriental' when he was being difficult. See, e.g. E. Barker, *Churchill and Eden at War* (London, 1978), 221. And when Japanese leaders sought to

existed within that country since the time of the Meiji restoration a deep ambivalence over whether it 'belonged' to Asia or was in essence a Westernized outsider on the fringe of that continent.<sup>1</sup>

Nevertheless, when all the necessary qualifications have been made, there remain a number of ways in which the Far Eastern War was of significance in terms of what was seen, crudely speaking, as relationships among races.

This becomes more apparent if, in the first place, the advent of that war is viewed in a context reaching back to around the turn of the century and involving certain developments within Asia, especially as they concerned the Western powers. What is entailed, of course, is a historian's retrospective choice of perspective and pattern; but it is also a pattern that was discerned and emphasized by some of those involved in the 1941-5 war itself. Moreover, it consists, not so much of pre-1941 events in themselves, as of how those events appeared to certain people at the time.<sup>2</sup>

Nationalist sentiments in Asia developed in a far from uniform manner, often entailed hostility towards fellow-Asians, and were not always anti-Western.<sup>3</sup> Moreover, some of the political ideas

convince themselves, as the war turned against them, that help could be obtained from Moscow, one of the points made was that the Soviet Union was 'Asiatic'. See A. Iriye, *Power and Culture: the Japanese-American War, 1941-1945* (Cambridge, Mass., 1981), 171, 223.

<sup>1</sup> 'What we have to do', proclaimed Japan's Foreign Minister, Inoue Kaoru, in 1887, 'is to transform our empire and our people and make the empire like the countries of Europe and our people like the people of Europe'. Quoted in J. Crowley (ed.), *Modern East Asia* (New York, 1970), 114. See also R. Storry, 'Japanese Attitudes to the West', in Iyer, *op. cit.*; M. B. Jansen (ed.), *Changing Japanese Attitudes Toward Modernization* (Princeton, 1965), 11, 88-9, 205 ff., 444; W. G. Beasley, 'Japan and the West in the Mid-Nineteenth Century', in *Proceedings of the British Academy*, vol. LV (London, 1971); and, on the important question of Japan's relationship with her cultural 'mentor', China, M. B. Jansen, *The Japanese and Sun Yat-sen* (Cambridge, Mass., 1954).

<sup>2</sup> Japanese propaganda also stressed in 1942-3 that current battles were but a continuation of the struggle embarked upon in 1904 against the 'white' power, Russia. e.g. *The Tribune* (Manila), 3 Feb., 10 March, 7 July, 25 Nov. 1942; 5 Feb. and 27 May 1944 (*Gaimusho* archives, Tokyo).

<sup>3</sup> e.g. on the slow development of nationalism among Malays, see W. R. Roff, *The Origins of Malay Nationalism* (New Haven, 1967); on tensions within plural societies in south-east Asia, see V. Purcell, *The Chinese in Southeast Asia* (Oxford, 1965); on the anti-Manchu, rather than anti-Western, focus of Chinese revolutionary nationalism in the early 1900s, see J. Ch'en, *China and the West* (London, 1979), 275 ff.

that were involved focused upon principles and categories that went beyond race, and had their roots in Europe rather than Asia. And yet, if we take the case of the revolutionary Left in this connection, we find that, even though Lenin had done much to act as 'the mediator between Marxism and the non-European world',<sup>1</sup> considerable strains arose within the Comintern in the inter-war years over the issue of the potential role of Asian peoples.<sup>2</sup> Stalin's markedly Eurocentric approach was one reason for this. There were those on the Asian side, however (Li Ta-chao in China in 1924 was one), who believed in any case that, given the existing pattern of world politics, the class struggle was taking the form of a race war.<sup>3</sup>

The notion that what was stirring was a general revolt of 'Asia' against the white man, fostered by the existence of Western empires and a Western-dominated international political and economic order, had already been given fresh impetus by the remarkable victory of Japan over Russia in the war of 1904-5. The outcome proved, wrote one Japanese commentator, 'that there is nothing Westerners do which Asians cannot do', while a Chinese newspaper declared that its readers could now 'have some confidence in the regeneration of the yellow race'.<sup>4</sup> In India, writes Dr Pandey, Japan's triumph 'freed the minds of young men from the spell of European invincibility'<sup>5</sup>—a spell which was further reduced among Asians by the events of the European civil war of 1914-18.<sup>6</sup>

Within Japan, meanwhile, there had existed since the Meiji restoration a line of nationalist thinking which cast that country in

<sup>1</sup> H. Carrère d'Encausse and S. Schram, *Le Marxisme et l'Asie, 1853-1964* (Paris, 1965), 27. Among Lenin's writings, see, especially, the essay 'Better Fewer, But Better' (1923), in his *Collected Works*, vol. 33 (Moscow, 1965).

<sup>2</sup> D'Encausse and Schram, *op. cit.*, 41 ff. The issue of the revolutionary potential to be found in Asia was also raised during the inter-war years by André Malraux, of course, notably in *Les Conquérants* (1927) and *La Condition Humaine* (1933).

<sup>3</sup> D'Encausse and Schram, 83. See also S. Schram, *Mao Tse-tung* (Harmondsworth, 1967), 38-9, 49-50.

<sup>4</sup> See A. Iriye, *Pacific Estrangement: Japanese and American Expansion, 1897-1911* (Cambridge, Mass., 1972), 98.

<sup>5</sup> B. N. Pandey, *The Break-Up of British India* (London, 1969), 68. And see, in general, K. M. Panikkar, *Asia and Western Dominance* (London, 1953).

<sup>6</sup> See, e.g. Ch'en, *op. cit.* 70, 89, 278 ff. At a romantic and mystical level, Rabindranath Tagore proclaimed that the 1914-18 war was Europe's judgement upon itself, and that 'the East, with her ideals . . . , can patiently wait till the West, hurrying after the expedient, loses breath and stops'. R. Tagore, *Nationalism* (London, 1917), 43-5, 64.

the role of the leader of an Asian struggle for emancipation from Western domination.<sup>1</sup> And although in the 1920s Japanese foreign policy was directed essentially towards co-operation with the Western powers, issues like new United States immigration restrictions, the rejection of a racial-equality clause for the League of Nations Covenant, and the closing of Western or Western-imperial markets to Japanese goods all gave ammunition to those 'double patriots' (to use Richard Storry's term) who argued that the white man would never treat the Japanese as equals.

Such ideas proved all the more attractive when, during the Manchurian crisis of 1931-3, Japan successfully defied the Western powers, and with them a League of Nations whose underlying principles and focus of attention until then had alike been fundamentally Western also.<sup>2</sup> True, during the ten years between the outbreak of the Manchurian conflict and the attack on Pearl Harbour the belief that Japan had a mission to create an entirely new order in East Asia and beyond did not play a steady or predominant part in shaping the country's foreign policies. (Still less was it the case that policy was dictated by a genuine concern for all the peoples of the region.) Nevertheless, the call to fulfil such a mission was being loudly uttered in various quarters.<sup>3</sup> And in particular, a number of programmes were put forward which entailed the formation of some kind of 'Greater East Asia Coprosperity Sphere', in which Asians would find freedom and harmony after the expulsion of the Western presence.<sup>4</sup>

Moreover, there were already those Asians outside Japan who during the 1930s were publicly hailing that country's successes and destiny. Again, it must be emphasized that in terms of a

<sup>1</sup> See, e.g. Jansen, *Changing Japanese Attitudes Toward Modernization*, 250, 441, which includes the case of Yamagata Arimoto, who argued even wider, in terms of coloured versus white on a world scale. For the example of Okawa Shumei, see Thorne, *Allies of a Kind*, 729, and in general R. Storry, *The Double Patriots* (London, 1957). It is also worth noting that in 1935-6 there was to be a display of sympathy in Japan, on a 'coloured versus white' basis, for the Abyssinians and against Italy. See E. M. Robertson, *Mussolini As Empire Builder* (London, 1977), 153.

<sup>2</sup> See C. Thorne, *The Limits of Foreign Policy: the West, the League, and the Far Eastern Crisis of 1931-1933* (London, 1972). Before 1931, Asiatic and other non-European delegates to Geneva had been warning against the League's Eurocentrism. See, e.g. *League of Nations Official Journal, Special Supplement No. 93*, 49-50.

<sup>3</sup> See, e.g. J. Crowley, 'A New Deal for Japan and Asia: One Road to Pearl Harbor', in Crowley (ed.), *Modern East Asia*.

<sup>4</sup> See J. C. Lebra (ed.), *Japan's Greater East Asia Coprosperity Sphere in World War Two: Select Readings and Documents* (Kuala Lumpur, 1975).

readiness to collaborate actively with her against the Western powers, it was a small minority that was involved at this stage: Aung San and his companions, for example, who made their way from Burma to train with the Japanese; Subhas Chandra Bose, who by 1937 was applauding Japan's achievements 'for herself and for Asia' in 'shattering the white man's prestige in the Far East and putting all the Western imperial powers on the defensive'; or Soekarno, who had long been forecasting a major war in the Far East in which Japan would help the Indonesians to become free.<sup>1</sup> The general impact being made by Japan did go much wider, however, together with the perception that accompanying patterns on the international scene had a strong racial or colour component. Thus, in the East Indies in 1936 and 1937, the strongly anti-Japanese nationalist leader, Soetan Sjahrir, was noting with regret 'the winning of sympathy among Eastern peoples by the Japanese'. 'As far as I can make out', he wrote privately,

the whole Islamic population of our country is now pro-Japanese! . . . Besides, in Java there is a popular belief [i.e. what was known as the *Djojobojo* legend] that after white rule there will be a rule for 'a hundred days' of yellow people who will come from the north. This belief is centuries old, and now the people say: 'It is the Japanese who will come'.<sup>2</sup>

Sjahrir attributed these sentiments among Indonesians to 'disaffection with the whites', together with what he saw as 'the Asiatic inferiority feelings, which seek compensation in a glorification of the Japanese . . . [and] the difficulties they are causing the white man'. And among Western officials, too, there existed perceptions and opinions of a matching kind which again involved fundamental divisions along lines of colour. Thus Anthony Eden in 1938 was privately emphasizing the importance, in the face of Japan's uncompromising behaviour, of 'effectively asserting white-race authority in the Far East'.<sup>3</sup> Likewise, from his vantage-point on the spot in China, the British Inspector General of that country's Maritime Customs, Sir

<sup>1</sup> See, respectively, Maung Maung, *op. cit.*; S. C. Bose, *Testament* (New Delhi, 1941) and *Crossroads* (Bombay, 1962), and N. G. Jog, *In Freedom's Quest* (New Delhi, 1969); Dahm, *op. cit.* 69.

<sup>2</sup> Sjahrir, *op. cit.*, entries for 28 June and 16 Nov. 1936, 28 Oct. 1937.

<sup>3</sup> Quoted in B. A. Lee, *Britain and the Sino-Japanese War, 1937-1939* (Stanford, 1973), 94. See also, e.g. the observation of a Foreign Office official in 1937: 'The point that we are a much greater Asiatic Power than Japan is one that might well be made to the Japanese when they become over-insistent on their claim to a leading role in Asiatic affairs.' *Ibid.* 46-7.

Frederick Maze, saw the crisis at Tientsin in 1939 as involving 'not merely Japan against Great Britain' but also 'the Orient against the Occident—the Yellow Race against the White Race'.<sup>1</sup>

Again, it was obviously a minority who articulated beliefs of this kind. Even so, the idea that a confrontation was developing on the basis of an uprising on the part of 'Asia' or 'the yellow man' reached back in the West, as it did in the East, a long way before 1941. It had been shared, for example, in the period leading up to the First World War, by men as politically diverse as Jean Jaurès, Kaiser Wilhelm II and Viscount Esher.<sup>2</sup> Given a new edge by the shock and internecine destruction of 1914-18,<sup>3</sup> it had figured in the 1920s in the arguments both of those like Romain Rolland who discerned in Asians qualities of which the European was urgently in need,<sup>4</sup> and of those reactionaries like Henri Massis who warned that 'Asia' was bent upon destroying the very soul of 'the West', a soul 'divisée, incertaine de ses principes . . .'.<sup>5</sup> During the inter-war period, too, it had hovered around debates in Washington, as well as London and Paris, on such matters as colonial policy, defence programmes, immigration, and the threat posed by cheap Japanese exports. Thus, America's Governor General of the Philippines was writing in the late 1920s of the need to retain that colony in order to sustain 'Anglo-Saxonism . . . in the Western Pacific, in the Far East, [and] in India', whilst a senior staff officer of the US Army defined the essence of the Far Eastern situation in 1930 in terms of maintaining white rule over 'yellow or brown races of limited development, the majority of whom are constantly stirred by sentiment or propaganda to throw aside Western

<sup>1</sup> Maze to Little, 12 July 1939, Maze Papers, Private Correspondence (School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London).

<sup>2</sup> Thus Jaurès wrote in 1900: 'On peut très bien entrevoir un mouvement d'ensemble de l'Asie contre l'Europe'. Quoted in H. Grimal, *La Décolonisation, 1919-1963* (Paris, 1963), 33. Esher wrote privately on the eve of the First World War: 'Millions of splendid youths, the heirs of European ages, will go childless to their graves . . . And the yellow races will gather strength . . .' M. Brett (ed.), *Journals and Letters of Lord Esher, vol. III* (London, 1936), 176. And see, e.g. C. H. Howard (ed.), *The Diary of Edward Goschen, 1900-1914* (London, 1980), entry for 16 Sept. 1903.

<sup>3</sup> Among the works of contemporaries reflecting a loss of confidence in the progress of Western civilization, see O. Spengler, *The Decline of the West: Form and Actuality* (trs. C. Atkinson, London, 1926); and among secondary works, I. F. Clarke, *The Pattern of Expectation* (London, 1979).

<sup>4</sup> See R. Rolland, *Inde Journal, 1915-1943* (Paris, 1960). In addition to the works of Malraux already cited, see also his *La Tentation de l'Occident* (Lausanne, 1962) and R. Guénon, *East and West* (trs. W. Massey, London, 1941).

<sup>5</sup> Massis, *op. cit.* 15.

control'. And in 1932, the Secretary of State, Henry Stimson, and the Director of the US Navy's War Plans Division were both noting the need for the United States to bear its share of 'the white man's burden'.<sup>1</sup>

What was involved in many cases—and what was to come under strong challenge during the Second World War—was of course an underlying belief in an innate Western superiority and in the universal validity of Western values and principles when it came to the regulation of both domestic and international orders.<sup>2</sup> Before extraterritorial privileges could be surrendered, insisted the British Government to that of China in 1929, 'Western legal principles should be understood and be found acceptable by the [Chinese] people at large not less than by their rulers'. 'What is wrong with China', pronounced Sir Alexander Cadogan in the mid-1930s, 'is that there is something wrong with the Chinese—something at least that does not conform to Western standards and makes them unable properly to adjust to Western standards.'<sup>3</sup>

As the threat of a clash between the Western Powers and Japan

<sup>1</sup> See Thorne, *The Limits of Foreign Policy*, 44–7, 55–7. On the question of Asian immigration into the USA, see, e.g. Ch'en, *op. cit.*, and Iriye, *Pacific Estrangement*.

<sup>2</sup> The most that can be done here is to provide references to a few works relating to some of the numerous aspects of this large subject. On one of the oldest European empires in Asia, see C. R. Boxer, *op. cit.*; on changing European attitudes to China in the nineteenth century, see Ch'en, *op. cit.* 45, and Dawson, *op. cit.* 132 ff.; on specific British overseas communities, see K. Ballhatchet, *Race, Sex and Class Under the Raj* (London, 1980), and J. G. Butcher, *The British in Malaya, 1880–1941* (Kuala Lumpur, 1979). On wider themes, V. G. Kiernon, *The Lords of Human Kind* (Harmondsworth, 1969); E. W. Said, *Orientalism* (London, 1978); P. Mason, *Patterns of Dominance* (London, 1971) and *Prospero's Magic* (London, 1962); J. Needham, *Within The Four Seas* (London, 1969). On the assumptions underlying the policies of various colonial powers in the East, see, e.g. Grimal, *op. cit.*; W. F. Wertheim, *Indonesian Society in Transition* (The Hague, 1964); Duiker, *op. cit.*; P. S. Gupta, *Imperialism and the British Labour Movement, 1914–1964* (London, 1975); E. May, *Imperial Democracy: The Emergence of America as a Great Power* (New York, 1961); R. Hofstadter, *The Paranoid Style in American Politics* (New York, 1967); R. F. Weston, *Racism in U.S. Imperialism* (Columbia, South Carolina, 1972). On the Eurocentrism of Karl Marx (Britain's task in India, he wrote, was 'the annihilation of the Asiatic society and the laying of the material foundations of Western society in Asia'), see D'Encausse and Schram, *op. cit.* 13 ff. On underlying issues concerning the international order as a whole, see the provocative works by A. Bozeman, *Politics and Culture in International History* (Princeton, NJ, 1960), and *The Future of Law in a Multicultural World* (Princeton, 1971).

<sup>3</sup> *Documents on British Foreign Policy, 1919–1939, Second Series, vol. VIII* (London, 1960), No. 12; W. R. Louis, *British Strategy in the Far East, 1919–1939* (Oxford, 1971), 233–4.

increased between 1937 and 1941, there were those in official positions in the West who derived comfort from the belief that when it came to the point the Japanese—‘an extremely sensible people [who] would not run such a risk’, Churchill insisted in 1939—would weigh up the situation in an essentially (and idealized) Western fashion and back down before the manifestly greater strength of the United States and Great Britain.<sup>1</sup> Alternatively, and on a more overtly racist basis, a good many were able to find reassurance in the conviction that if war did indeed break out, then the inherent inferiority of the Japanese would lead to their rapid defeat.<sup>2</sup> Not uncommonly, the language employed to express such beliefs clearly indicated the assumption that the potential enemy was some kind of lesser species. In Adelaide, for example, ‘staid businessmen’, reported the American Consul, mocked at the menace said to be presented by ‘the “yellow dwarf”’.<sup>3</sup> ‘I had a good close-up, across the barbed wire’, wrote the British C.-in-C. Far East after visiting mainland Hong Kong in 1940, ‘of various sub-human specimens dressed in dirty grey uniform, which I was informed were Japanese soldiers . . . I cannot believe they would form an intelligent fighting force.’<sup>4</sup> What the West had to do with the Japanese once Germany had been defeated, declared Queen Wilhelmina of The Netherlands in private, was to ‘drown them like rats’.<sup>5</sup>

There ensued the dramatic and sweeping Japanese victories of late 1941 and early 1942. The result was a blow to white prestige even

<sup>1</sup> On these tendencies see Thorne, *Allies of a Kind*, 3 ff., and on a similar process of reasoning, based on the projection of Western liberal principles, by Lord Cecil and others during the Far Eastern crisis of 1931-3, Thorne, *The Limits of Foreign Policy*, 107, 406-7.

<sup>2</sup> See Thorne, *Allies of a Kind*, 4-5; also, e.g. S. W. Kirby, *Singapore: the Chain of Disaster* (London, 1971); W. Manchester, *American Caesar: Douglas MacArthur, 1880-1964* (London, 1979), 171, 205-6; C. Brown, *Suez to Singapore* (New York, 1942), 120 ff. For evidence of the widespread readiness in Britain in the summer of 1939 to stand up to Japan over Tientsin, despite threats closer to home, see the Gallup Poll results printed in Thorne, *The Limits of Foreign Policy*, 380-1.

<sup>3</sup> Hutchinson to State Dpt., 12 Jan. 1942, Hornbeck Papers, box 22.

<sup>4</sup> L. Allen, *Singapore, 1941-1942* (London, 1977), 54. And see, e.g. the diary entry by Harold Nicolson for 19 Dec. 1941, referring to the shock displayed by his Parliamentary constituents in Leicester after ‘two of our greatest battle-ships’ (i.e. the *Prince of Wales* and the *Repulse*) had been ‘sunk within a few minutes by the monkey men . . .’ N. Nicolson (ed.), *Harold Nicolson, The War Years: Diary and Letters, 1939-1945* (London, 1967).

<sup>5</sup> A. Kersten (ed.), *het Dagboek van dr. G. C. H. Hart* (The Hague, 1976), entry for 21 Feb. 1941.

greater than the one that had accompanied Japan's defeat of Russia in 1904–5. The immediate origins of this new conflict had not been racial in nature; but its coming heightened the degree of racial self-consciousness in many of those directly or indirectly involved. Those who had hoped for such a war, or had forecast it, on the basis of a 'white/coloured' or 'West/Asia' dichotomy had been a minority; but once battle was joined with startling results, perceptions and arguments of this kind received much greater attention, with the highlighting of supposed racial or national characteristics, and with the conclusion often being drawn that the conflict had in fact been inevitable.<sup>1</sup>

Japan's initial triumphs involved great humiliation for some of her opponents, notably during the campaign in the Malayan Peninsula and Singapore, in which Japanese battle casualties of less than ten thousand had to be set against British Empire and Commonwealth losses of almost one hundred and forty thousand, one hundred and thirty thousand men being marched off as prisoners of war.<sup>2</sup> Japanese propaganda was thus all the more easily able to assert that the individual enemy soldier and his entire Western civilization were essentially effete,<sup>3</sup> whilst reinforcement was provided for that belief in Japan's own spiritual superiority which already had been cultivated by pre-war government campaigns.<sup>4</sup> At the same time, the new conflict came as a relief to many Japanese after months of growing international tension and years of an apparently deadlocked war against China.

<sup>1</sup> Among those who now—unconsciously it seems—changed their opinion about the Japanese and the possibility of avoiding war was the prominent American banker, Thomas Lamont. Confident before Pearl Harbour that no attack on the USA was being contemplated, he was convinced in 1942 that the Japanese had entertained 'evil intent towards America for years'. Likewise, another member of the family wrote that the war 'was probably inevitable, having regard to the profound racial dislike existing between ourselves and the Japanese . . .' T. W. Lamont to Lippmann, 13 Nov. 1941, Lamont Papers, 105/3 (Harvard Business School, Cambridge, Mass.); T. W. Lamont to Grew, 15 Sept. 1942, *ibid.* 96/19; R. W. Lamont to T. W. Lamont, 4 Feb. 1942, *ibid.* 95/27. See also note 3, p. 332 above.

<sup>2</sup> See Kirby, *Singapore: the Chain of Disaster*; Allen, *Singapore, 1941–1942*; M. Tsuji, *Singapore: the Japanese Version* (London, 1962).

<sup>3</sup> e.g. *Syonan Shimibun*, 23 Feb. and 1 Oct. 1942. This was the newspaper established in Singapore (re-named by them 'Syonan') by the Japanese, with both English- and Japanese-language editions. (Microfilm of English-language edition, Netaji Bureau, Calcutta.)

<sup>4</sup> T. H. Havens, *Valley of Darkness: the Japanese People and World War Two* (New York, 1978), 25 ff.; *Proceedings of the British Association for Japanese Studies*, vol. 2 (Sheffield, 1977), 135.

In particular, difficulties that had arisen when explaining this last fight—being conducted, as it was, against fellow-Asians—were greatly eased now that Chiang Kai-shek was openly aligned with the real foe, the Western Powers, and could be dismissed as their puppet.<sup>1</sup> A French reporter found in the streets of Tokyo after the announcement that hostilities had commenced ‘un air de détente heureux et d’intense satisfaction’.<sup>2</sup> Various Japanese writers have recalled their rejoicing on that occasion: ‘I remember’, notes one, ‘the feeling of relief bubbling up inside me. There was the joy of having been given a direction clearly.’<sup>3</sup>

Many Asians in the path of the Japanese advance also took pleasure in what was happening. His fellow-Indonesians, recorded Sjahrir, ‘rejoiced over the Japanese victories’.<sup>4</sup> In Burma, too, in addition to those who actually collaborated with the invader, many appeared to welcome the British defeat, and the same was true in Malaya—though not among the Chinese of that country.<sup>5</sup> According to the President of the India Association in Singapore, writing in 1945, ‘the running away action of the Empire, both officials and non-officials, created a very deep impression in the minds of the people throughout Malaya [and] brought great disgrace on the white race generally’.<sup>6</sup>

Retrospective testimony such as this needs handling with care, and certainly there were those among the Empire’s officials who performed their duty with much fortitude in the face of the Japanese advance in south-east Asia. None the less, it is clear that the events of December 1941 and the first months of 1942 greatly increased the readiness of large numbers of Asians to discard any remaining loyalty to their European rulers. Among Indian nationalists, Subhas Chandra Bose had of course already thrown in his lot with the Axis Powers, and in Germany had recruited a number of Indian prisoners of war. For him, Tokyo’s decision for

<sup>1</sup> Iriye, *Power and Culture*, 36 ff.

<sup>2</sup> R. Guillain, *La guerre au Japon* (Paris, 1979), 23-5.

<sup>3</sup> *Proceedings of the British Association for Japanese Studies*, vol. 2, 92, 133 ff.

<sup>4</sup> Sjahrir, op. cit. 209, 219, 219-32.

<sup>5</sup> See Thorne, *Allies of a Kind*, 206; Ba Maw, *Breakthrough in Burma* (New Haven, Conn., 1968); Thakin Nu, *Burma Under The Japanese* (London, 1954); Purcell, *The Chinese in Southeast Asia*, 311. Meanwhile, in South Africa, Jan Smuts was noting privately: ‘I have heard Natives saying: “Why fight against Japan? We are oppressed by the whites and we shall not fare worse under the Japanese”’. Smuts to Gillett, 7 June 1942, in J. van der Poel (ed.), *Selections from the Smuts Papers*, vol. VI (Cambridge, 1973).

<sup>6</sup> Goho Report, 3 Sept. 1945, K. P. K. Menon Papers, file 2 (Nehru Memorial Library). Cf. Thorne, *Allies of a Kind*, 203-9.

war provided the opportunity he had been waiting for to carry his cause nearer to home, as well as easing the ambivalence which he had experienced when Japan's fight had been directed solely against Chinese fellow-Asians.<sup>1</sup> Defiance of the Raj was new, however, for those officers and men of the Indian Army who, after being captured by the Japanese, agreed to join an Indian National Army which would fight alongside the former enemy and against Britain. A wide range of motives, obviously, was involved among the twenty thousand or so (estimates vary widely) who had joined the INA by August 1942. The shock of the swift defeat in which they had just been involved did, however, figure prominently in subsequent testimonies; so, too, did resentment against what was seen as racial discrimination within the Indian Army, and the belief that they had been used as mercenaries by Britain. Moreover, for their leaders, notably Captain Mohan Singh, it was of importance that the Japanese officer they had to deal with, Major Fujiwara Iwaichi, sincerely believed in the collaboration of all Asians on an equal basis against the West. And some of the Indians may even have thought of their situation in the way one of them publicly defined it at the time: 'an opportunity to live as an Asiatic people . . . and to cooperate in the making of an Asiatic Asia'.<sup>2</sup>

Meanwhile, even among those Indians who remained opposed to Japan or were in any case beyond her reach, the dramatic collapse of British power in south-east Asia made a strong impression. One Indian member of the Malayan Civil Service, for example, afterwards admitted: 'Although my reason utterly rebelled against it, my sympathies instinctively ranged themselves with the Japanese in their fight against the Anglo-Saxons.'<sup>3</sup> Even

<sup>1</sup> For Bose's criticisms of Japan's attack on China, see, e.g. his essay, 'Japan's Role in the East', in *Through Congress Eyes* (Allahabad, 1937). In 1944, in an unpublished essay entitled 'If I Were Chinese' (Bose Papers, Netaji Bureau, Calcutta), he was to argue that Japan, having taken on the cause of Asia as a whole, was 'not the Japan of 1937'. See also *Azad Hind* (the journal of Bose's movement that was published in Berlin during the war years), No. 9, 1944.

<sup>2</sup> N. S. Gill oral transcript No. 168, Nehru Memorial Library; K. K. Ghosh, *The Indian National Army, Second Front of the Indian Independence Movement* (Meerut, 1969); H. Toye, *The Springing Tiger: a Study of a Revolution* (London, 1959); J. C. Lebra, *Jungle Alliance: Japan and the Indian National Army* (Singapore, 1971). It must also be emphasized that some members of the Indian Army were prepared to undergo great suffering rather than betray their oath of loyalty. See, e.g. O. Lindsay, *The Lasting Honour: The Fall of Hong Kong, 1941* (London, 1978), 177. On the record of the Army during the Second World War as a whole, see P. Mason, *A Matter of Honour* (London, 1974).

<sup>3</sup> W. H. Elsbree, *Japan's Role in Southeast Asian Nationalist Movements, 1940-1945* (Cambridge, Mass., 1953), 163.

Nehru, according to Edgar Snow, to whom he talked at the time, was not immune to such feelings.<sup>1</sup> Congress Party officials were particularly incensed at what they believed had been 'racial discrimination at every step' during the evacuation of whites and Asians from the territories overrun by the Japanese.<sup>2</sup> Privately, too, they displayed startled reactions to what had occurred. 'God', wrote a friend to Nehru on the subject of British officialdom, 'their *incompetence* is sickening.'<sup>3</sup>

The changes in perception that were involved were publicly reflected in the *Bombay Chronicle*, for example. Immediately after Pearl Harbour, that newspaper had predicted that Japan would swiftly be punished for her aggression, declaring: 'It is one thing to harrass an impoverished, ill-equipped and defenceless China, or to make surprise air-raids, and quite a different matter to challenge the might of Britain, the U.S.A. and Russia [*sic*].' Yet by early March 1942, the paper was bitterly attacking the 'blunders and inefficiency' that had characterized the defence of Singapore, and was hailing, not the mighty West, but China, as 'a heroic fighter against aggression and an embodiment of Asia's hopes for the future'.<sup>4</sup> In China itself, the Australian Minister in Chungking was writing: 'The British Empire in the Far East depended on prestige. This prestige has been completely shattered'.<sup>5</sup>

A sense of shock over Japan's triumphs was likewise great in the West itself. Fierce criticisms were made—by some of the British who had been on the spot, as well as by Americans and Australians—of what were seen as having been decadent aspects of Britain's imperial presence, and in some cases (as when Sir John Brenan in the Foreign Office read a report on poverty and racial discrimination in Hong Kong) were acknowledged to contain uncomfortable truths.<sup>6</sup> The predominant reaction, however, was

<sup>1</sup> E. Snow, *Journey to the Beginning* (London, 1959), 269.

<sup>2</sup> e.g. draft paper, 'Evacuation from Malaya and Burma', AICC Papers, FN-31β. On the issue itself, see H. Tinker, 'A Forgotten Long March: the Indian Exodus from Burma, 1942', *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies*, March 1975; and for a somewhat different emphasis, Thorne, *Allies of a Kind*, 206.

<sup>3</sup> Mrs Rajkumari Amrit Kaur to Nehru, 22 May 1942, Nehru Papers, Correspondence, vol. 2. Also, e.g. AICC Working Committee draft paper, 'The Loss of Rangoon and Lower Burma', 27 Apr. 1942, AICC Papers, FN-31β.

<sup>4</sup> *Bombay Chronicle*, 9 Dec. 1941, 26 Feb., and 7 Mar. 1942.

<sup>5</sup> Eggleston to Evatt, 4 May 1942, Evatt Papers, Ext. Affairs, Misc. Corr. (Flinders University, South Australia). And see, e.g. Butcher, *The British in Malaya*, 77, 227.

<sup>6</sup> See Thorne, *Allies of a Kind*, 202 ff.

one of alarm. 'All over the country signs of panic coming up', noted the leading Washington journalist, Raymond Clapper, as the news from Pearl Harbour sank in, and similar observations were made in Australia, especially following the sinking of the *Prince of Wales* and *Repulse*.<sup>1</sup> In several cases, concern was expressed in terms of 'yellow versus white', with both Churchill and the Anglophobe Admiral Ernest King of the US Navy describing the threat to Australia and New Zealand in this fashion.<sup>2</sup> The fall of Singapore, warned the Chief of the State Department's Far Eastern Division, would 'lower immeasurably . . . the prestige of the white race and particularly of the British Empire and the United States in the eyes of the natives of the Netherlands East Indies, of the Philippines, of Burma and of India'.<sup>3</sup> And when that base (described by the *Sydney Morning Herald* as 'a buttress against the Asiatic tide')<sup>4</sup> did indeed fall, even the press away in Vichy France, for all its *Schadenfreude* at the discomfiture of the Anglo-Saxons, reflected uneasily on the likely consequences of this loss of standing for 'les conquérants blancs' in the eyes of 'ces peuples dits mineurs', and on Japan's aim of excluding all Western influence from the East.<sup>5</sup>

The belief that loss of face might needlessly be spread wider still also contributed to early Allied decisions not to publicise Japanese atrocities against white prisoners.<sup>6</sup> And some of those involved on the spot, in the Far East, were, it seems, keenly conscious of the same consideration. 'The thing that has hurt our fellows more than harsh treatment', wrote Australia's General Thomas Blamey in 1945 after reading a report on prisoners released from captivity in Singapore, ' . . . has been the loss of prestige amongst the natives by British [*sic*] personnel due to the ignominious treatment they have received at the hands of the Japs in the sight of the natives.'<sup>7</sup>

<sup>1</sup> R. Clapper, Journal, 9 Dec. 1941, Clapper Papers, box 9 (Library of Congress); e.g. Hutchinson to State Dpt., 12 Jan. 1942, loc. cit.; C. Thorne, 'MacArthur, Australia and the British, 1942-1943', part 1, *Australian Outlook*, vol. 29, No. 1, 1975.

<sup>2</sup> Thorne, *Allies of a Kind*, 7.

<sup>3</sup> Department of State files, DS 740.0011 PW/1891 (National Archives, Washington DC).

<sup>4</sup> *Sydney Morning Herald*, 10 Feb. 1942.

<sup>5</sup> e.g. *Le Temps*, 17 Feb., 16 Mar., 7 Apr., 20 Oct. 1942; *L'Action Française*, 4 Mar. 1942.

<sup>6</sup> e.g. political-warfare plans in file EA 84/6/1 part 1, New Zealand National Archives.

<sup>7</sup> Report of Australian Military Mission, 16 Oct. 1945, Blamey Papers, file 8.6, SACSEA (Australian War Memorial Library, Canberra). And see W. W. Mason, *Official History of New Zealand in the Second World War: Prisoners of War* (Wellington, 1954), 522.

For Adolf Hitler, meanwhile, the triumphs of his new ally in the Far East gave rise to mixed feelings. Greatly relieved at Japan's entry into the war, and much impressed by her achievements, he did not modify, even so, the conviction, central to his movement, that it was the German people, 'the Prometheus of humanity', who represented 'the superior race throughout the world'.<sup>1</sup> In his eyes, the Japanese remained 'always inferior to us on the cultural level', possessing 'no affinities' with the Germans. Moreover, he privately viewed their dramatic early successes as 'a turning point in history' which entailed 'the loss of a whole continent, . . . [with] the white race the loser'. The weakening of Britain's hold on India—an imperial regime which he saw as something of a model for German rule over Russia—was a topic on which Hitler was particularly ambivalent. In his dealings with Bose and other Indian nationalists, he remained cool and non-committal, declining to withdraw earlier public statements in which, by implication at least, he had dismissed the peoples of that country as being inherently inferior.<sup>2</sup> In short, in Berlin, too, as well as within the ranks of the Western Allies, the coming of the Far Eastern War heightened the racial element in perceptions of the international scene.

Following the early dramas of the war, the bitterness of the battles between the Japanese and their opponents, the conviction on both sides that the struggle was mortal in nature, and the growing volume of official and quasi-official propaganda:<sup>3</sup> all

<sup>1</sup> A. Hitler, *Mein Kampf* (New York, 1939), 282.

<sup>2</sup> H. R. Trevor-Roper (ed.), *Hitler's Table Talk* (London, 1953), entries for, e.g. 18 Dec. 1941 and 5 and 7 Jan. 1942; E. L. Presseissen, 'Le Racisme et les Japonais: un Dilemme Nazi', *Histoire de la Deuxième Guerre Mondiale*, July 1963; B. Martin, *Deutschland und Japan in Zweiten Weltkrieg* (Göttingen, 1969), 34 ff.; J.-M. Maskill, *Hitler and Japan: the Hollow Alliance* (New York, 1966), 41 ff.; the essay by M. Hauser in S. K. Bose (ed.), *Netaji and India's Freedom* (Calcutta, 1975). The conservative, anti-Nazi German diplomat, Ulrich von Hassell, likewise noted in December 1941 that Japan's successes were 'deplorable from a higher European viewpoint'. *The von Hassell Diaries, 1938-1944* (London, 1948), entry for 21 Dec. 1941.

<sup>3</sup> Every government involved exercised some degree of control over its country's press and broadcasting services, that control being virtually total in the case of Japan (see Havens, *op. cit.* 61 ff.). On the Allied side, in the early stages of the war especially, large numbers of people were, it seems, very open to suggestion as to the nature and purpose of struggle. e.g., 40 per cent of Americans polled in September 1942 responded in the negative when asked if they knew 'what this war was all about'. R. Dallek, *Franklin D. Roosevelt and American Foreign Policy, 1932-1945* (New York, 1979), 358. On Britain, see I. McLean, *Ministry of Morale: Home Front Morale and the Ministry of Information in World War Two* (London, 1979), 149.

helped to foster in each camp images of the enemy which explicitly or implicitly contained ideas and suggestions of a (crudely-speaking) racial kind. Thus, Japanese propaganda depicted the British and Americans as being wholly different from the people of Nippon, whose Emperor, himself a god, was carrying out the divine will through the instrument of a chosen race. The Westerners were decadent, selfish, and (as when they promulgated the Atlantic Charter) hypocritical. The Americans in particular, as their bombing campaign against the Japanese home islands gathered in strength in 1944–5, were depicted as ferocious barbarians who practised their cruelties on a racist basis, and were bent upon ‘the ruthless exploitation of all Asians’.<sup>1</sup> The united Protestant churches of Japan, *Nippon Kirisutokyodan*, much under government influence, made their own contribution to the war effort by urging all Christians throughout the Great East Asia Coprosperity Sphere to reject Western versions of the faith as fostering imperialism and racial discrimination, and to look instead to the restored purity and idealism enshrined in Japanese Christianity. (Christ having been an Oriental, argued Japanese theologians, the essence of his doctrines could best be understood and interpreted by the peoples of the Orient.)<sup>2</sup>

If Japanese propaganda of this kind is placed alongside material emanating from the West, the degree to which mirror-images were involved is striking. (To take one specific instance, after the American ‘Doolittle’ air-raid on Tokyo in April 1942, Japanese

<sup>1</sup> e.g. digest of a book written in 1943 by Lt. Col. Koji Takeda, ‘The Great East Asia War and Ideological Warfare’, Information Dpt., Japanese Ministry of War, External Affairs files, EA 84/6/1, part 3, National Archives of New Zealand; 1943 book on the Malayan campaign, Japanese document collection, AL 827/24, Imperial War Museum, London; *Syonan Shimbun*, 3 Mar. and 16 July 1945; A. Rhodes, *Propaganda: the Art of Persuasion: World War II* (London, 1976), 207, 248–9, 252, 256. On the experiences undergone by the Japanese under US bombing, see Havens, *op. cit.* 154 ff. In recent years, there have been a number of Japanese accusations that atrocities against their prisoners of war and civilians were committed by British and American forces, as well as Russians, following the 1945 surrender. On this issue, still much under dispute, see, e.g. S. Ienaga, *Japan’s Last War* (Oxford, 1979), 234 ff. and 292, note 71; L. Allen, ‘Not So Piacular: a Footnote to Ienaga on Malaya’, *Proceedings of the British Association for Japanese Studies*, vol. 5, part 1 (Sheffield, 1980). See also report on Japanese atrocities, *The Guardian*, 29 Oct. 1981.

<sup>2</sup> Dpt. of State files, 894.404/45 and 46; A. H. Ion, ‘The Formation of the *Nippon Kirisutokyodan*’, in *Proceedings of the British Association for Japanese Studies*, vol. 5, part 1, 1980. On the largely successful Japanese attempt to enlist the support of the Roman Catholic hierarchy in the Philippines, see the *Manila Tribune*, 14 and 20 Jan. 1942; 2 May 1942; 21 Feb. 1943; 10 Aug. 1944. This paper is a rich source on Japanese propaganda and collaborationist responses.

cartoons depicted the flyers as cunning demons; American cartoons, the executioners of those flyers as apes.)<sup>1</sup> Of course, on the Allied side, the accompanying fight against Nazism and its racist doctrines was enough in itself to inhibit the public expression of belief in one's own inherent superiority, though Churchill, for one, was ready to argue in such terms in private.<sup>2</sup> Defiance of Japan often involved a lauding of the supreme achievements of Western civilization, however,<sup>3</sup> and the invoking of 'the spirit of our race', as the *Sydney Morning Herald* put it.<sup>4</sup>

As for the character of the Japanese themselves, Western attacks at least equalled the ferocity of the propaganda coming in the opposite direction. Nor, indeed, was this simply a matter of the public employment of crude stereotypes. There is strong evidence to indicate that Roosevelt, for example, seriously entertained the notion that Japanese 'nefariousness' sprang from a skull pattern that was less developed than that of Caucasians, and he was encouraged in such a belief by none less than the Curator of the Division of Physical Anthropology at the Smithsonian Institution.<sup>5</sup> Likewise, a series of memoranda written within the State Department following Pearl Harbour contained swingeing criticisms of the Japanese as a people, one paper, judged 'first-rate' by the Chief of Division involved, depicting their 'cultural inferiority', 'insensitivity to true ethics', and 'sterility of mind'.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Rhodes, *op. cit.*, 258-60.

<sup>2</sup> Thorne, *Allies of a Kind*, 730; and see *ibid.* 5-7, 143, 277, 356-7, 474, 643, 711.

<sup>3</sup> This was obviously most common among Westerners. (For one of many examples, see *Le Temps*, 31 Mar. 1941.) But Vice-President Osmena of the Philippines, too, was ready to emphasize that the way of life of his people was 'the Occidental, the Christian, the democratic [one]'. Speech at Chicago, 2 Jan. 1944, RG 216, Office of Territories, High Commissioner Philippines, box 43 (US National Archives).

<sup>4</sup> *Sydney Morning Herald*, 27 Dec. 1941. Also, e.g. Hon. Sec. of the 'Awake! New Zealand' campaign to Fraser (Prime Minister), 30 March 1942, EA 84/12/2, New Zealand National Archives.

<sup>5</sup> See Thorne, *Allies of a Kind*, 158-9, 167-8.

<sup>6</sup> Langdon memoranda, 17 and 23 Jan., 28 Mar. 1942, Dpt. of State files, 740.0011 PW/2037 $\frac{3}{8}$ , 2037 $\frac{2}{8}$ , 2677; Langdon memorandum ('Elements of Weakness in the Japanese People', quoted here), 30 Apr. 1942, DS 894.00/1174; Jones and Emmerson memoranda, respectively 3 and 6 Feb. 1942, DS 740.0011 PW/2037 $\frac{4}{8}$  and 2037 $\frac{7}{8}$ . Supposed defects of Shinto and State Shintoism as a religion were often a subject for comment. See, e.g. 'Guidance for Action on . . . Political Warfare Against Japan', 30 June 1942, a report of the Far East Sub-Committee of the Political Warfare (Japan) Committee, Prime Minister's Dpt. Papers, A 1608, K/57/1/1, Commonwealth Archives, Canberra.

In terms of Allied publics, and especially that of the USA, probably the single most influential portrayal of Japanese aims and characteristics was that provided by the film, 'Prelude to War', the first in the series, 'Why We Fight', made at the behest of the Chief of Staff of the US Army, General George Marshall. This film declared Japan's goal to have been, since 1927, the complete conquest of North America as well as of Asia, and (using such examples as the fate of Shanghai in 1937) depicted the 'bestial' cruelties that would follow if the Japanese Army succeeded in its aim of marching 'down Pennsylvania Avenue'.<sup>1</sup> In short, as the official organ of the governing Labour Party in New Zealand put it in the same context, security would be assured only when 'a Maori, picking up a handful of ashes, can say: "That was Tokio"'.<sup>2</sup>

In contrast to the treatment of Germany and Italy (in which Hitler and Mussolini tended to be the main targets), written propaganda, films and cartoons in the USA and Canada attacked the entire Japanese people, and not their Emperor or Prime Minister alone, as being the embodiment of evil.<sup>3</sup> 'A Jap is a Jap', as General De Witt, in command of the Western United States military zone put it in 1943 with reference to American citizens of Japanese descent.<sup>4</sup> In Britain, too, whereas the Germans tended to

<sup>1</sup> 'Prelude to War', Imperial War Museum, London, film archive, ADM/7; F. Capra, *The Name Above the Title* (New York, 1971), 327. The film, like many other Western commentaries on Japan's long-term plans, cited in evidence the so-called 'Tanaka Memorial' of 1927, a document purported to have been drawn up by the Prime Minister of the day, General Tanaka Giichi. In fact, the original paper was a plan, drawn up by the Foreign Ministry in Tokyo, for railway construction in Manchuria. The document which became so widely cited appears to have been a forgery. See Ino Dentaro, 'Tanaka josobun o meguru ni-san no mondai', in *Kokusai seiji* (1964), 72-87. (I owe this reference to Professor Akira Iriye of Chicago University.) During the decision-making conferences in Tokyo in 1940-1, it was recognized that the USA was too powerful to be defeated; the hope, rather, was for a compromise peace which would give Japan the autarky and security that was regarded as essential. See Ike, *op. cit.*, *passim*.

<sup>2</sup> *The Standard* (Wellington), 19 Feb. and 17 May 1942.

<sup>3</sup> See, e.g. J. M. Blum, *V Was For Victory: Politics and American Culture During World War Two* (New York, 1976), 45 ff.; R. Polenberg, *War and Society: the United States, 1941-1945* (Philadelphia, 1972), 135. Thus, e.g. the Canadian film, 'The Mask of Nippon', dwelt upon the menace of 'the little men with devil faces and devil minds', while the US film: 'Know Your Enemy: Japan', argued that 'defeating this nation is as necessary as shooting down a mad dog in your neighbourhood'. Imperial War Museum film collection, respectively AMY 517 and USA/004-01.

<sup>4</sup> A. Girdner and A. Loftus, *The Great Betrayal: the Evacuation of the Japanese Americans During World War II* (Toronto, 1969), 277.

be depicted as a once-civilized people who had been led astray by the Nazis, the Japanese, in the words of a recent study, were described 'in terms appropriate to a newly-discovered zoological species'.<sup>1</sup>

If the tone of British propaganda regarding the Japanese tended to be one of 'amused contempt', in the United States and the two Dominions in the South Pacific, each more directly menaced by this particular enemy, he was commonly portrayed as a sub-human criminal, a 'murderous little ape-man', or 'a savage'.<sup>2</sup> This approach was expressed in its less violent form by Australia's General Blamey, when he wrote to his Minister for the Army 'to stress that in the South West Pacific our opponents are not a European race and [that] it would be of no avail to treat them or endeavour to reason with them entirely in European standards'.<sup>3</sup> In public, meanwhile, posters displayed in Australia during the initial Japanese advances had depicted the enemy in ape-like form, and had utilized such slogans as: 'We have always hated the Japanese.' The racism involved brought forth protests from some members of the Australian public,<sup>4</sup> but hatred burst forth anew later in the war, when Japanese atrocities against prisoners became known. These reports, declared the *Sydney Morning Herald*, revealed 'the true nature of the [Japanese] race', and showed the enemy's 'cunning, ape-like visage distorted into a hideous grin'.<sup>5</sup>

This last comparison was by then a familiar one. The US Navy's Admiral William F. Halsey, for example, was wont to urge his men to kill more of the 'low monkeys' facing them, and to make more 'monkey meat'.<sup>6</sup> As for the course to be followed once the war was won, Halsey's own prescription was that any Japanese then remaining alive should be rendered impotent. And although, when that moment of victory actually arrived, such

<sup>1</sup> McLean, op. cit. 158-9.

<sup>2</sup> e.g., *Sydney Morning Herald*, 2 Jan. 1942; Rhodes, op. cit. 163.

<sup>3</sup> Blamey to Forde, 8 Apr. 1943, Prime Minister's Dpt. Papers, A1608, K/41/1/1 (Commonwealth Archives, Canberra).

<sup>4</sup> Correspondence in Curtin Papers, CP 156/1 (Commonwealth Archives, Canberra). The 'Good Companions' Christian Social Order, for example, wrote to the Prime Minister on 9 Apr. 1942 to warn that 'if racial hatred is resorted to we shall not have any rational basis on which to establish peace'.

<sup>5</sup> e.g., *Sydney Morning Herald*, 31 Jan. 1944; *Sydney Daily Telegraph*, 19 Nov. 1944, 13 Aug. 1945; *The Dominion* (Wellington), 4 and 12 Mar. 1942; *The Standard* (Wellington), 20 Sept. 1945; Blamey Papers (loc. cit.), file 54.52; Col. R. W. Savage to Long, 8 Sept. 1945, Gavin Long Papers, Correspondence (Australian War Memorial Library, Canberra).

<sup>6</sup> J. M. Merrill, *A Sailor's Admiral* (New York, 1976), 53, 85, 209.

measures were scarcely thinkable, a significant number of Americans clearly regretted that the opportunity had not been seized to kill more of the enemy by nuclear bombardment.<sup>1</sup> (Privately, the Canadian Prime Minister, Mackenzie King, whose anti-Japanese racism had a lengthy history, expressed his relief that the new weapon had been used against an Asiatic people and not against 'white races' in Europe.)<sup>2</sup> In Australia and New Zealand, too, there were numerous warnings in the press that a race which could commit such atrocities as had the Japanese were never to be trusted. The task facing the democracies, declared the *Sydney Daily Telegraph*, was to transform a nation of 'savages'; 'to lift a race across 2,000 years of backwardness'.<sup>3</sup>

The heightened sense of racial differences and animosities that was brought about by the war made itself felt in domestic, as well as international, contexts. In both Burma and Malaya, for example, conflicts among the various nationalities within each territory tended to come further into the open amidst the turbulent circumstances of the time.<sup>4</sup> In Japan itself, 'repression', in the words of one historian, 'was the rule of thumb for both Chinese and Korean labourers'. Japanese attitudes towards China, it is true, were more ambiguous than those concerning other Asian countries; but the Chinese themselves, even so, were widely regarded as 'Chinks' and people to be made use of.<sup>5</sup> Indeed, the underlying assumptions that were involved had been spelled out even before Pearl Harbour, in March 1941, by the Imperial Rule Assistance Association. The creation of a Greater East Asia Coprosperity Sphere, that body had then emphasised, 'by no means ignores the fact that Japan was created by the Gods or posits an automatic racial equality'.<sup>6</sup> (The Japanese belief in their distinct and special qualities, writes Professor Reischauer,

<sup>1</sup> At the end of 1944, 13 per cent of Americans questioned by Gallup Poll had suggested that after the war all Japanese remaining alive should be exterminated. In September 1945, 54 per cent approved of the recent use of atomic bombs against Japanese cities, with an additional 23 per cent agreeing with the further proposition that 'we should have quickly used more [such bombs] before Japan had a chance to surrender'. J. E. Mueller, *War, Presidents, and Public Opinion* (New York, 1973), 172-3; Foreign Office files, FO 371, AN 4/4/45 (Public Record Office, London).

<sup>2</sup> *The Times*, 3 Jan. 1976; and see note 2, p. 353 below.

<sup>3</sup> *Sydney Daily Telegraph*, 3 Sept. 1945.

<sup>4</sup> See, e.g. Purcell, *The Chinese in Southeast Asia*, 311; Maung Maung, op. cit. 149 ff.

<sup>5</sup> Havens, op. cit. 104.

<sup>6</sup> Ienaga, op. cit. 57, 154, 156 ff.

is 'in essence a deeply racist concept, almost as if [they] were a different species of animal from the rest of humanity'.<sup>1</sup>

If the harsh treatment of minorities within Japan failed to square with much of that country's war-time propaganda on the theme of Asian brotherhood, in the West, too, there were instances where racial attitudes and actions in a domestic setting fell far short of the kind of norms enshrined in the Four Freedoms and the Atlantic Charter. The most striking instances of this concerned those people of Japanese descent who were living in North America. In Canada, over twenty thousand of them were deported from the coastal regions of British Columbia (that is, from the seaboard which it was thought could be threatened by Japan) and interned. And although no evidence of any moves aimed against Canada's security was ever found, the Prime Minister, Mackenzie King, urged in 1944 that 'disloyal' Japanese-Canadians should be deported 'as soon as physically possible', and that even those adjudged 'loyal' should be prevented from grouping themselves in one area of the country.<sup>2</sup>

In the case of the United States, one senior American diplomat has written in retrospect that after Pearl Harbour 'the enthusiastic exploitation of prejudice, hatred, emotion and covetousness became respectable and acceptable'.<sup>3</sup> This prejudice and animosity was directed against Japanese-Americans rather than against Americans of German or Italian stock.<sup>4</sup> Among those who pressed early in 1942 for special action to be taken against them—including those born in the United States—was the renowned liberal columnist, Walter Lippmann, and Roosevelt himself authorized the drastic measures which ensued.<sup>5</sup> Altogether,

<sup>1</sup> E. O. Reischauer, *The Japanese* (Cambridge, Mass., 1978), 411.

<sup>2</sup> D. R. Hughes and E. Kallen, *The Anatomy of Racism: the Canadian Dimension* (Montreal, 1974); K. Adachi, *The Enemy That Never Was* (Toronto, 1976); S. Salaff, 'The Diary and the Cenotaph: Racial and Atomic Fever in the Canadian Record', *Bulletin of Concerned Asian Scholars*, vol. 10, No. 2, 1978.

<sup>3</sup> J. K. Emmerson, *The Japanese Thread* (New York, 1979), 149.

<sup>4</sup> In general, see Girdner and Loftus, *op. cit.*, and Blum, *op. cit.* 147 ff. Harold Ickes, the Secretary of the Interior, disliked what was being done, and his diary entry for, e.g. 20 Nov. 1942 is of interest (Manuscript Division, Library of Congress). A soothing film on the subject was made by the Office of War Information, 'Japanese Relocation', Imperial War Museum film collection, US 003.

<sup>5</sup> Lippmann's article on the subject appeared in the *Washington Post* of 12 Feb. 1942. The Chief of the State Department's Far Eastern Division cited it when arguing that evacuation should take place. Hamilton to Welles, 13 Feb. 1942, DS 740.0011 PW/181. On subsequent efforts in Congress to bar American citizenship to Japanese in the future, and in various States to prevent

something like one hundred and ten thousand Japanese were evacuated from the West Coast by the US Army, being obliged in the process to sell off many possessions at virtually give-away prices. They were then interned in camps in the centre of the country, much to the displeasure of many of the local inhabitants.<sup>1</sup> Two-thirds of those involved had been born in the United States and were US citizens, and the great majority had never been to Japan. Most of them appear to have hoped for reacceptance into American society, although there were those who reacted to their internment by identifying with the cause of Japan.

In addition, there were those in Washington who feared that, given a chance, America's blacks, too, would side with Japan. Harold Ickes, Secretary of the Interior, noted in his diary: 'There seems to be a feeling that the Japanese . . . are doing a good deal of disturbing undercover work among the Negroes', and a special watch was kept on organizations in Harlem that were said to be 'seeking to unite all colored peoples into a common cause'.<sup>2</sup> More bizarre still, given the manifest loyalty of the Maoris and the record of their battalion in New Zealand's Army, was the assertion in a few quarters in that country that, at a time when the coloured peoples were on the march, it would be foolish to arm indigenous members of the Dominion as part of its Home Guard.<sup>3</sup>

However far-fetched some of these fears entertained at the time might have been, there did exist among non-whites in the West an awareness that the white man was facing a new challenge on a world scale. Gunnar Myrdal, who was in the USA in 1942, preparing his major study of the racial issue there, observed: 'In this war there [is] a "coloured" nation on the other side—Japan. And that nation [has] started out by beating the white Anglo-Saxons on their own ground . . . Even unsophisticated Negroes

landholding by Orientals, see DS 740.00115 EW (1939) 3300 $\frac{1}{2}$ , and DS 711.99/10-1244. For a collection of press cuttings on race issues in general, see DS 800.4016/70.

<sup>1</sup> Analyses of public attitudes towards Japanese-Americans in West Coast and Mid-West States, files of the War Relocation Authority, RG 210, boxes 140-2 (National Archives, Washington DC).

<sup>2</sup> Ickes Diary, 24 May 1942; State Dpt. Cttee. on Colonial Problems, 15 Oct. 1943, DS, Notter files, box 120. Similar warnings had been uttered about the unreliability of blacks during a period of American-Japanese tension early in the century. See Iriye, *Pacific Estrangement*, 159.

<sup>3</sup> New Zealand Army Dpt. files, series 11, file 16/18, Security Intelligence Records (National Archives, Wellington). Maoris were, nevertheless, recruited for the Home Guard.

[begin] to see vaguely a colour scheme in world events.’<sup>1</sup> Against a background of discrimination within the country’s war-industries and segregation in its armed services, black attitudes towards the war generally were secretly reported to Roosevelt by the Office of War Information as being characterized by ‘frustration, pessimism, cynicism and insecurity’. With upheavals taking place as blacks moved from the South into northern industrial cities, or into the forces, the fact that (again to quote a secret OWI report) an ‘illiberal attitude toward Negroes’ continued to be adopted by ‘large numbers of [white] people in all regions’ helped produce serious racial clashes, notably in Detroit in 1943.<sup>2</sup>

While the Japanese made their own attempts to capitalize upon these features of American society,<sup>3</sup> black leaders themselves were emphasizing the world-wide colour issue, as they saw it, and challenging Western governments to live up to their own, proclaimed war-aims. ‘This is not a war for freedom’, declared the militant organizer of the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters, A. Philip Randolph. ‘It is a war to continue “white supremacy” and the . . . exploitation of people of colour.’<sup>4</sup> The more moderate Walter White, Executive Secretary of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored Peoples, likewise worked hard to get Roosevelt to force Britain to grant self-government to India in 1942, called for an end to European colonial empires in south-east Asia once victory was won, and condemned the ‘White Australia’ immigration policy maintained by Canberra. ‘If this war should end with the continuation of white overlordship over brown, yellow, and black peoples of the world’, he forecast, ‘there will inevitably be another war and continued misery for the colored peoples of the United States, the West Indies, South America,

<sup>1</sup> G. Myrdal, *An American Dilemma*, vol. II (New York, 1944), 1006.

<sup>2</sup> OWI surveys, 16 Mar. and 5 Aug. 1942, Roosevelt Papers, PSF, boxes 170 and 171 respectively (Franklin D. Roosevelt Memorial Library, Hyde Park, NY). In general, see, e.g. A. R. Buchanan, *Black Americans in World War II* (Santa Barbara, California, 1977); N. A. Wynn, ‘The Impact of the Second World War on the American Negro’, *Journal of Contemporary History*, vol. 6, No. 2 (1971); Blum, op. cit. 11, 182 ff.; Polenberg, op. cit. 101 ff. On the Administration’s attempt to improve matters via Frank Capra’s film, ‘The Negro Soldier in World War II’, see R. Manvell, *Films and the Second World War* (London, 1974), 175 ff.

<sup>3</sup> See, e.g. *New York Times* report, 17 Sept. 1943, and the report of Walter White, Executive Secretary of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored Peoples, on his Pacific Theatre tour, 11 July 1945, NAACP Papers, box 576 (Library of Congress).

<sup>4</sup> See J. Anderson, *A. Philip Randolph* (New York, 1973).

Africa, and the Pacific.’<sup>1</sup> This linking of injustices suffered by blacks within the USA with the ‘colour-versus-white’ issue in world-wide terms was also being emphasized by such unquestionably patriotic and anti-Japanese organs as the magazine *Asia* (edited by the husband of Pearl Buck).<sup>2</sup>

Among those outside the United States who made connections of the same kind was Gandhi, who informed Roosevelt in 1942 that ‘the Allied declaration that [they] are fighting to make the world safe for freedom of the individual sounds hollow, so long as India, and for that matter Africa, are exploited by Great Britain, and America has the Negro problem in her own home’.<sup>3</sup> Likewise, the *Bombay Chronicle* was quick to pick up the Dutch Prime Minister, Dr P. S. Gerbrandy, when he spoke publicly of the threat to white prestige being created by Japan’s victories:

So . . . Japan is to be fought and punished with the help of the Chinese, the Indians, the Philippinos [*sic*] and the ‘natives’ of the East Indies for the vindication of ‘white prestige’ . . . against Japan, whose main crime is not, apparently, aggression but colour.<sup>4</sup>

Warnings and outcries of this kind did not go unheeded in the United States, where a significant number of men in high places were becoming much concerned over the possibility of a pan-Asian or even pan-coloured movement gathering momentum, if not during, then after the war. Senior Congressmen, for example, warned the State Department in private that ‘a racial war between the yellow man and the white man’ might soon constitute a threat to the latter’s very existence.<sup>5</sup> Roosevelt himself stressed the need to keep China within the Allied camp for this same reason, and in March 1945 was still emphasizing that a dangerous hostility from the coloured world could lie ahead. Cordell Hull, his successor as Secretary of State, Edward Stettinius, and Joseph Grew (former Ambassador in Tokyo) all continued to echo in private the argument put forward in 1942 by the Chief of the State Department’s Far Eastern Division: that if China and India should fall out of the war against Japan, then ‘psychologically Japan might well obtain such a secure place as the leader of the

<sup>1</sup> On White’s activities on behalf of India, NAACP Papers, boxes 316 and 519; on ‘White Australia’ immigration policies, his note of 23 Mar. 1945, box 583; on colonial empires, his statement of 9 Apr. 1945, box 583; his statement on post-war prospects to editors of black journals, 7 Jan. 1944, box 576.

<sup>2</sup> e.g. *Asia*, April 1942.

<sup>3</sup> *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1942, vol. I* (Washington, 1960), 677.

<sup>4</sup> *Bombay Chronicle*, 14 Feb. 1942.

<sup>5</sup> See Thorne, *Allies of a Kind*, 291.

Asiatic races, if not the coloured races, of the world, that [her] defeat by the United Nations might not be definitive'.<sup>1</sup> 'Colour consciousness', wrote the President's Personal Representative in India, William Phillips in 1943,

is . . . appearing more and more under present conditions and is bound to develop. We have, therefore, a vast bloc of Oriental peoples who have many things in common, including a growing dislike and distrust of the Occidental.<sup>2</sup>

Fears of this kind, together with other pressures and an awareness of the high war-aims proclaimed by the West, helped create acute tensions among the Allies themselves. Enough has already been written on the ensuing arguments by Professor Louis and the present author to enable the broad question of policy towards dependent territories to be left aside here.<sup>3</sup> It is worth recalling in passing, however, that private individuals, as well as government servants, became involved in the debates and exchanges, for example through such bodies as the Royal Institute of International Affairs and the Institute of Pacific Relations.<sup>4</sup>

Some of the immediate and specific issues that arose between members of the anti-Japanese side were also embarrassing, to say the least. Thus, for all its praise of China and India, the United States proved extremely reluctant to accept immigrants from those countries. It was only after much resistance in Congress and from the American Federation of Labor that quotas were granted of a mere one hundred and five Chinese annually (in 1943) and one hundred Indians (in 1946).<sup>5</sup> Australia and New Zealand too, despite their Labour Governments and their criticism of British colonial policy as being short-sightedly conservative, remained determined to prevent an influx of settlers from Asia, privately agreeing between themselves to approach the topic in a spirit of

<sup>1</sup> See Thorne, *Allies of a Kind*, e.g. 8-9, 307-8, 539, 593.

<sup>2</sup> Phillips to Roosevelt, 19 Apr. 1943, *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1943*, vol. IV (Washington, 1964), 217. Others, by contrast, stressed the need, in the face of growing solidarity among Asian peoples, for the whites to stand by one another. Thus, the American Minister in Canberra, Nelson T. Johnson, argued that Australians were America's 'natural racial allies in dealing with the problems of the Pacific'. Johnson to Howard, 12 May 1943, Johnson Papers, box 42 (Library of Congress).

<sup>3</sup> W. R. Louis, *Imperialism at Bay* (Oxford, 1977); Thorne, *Allies of a Kind*.

<sup>4</sup> See C. Thorne, 'Chatham House, Whitehall, and Far Eastern Issues, 1941-1945', *International Affairs*, January 1978.

<sup>5</sup> See Thorne, *Allies of a Kind*, 183, 325, 643-4.

'masterly evasion'.<sup>1</sup> Like Australia, The Netherlands, also, delayed agreeing with China on the ending of extraterritorial privileges in that country as a result of issues that were, at bottom, racial, and considerable Sino-Dutch friction arose over the racially-based treatment of Chinese seamen on Dutch ships.<sup>2</sup>

Troubles that, in part at least, were racial in nature also arose in a number of contexts where the course of the war brought together for the first time members of Allied nations who normally lived worlds apart from one another. 'White Australia' attitudes, for example, gave rise to protests and friction when black American servicemen arrived in that country.<sup>3</sup> The presence of black GIs, together with the US Army's policy of segregation, also created difficulties in the United Kingdom, where the issue was taken up at Cabinet level.<sup>4</sup> In this instance, however, the difficulties sprang for the most part from the racist attitudes, not of the host population, but of some (notably Southern) white American servicemen who were also in Britain. And although the Secretary of State for War, P. J. Grigg, wished to 'educate the personnel of the [British] Army . . . to adopt towards the U.S.A. coloured troops the attitude of the U.S.A. Army Authorities' (i.e. the enforcement of segregation), he was opposed in Cabinet by Lord Cranborne and Brendan Bracken amongst others, and was moved to deplore what he saw as a disruptive sympathy for the black troops among 'the public at large'.<sup>5</sup> On the other side of the

<sup>1</sup> On Australian fears of Asian masses, e.g. Robinson to Evatt, 12 Nov. 1942, Evatt Papers, Robinson file; on Australian immigration issues generally, and with reference to China specifically, Australian Dpt. of External Affairs, files A989/44/655/25 and 37; A989/43/735/301 and 313; A989/43/150/5/1/2 (Commonwealth Archives, Canberra); on the policy of 'masterly evasion', records of the Australia–New Zealand conference of January 1944, NZ Dpt. of External Affairs, file EA 153/19/4 part 1.

<sup>2</sup> Papers of Dr Wunz King, Chinese Ambassador to The Netherlands, *passim* (Hoover Institution, Stanford).

<sup>3</sup> e.g. Johnson to Hornbeck, 8 and 20 Jan. 1942, Hornbeck Papers, box 262; cable NR 41, 29 Mar. 1942, MacArthur to Marshall, US War Dpt. files, Exec. 10, item 7d (National Archives, Washington); 'Civilian Morale in North Queensland', report of 1 Feb. 1943, Prime Minister's Dpt. files, A1608, BA/29/1/2 (also B45/1/10) (Commonwealth Archives, Canberra); material in NAACP Papers, box 625.

<sup>4</sup> See C. Thorne, 'Britain and the Black G.I.s', *New Community*, vol. III, No. 3 (1974).

<sup>5</sup> Grigg memo., 3 Oct. 1942; Cranborne memo., 2 Oct. 1942; Morrison memo., 10 Oct. 1942; Bracken memo., 12 Oct. 1942; Cripps memo., 12 Oct. 1942, respectively WP (42) 441, 442, 456, 459, and 460, CAB 66/29. Cabinet minutes, 13 Oct. 1942, CAB 65/28. Grigg memo., 5 Jan. 1943, PREM 4, 42/9. Grigg to Churchill, 7 Apr. 1943, PREM 4, 50/3. Letters and memos. of October

Atlantic, meanwhile, Roosevelt, Henry Stimson (Secretary of War), John Foster Dulles, and Arthur Sulzberger of the *New York Times* were all disturbed by 'the fact', in Sulzberger's words, 'that the English treat our coloured people without drawing the race line'. It was, he feared, 'bound to cause trouble in the end'.<sup>1</sup>

It by no means follows from this last episode that British attitudes were inherently and lastingly more enlightened than American ones over racial matters, for the challenge of living in a multi-racial society had not at the time presented itself to the British public to any significant extent. The affair does, however, serve as a reminder that no Allied nation had a monopoly of virtue where attitudes involving race were concerned—a point which needs making only because in war-time Washington and the USA at large it was commonly assumed that over such matters generally (and above all where the Chinese and other peoples of Asia were concerned), a disinterested America and a reactionary, imperial Britain were 'miles apart'.<sup>2</sup>

In fact, on the spot in Asia, American servicemen not uncommonly displayed fundamentally racist attitudes towards Indian 'wogs' or Chinese 'slopeys'. (In India, observed an American journalist and war-time officer who was highly critical of Britain's imperial rule, 'the British colour-prejudice seems much less violent than our own'.)<sup>3</sup> Likewise, beneath much idealizing of their colonial rule in the Philippines, which was frequently held up to the European imperial powers as an example to follow, Americans did not always look upon the Filipino as an equal. 'Socially', noted a secret survey by the Office of Strategic Services, 'the two races have been separated [in the islands] much as elsewhere throughout the Far East'. 'The Filipino', it continued, 'is . . . at bottom emotionally unstable . . . [He] is pliant, will not stand up against opposition, . . . cannot be expected to support general ideas of justice or right if he has to

1943, PREM 4, 26/9. Foreign Office reports, FO 371/38511, AN 3006/6/45; all Public Record Office, London. See also, e.g. *Hansard, House of Commons*, vols. 383, cols. 670-1, and 397, cols. 1231-2; *The Times*, 14 Oct. 1942; *Current Affairs* (British Army Journal), 5 Dec. 1942; *Sunday Pictorial*, 6 Sept. 1942.

<sup>1</sup> Stimson Diary, 13 Jan., 24 Sept., 2 Oct. 1942 (Stirling Memorial Library, Yale University); Dulles report on June-July 1942 visit to UK, Institute of Pacific Relations Papers, box 374 (Columbia University Library).

<sup>2</sup> See Thorne, *Allies of a Kind*, e.g. 292.

<sup>3</sup> E. Taylor, *Richer By Asia* (London, 1948), 89ff. See also his *Awakening From History* (London, 1971), and H. R. Isaacs, *No Peace For Asia* (Cambridge, Mass., 1967). On the anti-black prejudices of Chinese in the USA before the war, see Ch'en, *op. cit.* 79, 160, 233.

make an unpleasant struggle . . . He cannot be trusted with Government funds or official positions as far as Occidental . . .'<sup>1</sup>

Conversely, from the non-American ranks of the Western Allies in Asia, one could single out, for example, those British 'hostilities-only' servicemen who were deeply disturbed when encountering, say, the wretchedness of Calcutta for the first time.<sup>2</sup> Within Europe itself, meanwhile, there were a good many observers who recognized, like the Pearl Bucks and Raymond Clappers in America, that, as the latter put it, 'revolutionary forces are loosening in Asia independent of who wins [the war]'.<sup>3</sup> 'Nationalist, democratic and communist tendencies have become world-shaping forces', wrote the Dutch Prime Minister privately at the end of the war to a conservative Governor General of the East Indies just released from Japanese captivity. 'They have arrived in the Indies for ever . . . [and] the whole world is involved in what is happening there.'<sup>4</sup> 'A change in the mentality of the European towards the Indonesian is badly needed', the Dutch Socialist resistance paper, *Het Parool*, had argued earlier, 'a change in a fundamentally democratic sense, whereby the equality of the Indonesian with the European becomes the basis of all relations'.<sup>5</sup> 'In our propaganda', urged the Lieutenant Governor General of the East Indies privately in 1944, ' . . . a very important—if not the most important—point is the abolition of all racial discrimination. Practical measures in this respect must accompany liberation and give proof of the sincerity of our professed policy of emancipation'.<sup>6</sup>

In London, it was not only the Attlees and Laskis, Crippses and

<sup>1</sup> OSS Research and Analysis report No. 760, second edition, 1 Nov. 1943 (National Archives, Washington). On post-war US attitudes involved in agreements signed with the Philippines, see C. E. Bohlen, *Witness to History* (London, 1973), 452. See also T. Friend, *Between Two Empires* (New Haven, 1965), 31 ff.

<sup>2</sup> e.g., A. Gilchrist, *Bangkok Top Secret* (London, 1970), 143; Royal Institute of International Affairs, Far East Study Group, minutes of 6 April 1944 (Chatham House archives, London).

<sup>3</sup> Clapper Papers, box 36.

<sup>4</sup> Schermerhorn to van Starckenborgh, 9 Oct. 1945, Gerbrandy Office Papers, 353.83.003 (Algemeen Rijksarchief, The Hague).

<sup>5</sup> *Het Parool*, 28 May 1943 (Rijksinstituut voor Oorlogsdocumentatie, Amsterdam). And see, e.g. *Le Monde*, 21 Aug. 1945.

<sup>6</sup> Van Mook outline of policy over occupied territories in south-east Asia, 13 Nov. 1944, van Mook Papers, folder 14 (Algemeen Rijksarchief, The Hague). Van Mook also had in mind that such a policy would help prevent the Chinese in the region from banding together, encouraging them, rather, to 'merge into the several communities'.

Bevins, who were arguing that a new basis would need to be found for relations with peoples East of Suez. Duff Cooper, for example, had warned his Cabinet colleagues in 1941: 'We are now faced by vast populations of industrious, intelligent and brave Asiatics, who are unwilling to acknowledge the superiority of Europeans or their right to special privileges in Asia'.<sup>1</sup> The need for changes in attitudes, as well as in policies, was broadly accepted in what to some at the time would have seemed such unlikely quarters as the Tory ex-Cabinet Minister who had become Governor of Burma,<sup>2</sup> and the Foreign Office, where it was assumed that the Atlantic Charter applied world-wide (and not simply in Europe, as Churchill argued) and where it was recognized that 'there was going to be a clean break between the past and the future' where dealings with China were concerned.<sup>3</sup> 'We no longer regard the Colonial Empire as a "possession"', declared a British Army educational pamphlet in 1943, 'but as a trust . . . [and] the concept of trusteeship is already passing into the more active one of partnership . . . Self-government is better than good government'.<sup>4</sup> And away in China, Sir Frederick Maze was privately concluding in the same year that the war against Japan, together with the new agreements with Chungking ending Western extraterritorial privileges, marked not only 'the last milestone on the road to China's emancipation', but also 'the dawn of a new era in the Far East'.<sup>5</sup>

Nor was it Americans alone who feared that an anti-white Pan-Asianism might develop out of the war. On the extreme Right of French politics, for example, *L'Action Française* had uneasily detected, even before Pearl Harbour, 'un renouveau spirituel asiatique',<sup>6</sup> whilst the subsequent Japanese slogan of 'Asia for the Asiatics' was privately acknowledged by British, Commonwealth, and Dutch officials to have a powerful appeal.

The strength of this appeal is twofold', ran an outline of Allied political-warfare policy. 'First, all the peoples of East Asia have in greater or lesser degree experienced either the direct domination or the interference of the European Powers; and all have come to resent it, and the superior racial attitude and the economic exploitation which went with it . . .

<sup>1</sup> WP (41) 286, CAB 66/20. And see Thorne, *Allies of a Kind*, 61.

<sup>2</sup> See Thorne, *Allies of a Kind*, 221, 345.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. 161, 195-6, 318.

<sup>4</sup> Directorate of Army Education, *The British Way and Purpose*, No. 3, January 1943.

<sup>5</sup> Maze to Pouncey, 10 Apr. 1943, Maze Papers, CLR, vol. 15.

<sup>6</sup> *L'Action Française*, 24 Dec. 1940.

Secondly, Japan was the first of the Asiatic nations to modernise herself and meet the European powers on their own terms . . . and thus has a strong claim in Asiatic eyes to lead the peoples of Asia in revolt against the West. This claim is enhanced with every Japanese success against the Western Powers, which lowers Western prestige yet further in Asiatic eyes and appears to justify the Japanese contention that Asiatic peoples are at least the equals of the Western Powers if only they have the will to stand up to them.<sup>1</sup>

Such shrewd observers as the Australian Minister in Chungking, Sir Frederick Eggleston, and the Foreign Office's senior representative with South East Asia Command, Esler Dening, together with various Dutch officials, believed that a powerful pan-Asian movement was a real possibility.<sup>2</sup> Dening, for example, emphasised 'the stimulus Pan-Asianism has received from the circumstances of war', warning that a 'colour cleavage' could develop if the West were to impose upon Japan peace terms which other Asians would regard as unduly harsh.<sup>3</sup> In the same spirit, the Far Eastern Department of the Foreign Office drew up a strong protest when they learned that an atomic bomb had been dropped on Japan, being particularly concerned lest it should transpire that the weapon had been available for use against Germany but had been reserved for the destruction of 'Asiatics'.<sup>4</sup>

Yet although an awareness of changing circumstances was more widespread in Europe than many Americans chose to believe, what stands out in retrospect is the degree to which, even so, ambivalence and ambiguity continued to mark attitudes in the West as a whole concerning the capacities of non-white peoples and the future of the white man in Asia. There were those like Churchill, of course, who unashamedly, and partly on the basis of racist convictions, remained until the end of the war profoundly opposed to any change in the white-dominated order of things. And at Churchill's right hand (encouraging him, for example, to restrict the supply of additional grain to a famine-stricken India), Lord Cherwell, his biographer tells us, was 'filled with physical repulsion' by non-white people.<sup>5</sup> L. S. Amery, too (the Secretary of State for India), although moved to describe his Prime

<sup>1</sup> Far East Sub-Committee of Political Warfare (Japan) Committee, 'Guidance for Action' of 30 June 1942, loc. cit. Also, e.g. van Mook, outline of policy, 13 Nov. 1944, loc. cit.

<sup>2</sup> Thorne, *Allies of a Kind*, 8.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. 539.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid. 533-4.

<sup>5</sup> Lord Birkenhead, *The Prof. In Two Worlds* (London, 1961), 23; Thorne, *Allies of a Kind*, 474.

Minister's attitude over food supplies for India as 'Hitler-like', and although more ready to support constitutional change for that country than was generally realized at the time or afterwards, believed that if India were successfully to sustain her independence, she might well need 'an increasing infusion of stronger Nordic blood, whether by settlement or intermarriage or otherwise'.<sup>1</sup> Similarly, the Dutch clandestine newspaper of the Calvinist party of the Prime Minister, Gerbrandy, observed of the Indonesians in 1943: 'A child that wishes to grow into an adult does not possess the capacity of an adult.'<sup>2</sup>

More widespread, however, than such overtly racist opinions, were attitudes which, while appearing on one level to accept that circumstances in Asia were changing, reflected nevertheless a profound unreadiness to abandon all idea of a special position of one kind or another for the white man in various parts of that continent. Thus, in both The Netherlands and France, despite the general conviction that a new and better international order must be created following the defeat of Nazism, there remained among virtually all political groups an unwillingness to accept a speedy end to white overlordship in colonial territories after the war. The broadcast assurances given by Queen Wilhelmina in December 1942, for example, of 'collaboration on the basis of equality' and 'complete partnership' within the Dutch Empire were far from representing a readiness to accept an independent Indonesia.<sup>3</sup> The Dutch underground Communist paper, *De Waarheid*, might proclaim that 'No nation is free that suppresses another nation';

<sup>1</sup> Thorne, *Allies of a Kind*, 16, 61-2, 221, 356, 640. Others were sometimes more consciously and cynically two-voiced in the interests of the war effort. Thus the Viceroy of India, Lord Linlithgow, urged the people of that country on the outbreak of war in 1939 to give their all in the anti-German cause on the grounds that 'our civilisation' was in peril. In private, however, he believed that India and Burma had 'no natural association with the Empire, from which they are alien by race, history and religion . . .' Linlithgow statement of September 1939, AICC Papers, FD-46 (1939): Linlithgow to Amery, 21 Jan. 1942, Linlithgow Papers, vol. 22 (India Office Library, London).

<sup>2</sup> *Trouw*, December 1943 (Rijksinstituut voor Oorlogsdocumentatie, Amsterdam).

<sup>3</sup> Loudon to van Kleffens, 5 June 1942, and van Mook to Council of Ministers, 21 Oct. 1942, Netherlands Colonial Ministry archives, XI.A.B11 (The Hague); Queen Wilhelmina to van Mook, ? Oct./Nov. 1942, concerning the latter's draft of the broadcast, van Mook Papers, file 4; C. Fasseur, 'Een wissel op die toekomst: die rede van Koningen Wilhelmina van 6/7 December 1942', in F. van Anrooij (ed.), *Between People and Statistics: Essays on Modern Indonesian History* (The Hague, 1979). The Queen's speech was undertaken above all for the benefit of American public opinion.

but it also asserted that 'The Netherlands and Indonesia must not be split from one another',<sup>1</sup> a sentiment that also underlay a declaration drawn up by six leading organs of the resistance press in April 1945.<sup>2</sup> As for the Lieutenant Governor General of the Indies, Dr H. J. van Mook, for all his conviction (illustrated above) that reform was needed in the field of race relations, he remained essentially a paternalist, believing, right up to the moment he re-entered the colony to find a solidly-based Indonesian Republic awaiting him, that 'an important part of the more educated people increasingly realize the importance and necessity of Western leadership', and that 'the people as a whole', after their experiences under the Japanese, 'long for a return to the good old days'.<sup>3</sup>

Ambivalence over the white man's future in the East was if anything even more marked in France. On the Vichy and fascist Right, both the international alignments of the time and a genuine admiration for Japan's 'spiritual revival' and Bushido code led to a moralizing pleasure being taken in the discomfiture of the Allies in the early stages of the Far Eastern War.<sup>4</sup> In addition, the presence of Japanese forces in Indochina encouraged a number of French newspapers there to take up the theme of Franco-Asiatic collaboration, a partnership that would not only involve the Indochinese peoples but would eventually, it was hoped, produce 'une synthèse harmonieuse de deux civilisations, occidentale et extrême-orientale'.<sup>5</sup> And yet the underlying emphasis of all Vichy organs, both in France itself and in Indochina, was upon the need to base the future of the Empire on a rallying to a revived and purified French patriotism.<sup>6</sup> Moreover, if Japan's upsurge provided an example to France of the need to return for inspiration to her own spiritual roots, the anti-white crusade being led from Tokyo could not but represent, even so, a

<sup>1</sup> *De Waarheid*, 1 May 1943. See also, e.g. the Radical Catholic *Je Maintiendrai*, 10 May 1943 (both Rijksinstituut voor Oorlogsdocumentatie, Amsterdam).

<sup>2</sup> A. H. van Namen (ed.), *Het Ondergrondse Vrij Nederland* (Baarn, 1970), 219.

<sup>3</sup> Van Mook to Logemann, 31 July 1945; van Mook to Starckenborgh, 3 Sept. 1945, van Mook Papers, file 2.

<sup>4</sup> e.g. *L'Action Française*, 20 Feb. and 29 May 1942; *La Nouvelliste de l'Indochine*, 8 Feb. 1942.

<sup>5</sup> See *L'Action* (Hanoi; Bibliothèque Nationale, Versailles annex, Gr. Fol., Jo. 5146); *L'Union* (Hanoi and Saigon; *ibid.*, Gr. Fol., Jo. 5929); *Le Nouveau Laos* (Vientiane; *ibid.*, Gr. Fol., Jo. 6398); *La Nouvelliste de l'Indochine* (Saigon; *ibid.*, Gr. Fol., Jo. 1399).

<sup>6</sup> e.g. article by Nam Dong, *L'Action*, 13 Apr. 1942. On the importance of French racial antecedents, see e.g. *Le Temps*, 19 Aug. 1941.

long-term threat to France's Empire in the East. As a leading writer in *L'Action Française* put it:

Ce retour de l'Asie, et du Japon notamment, à son génie propre, un instant violé sous le vernis de la civilisation occidentale, est un phénomène lourd de conséquences . . .<sup>1</sup>

In the clandestine, anti-Vichy and anti-Nazi French press, meanwhile, papers right across the political spectrum were denouncing racism as being contrary to socialist principles, or Christianity, or the humanist tradition in French thought.<sup>2</sup> One publication, indeed—*J'accuse*—adopted as its primary task the struggle against racist doctrines.<sup>3</sup> At the same time, the clandestine press, whatever the particular political creed of each individual organ, was at one in asserting that the post-war order, both within and beyond France, must rest on the resurrected principles of liberty and justice, on 'le droit des gens à disposer d'eux-même', as *Combat* summarized it.<sup>4</sup> The peace, declared *Libération*, must be one of 'des hommes libres', and must put an end to 'des impérialismes nationaux',<sup>5</sup> while for the Communist Party, *L'Humanité* made a special declaration of support for those Annamites and others who were struggling against the imperialism of France herself.<sup>6</sup>

Yet the racism against which the Resistance press campaigned was in almost every instance that of Nazism and anti-Semitism. And where the French Empire was concerned, the emphasis was placed, not on the racism to be found among the whites there,<sup>7</sup> nor on the notion of superiority underlying the *mission civilisatrice*, but on the record of France as having been, in the words of *J'accuse* itself, 'la première à proclamer l'égalité des races, à émanciper les esclaves, à donner des droits civiques aux peuples de couleur'.<sup>8</sup>

<sup>1</sup> J. Delbecq, *L'Action Française*, 4 March 1944.

<sup>2</sup> e.g., *L'Université Libre*, 28 May 1942; *Le Populaire*, 15 Aug. 1944; *Libération*, 30 Nov. 1944; *Cahiers du Témoignage Chrétien*, February 1942; and, after the Liberation, *Le Monde*, 1 Feb. 1945. (All Resistance publications in the collection in the Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris: Périodiques Clandestins, Rés. G. 1470.)

<sup>3</sup> See, e.g. the first issue: *J'accuse*, April 1942.

<sup>4</sup> *Combat*, May 1942.

<sup>5</sup> *Libération* (zone Sud), 10 Jan. 1943. And see in general, H. Michel and B. Mirkine-Guezévitch (eds.), *Les idées politiques et sociales de la Résistance* (Paris, 1954), 193 ff.

<sup>6</sup> *L'Humanité*, December 1940.

<sup>7</sup> On the persistence of racism among the French in Algeria, for example, see A. Horne, *A Savage War Of Peace* (London, 1979), 54-5.

<sup>8</sup> 'Le racisme et les peuples de couleur', *J'accuse*, February 1943.

True emancipation for the peoples of the colonies, declared the November 1944 Congress of the Socialist Party, would be found in an ever-closer union with a democratic and socialist France.<sup>1</sup> And here, too, over the issue of post-war freedoms, the contradiction in thought affected virtually all shades of political opinion, as it did over racism. For Communists<sup>2</sup> as much as Gaullists were adamant that the full grandeur of France, so shaken in 1940, had to be restored; and that (as was also the argument of Vichy supporters)<sup>3</sup> to this end the Empire must be regained in its entirety.<sup>4</sup>

In short, for all the genuine hopes that existed in both France and The Netherlands that a new international morality would be established after the war; for all the awareness that the peoples of the colonies could not be left aside from such a process of reordering; demands by the Indonesians or the Vietnamese, say, that they should indeed be able to 'disposer d'eux-même' would be fiercely resisted. And one element in that resistance would be an underlying and continuing belief in the innate superiority of Western civilization, and in the rightness of the rule of white over coloured.

In Britain, too, for all the greater strength and wider base there of arguments in favour of emancipating imperial territories, there remained among the Labour as well as the Conservative members of the Coalition Government a strong resolve to conduct post-war colonial policy in one's own way, at one's own pace, and free from any dictation by whatever new international organization might emerge from the peace.<sup>5</sup> Paternalist assumptions and approaches continued to exist within the Labour Party.<sup>6</sup> Where the Dutch and French Empires in the Far East were concerned, there was strong support in Whitehall for the return of the metropolitan

<sup>1</sup> *Le Populaire*, 14 Nov. 1944.

<sup>2</sup> See, e.g. *L'Humanité*, 1 Jan. 1944; 11 Jan. and 16 Sept. 1945. On the relevant December 1944 speech in the Consultative Assembly by the Party Secretary, Jacques Duclos, see J. Duclos, *Mémoires: Dans la Bataille Clandestine, Deuxième Partie, 1943-1945* (Paris, 1970). In general, see G. Madjarian, *La question coloniale et la politique du Parti communiste français, 1944-1947* (Paris, 1977).

<sup>3</sup> See, e.g. *Le Temps*, 23 Dec. 1940, and in general R. O. Paxton, *Vichy France: Old Guard and New Order, 1940-1944* (New York, 1972), 57.

<sup>4</sup> e.g. *Défense de la France*, 20 June 1943; *Combat*, May 1942; *Destin*, May 1944; *Cahiers du témoignage Chrétien*, July 1944; *L'Aurore*, Oct. 1943. For the recommendations on colonial policy emanating from the Brazzaville Conference in 1944, see Michel and Guézévitch, op. cit. 339 ff., and in general, D. B. Marshall, *The French Colonial Myth and Constitution-Making in the Fourth Republic* (New Haven, 1973).

<sup>5</sup> See, e.g. Thorne, *Allies of a Kind*, 224, 342, 457-9, 600-1.

<sup>6</sup> See Gupta, *Imperialism and the British Labour Movement*, 260, 272-3.

powers as soon as the Japanese had been pushed back—support which was to be continued by Attlee and Bevin after August 1945, despite protests on the Left of their Party.<sup>1</sup> And in Britain, as in France and The Netherlands, the attention of officials and public alike was focused above all on the affairs and the future of Europe.<sup>2</sup> In the context of the struggle for survival against Nazi Germany, issues such as the future of dependent peoples were bound to occupy only a modest place, whilst an inherent Eurocentrism was if anything reinforced.

In the United States, the war against Japan assumed a far greater prominence. Nevertheless, ignorance about the countries and peoples of the Far East remained widespread among Americans,<sup>3</sup> as did the racist attitudes outlined above. By the latter stages of the war, moreover, Washington's earlier hostility towards the restoration of European empires in south-east Asia after Japan had been defeated had become eclipsed by an emphasis upon the dangers of instability in that area and of a wider Communist challenge, against which the support and goodwill of strong European powers would be essential.<sup>4</sup> Even in the

<sup>1</sup> On war-time British attitudes over the French and Dutch Empires, see Thorne, *Allies of a Kind*, e.g. 460, 465-9, 614, 622-3. On Attlee and Bevin's support for the Dutch in Indonesia in the latter part of 1945, see C. Thorne, 'Engeland, Australië en Nederlands Indië, 1941-1945', *Internationale Spectator* (The Hague), August 1975.

<sup>2</sup> On London's comparative lack of interest in Far Eastern affairs, see Thorne, *Allies of a Kind*, e.g. 117, 405, 538. Some indication of the focus of French attention during the war can be obtained, not only (as in the case of The Netherlands also) from the clandestine press, but from the issues of *La France Libre*, which was published in London. Articles which dealt with national freedoms (see, e.g. the issue of 16 Mar. 1943) were European-centred, as were the periodical's contents as a whole. See also the article of 15 Jan. 1944 by Raymond Aron, 'Pour l'Alliance de l'Occident', in which he argued the case for post-war Franco-British collaboration, not merely in the field of international politics, but in the interests of Western culture and its influence.

<sup>3</sup> e.g. four months after Pearl Harbour, when China and India were headline news in the American press, 60 per cent of a national sample poll were unable to locate either country on an outline map of the world. H. R. Isaacs, *Scratches on Our Minds* (New York, 1958), 37.

<sup>4</sup> See C. Thorne, 'The Indochina Issue Between Britain and the United States, 1942-1945', *Pacific Historical Review*, February 1976, and *Allies of a Kind*, 664 ff. Note, also, the acute retrospective observation of a senior American member of the SEAC staff: 'In Southeast Asia, as in China, United States policy, it seemed, was to dissociate ourselves as often as possible from the imperialist aims of our colonialist allies while vigorously asserting on occasion our claim to enjoy equally with them the commercial—and implicitly the strategic—rewards of colonialism, in the measure that the institution survived our disapproval.' Taylor, *Awakening From History*, 280.

case of those Americans who were prominent in seeking to find ways, in Stanley Hornbeck's words, to 'bridge the chasm between Occident and Orient and the chasm of "color"',<sup>1</sup> there frequently remained an underlying belief in the universal validity of American values. It is now widely recognized, for example, that the strong sympathy aroused among United States diplomats and press correspondents in China by the Yenan Communists involved an unconscious projection upon the latter of American cultural and political-cultural assumptions.<sup>2</sup> A similar projection was involved in the celebrated portrayals of the Chinese by Pearl Buck. The same writer repeatedly warned against the 'deep race prejudice of white people', and argued that the West urgently needed the help of Asians in order to find 'spiritual enrichment' ('In our pre-occupation with the wonders of science applied to materials', she declared, 'we have forgotten that man does not live by bread alone. . . . It is the people of the East who . . . must teach us again [this] truth').<sup>3</sup> And yet at the same time she openly urged that the United States must retain 'the ideological leadership of Asia', and that 'the American way of life' must prevail in that continent.<sup>4</sup>

It was in a similar spirit, indeed, that General Douglas MacArthur was to enter upon his well-nigh absolute rule in Japan after the war. The people of that country, he informed George Kennan, 'were thirsty for guidance and inspiration, [and] it was his aim to bring them both democracy and Christianity'.<sup>5</sup> It could

<sup>1</sup> Hornbeck to Hull, 20 Sept. 1943, Hornbeck Papers, box 4.

<sup>2</sup> See Thorne, *Allies of a Kind*, 438, 571; and K. E. Shewmaker, *Americans and Chinese Communists, 1927-1945* (Ithica, NY, 1971).

<sup>3</sup> P. Buck, 'Tinder for Tomorrow', *Asia*, March 1942, and 'People, East and West', *Asia and the Americas*, June 1943. Soetan Sjahrir's comment on such Western admirers of Asia was perceptive. 'Many Europeans long for the East', he wrote, 'which signifies to them tranquillity and reflection. In reality, the East is no longer that promised land of peace of mind and spirit . . . What is there of the East in Hong Kong or Shanghai or Tokyo, or even in Soerabaya or Batavia? . . . The longing of Westerners for the East, in effect, amounts to the same thing as a longing for the lost land of the Middle Ages and the greater goodness and universality that presumably characterised it. It is the same as a longing for the past, and it is certainly a sign of age.' Sjahrir, *op. cit.*, entry for 12 Mar. 1937.

<sup>4</sup> P. Buck speech of February 1942: cuttings in the Hornbeck Papers, box 19. Note also the argument of the American Citizens Committee to Repeal Chinese Exclusion, which worked to allow Chinese to emigrate to the USA: that if the goodwill of China were to be lost, 'we shall incur the risk of another war in which white supremacy may be openly challenged by the Oriental races'. *Our Chinese Wall* (1943): booklet in Hornbeck Papers, box 19.

<sup>5</sup> G. Kennan, *Memoirs, 1925-1950* (London, 1968), 382. And see D. MacArthur, *Reminiscences* (London, 1964), 310, on the 'spiritual revolution' which he achieved 'almost overnight' in Japan.

have been President William McKinley in 1898, resolving to take the Philippines in order to 'uplift, civilise and Christianise them'.

In fact, the climate of opinion in many parts of Asia by the end of the war was already set to reject the paternalism of a van Mook and the cultural imperialism of a Pearl Buck alike, let alone the late-Victorian aspirations of a Churchill. It was in this connection, and in the context of Japanese desires to rid East Asia, at least, of a white presence, that a French observer in the East Indies wrote in the summer of 1945: 'Though defeated in a general sense, Japan has "won the war" in this corner of Asia.'<sup>1</sup> Similarly, Victor Purcell of the Malayan Civil Service was subsequently to write of a pattern of politics in 'post-war south-east Asia which was unrecognizable to anyone whose contact with the region had ceased in 1941.'<sup>2</sup> In India, too, the changed mood was evident, being marked, for example, by the way in which Bose (though he had died during the final days of the war) and his Indian National Army were accorded the status of heroes, not traitors, by the Indian people at large. Thus Nehru, who in 1942 had deplored the INA's alliance with Japan, was in 1946 hailing their war-time efforts as having been 'a brave adventure' which had sprung from 'a passionate desire to serve the cause of Indian freedom'.<sup>3</sup>

The Japanese themselves had striven from Pearl Harbour onwards to inculcate in the peoples of their new Empire an awareness of their 'Asianness', and had given new prominence to those ideas regarding the creation of a Greater East Asia Coprosperity Sphere which have already been referred to in a pre-1941 context. (These, it should be noted, embraced the notion of economic development and industrialization, which clearly had Western origins. But as one Japanese commentator put it, the task was, not to resist such change, but to 'Asianize the Europeanization of Asia'.)<sup>4</sup> In newspapers like the *Syonan Shimbun*, and in films like 'Build New Philippines; Fight For Greater East Asia';<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Foreign Office files, FO 371, F11097/6390/61.

<sup>2</sup> Purcell, *The Chinese in Southeast Asia*, 551.

<sup>3</sup> Nehru press statement, April 1942, AICC Papers, G-26 part 2; Nehru statement of 10 Oct. 1946, *ibid.*, file 60/1946. On the national applause for the returned INA, see e.g. Jog, *op. cit.*; Ghosh, *op. cit.*; Toyé, *op. cit.*

<sup>4</sup> Iriye, *Power and Culture*, 34. See Lebra, *Japan's Greater East Asia Coprosperity Sphere*; G. K. Goodman (ed.), *Imperial Japan and Asia: a Reassessment* (New York, 1967).

<sup>5</sup> Imperial War Museum film collection: JYY.046-03.

through the promotion of cultural programmes,<sup>1</sup> and by direct appeals to religious leaders and other prominent sections of the communities that they had overrun,<sup>2</sup> the conquerors strove to implant the idea that the fate of Nippon was the fate of all Asians, and that the Western powers represented a common enemy. To the people of the Philippines—a people who were, indeed, now faced with a more urgent and unavoidable search for identity in the wake of their lengthy period under first Spanish and then American tutelage—the C. in C. of the Japanese forces proclaimed: ‘You cannot alter the fact that you are Orientals.’<sup>3</sup> Seeking wider support in the face of Allied advances, Tokyo also staged in 1943 a Greater East Asia Conference which seemed to some of its non-Japanese participants to mark the flowering of what the Prime Minister of Burma called ‘a new Asian spirit’.<sup>4</sup> (General Tojo, recalled that same Prime Minister years later, ‘impressed me tremendously, [as] he did . . . the other south-east Asian leaders. We found he really understood our problems . . .’)<sup>5</sup>

In addition, Japan granted so-called independence to both Burma and the Philippines, accepted Bose’s Azad Hind administration in Singapore as representing India, and was preparing to hand over the running of Indonesia’s internal affairs to Soekarno when the war came to an end. Indeed, the declaration issued at the conclusion of the Greater East Asia Conference was seen by Japanese officials as a direct response to the West’s Atlantic Charter.<sup>6</sup> For their part, meanwhile, leading collaborators like Jorge Vargas and Jose Laurel in the Philippines likewise reiterated the significance of Japan’s victories as ‘vindicating the prestige of all Asiatic nations’ in the face of ‘Anglo-Saxon imperialism’.<sup>7</sup> Time after time, Bose (whose standing amongst other anti-Allied Asian leaders was considerable)<sup>8</sup> declared in his

<sup>1</sup> See, e.g. G. K. Goodman, *An Experiment in Wartime Intercultural Relations: Philippine Students in Japan, 1943–1945* (Ithica, NY, 1962); report of 18 July 1942 on Japanese promotion of ‘Oriental’ culture in the Philippines, Office of Territories, High Commissioner of Philippines, box 41, loc. cit.

<sup>2</sup> See, e.g. H. J. Benda, *Crescent and Rising Sun* (The Hague, 1958); M. Aziz, *Japan’s Colonialism and Indonesia* (The Hague, 1955).

<sup>3</sup> D. J. Steinberg, *Philippine Collaboration in World War II* (Ann Arbor, Michigan, 1967), 15 ff., 49; *Manila Tribune*, e.g. 3 Feb., 10 Mar. 1942.

<sup>4</sup> Ba Maw, *Breakthrough in Burma*, 179 ff. Tatsuo Hayashida, *Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose: His Struggle and Martyrdom* (Bombay, 1970), 67.

<sup>5</sup> Ba Maw unpublished 1964 typescript, ‘The Great Asian Dreamer’ (Netaji Bureau, Calcutta).

<sup>6</sup> See, e.g. Dahm, op. cit. 225 ff., 275 ff., and Iriye, *Power and Culture*, 118–21.

<sup>7</sup> Steinberg, op. cit. 50, 66, 77; *Manila Tribune*, 8 Dec. 1942, 6 Nov. 1943.

<sup>8</sup> e.g. Ba Maw typescript, ‘The Great Asian Dreamer’.

writings and radio broadcasts that Japan was the hope of Asia and 'earnestly desired to see Asiatic nations free'.<sup>1</sup>

Yet for the most part it was not, in fact, admiration for the Japanese that had created an entirely new situation and self-assertiveness in many parts of Asia by the summer of 1945. Japanese ideas about the development of the newly-won Empire had been muddled and to a considerable extent haphazard.<sup>2</sup> Moreover, the one consideration that did clearly predominate from the outset was not the welfare of other Asians, but the safety and prosperity of Japan herself, to which end the Empire must collaborate to the full and at the direction of Tokyo.<sup>3</sup> In a book written by an officer working on propaganda in the Japanese Ministry of War in 1943, the relationship of other peoples of Asia to Nippon herself was described as being one of children to parents: children who, when they were brought to Japan in order to study, 'must be thoroughly imbued with the Kodo spirit and a Japanese view of the world'.<sup>4</sup>

In short, for the leadership in Tokyo and those military officials who administered the captured territories, together with most of the civilian officials who also served overseas, the concept of a Coprosperity Sphere was essentially a useful cover for the pursuit of Japan's own interests.<sup>5</sup> In China, Wang Ching-wei's puppet regime in Nanking was not even allowed to declare war on the

<sup>1</sup> S. C. Bose, *Testament* (New Delhi, 1946), *passim*.

<sup>2</sup> See the essay by A. Iriye, 'The Ideology of Japanese Imperialism', in Goodman (ed.), *Imperial Japan and Asia*, and his *Power and Culture*.

<sup>3</sup> See, e.g. the set of 'Principles Governing the Administration of Occupied Southern Areas', 20 Nov. 1941, endorsed by the leadership in Tokyo, which emphasized 'the acquisition of resources vital to national defence and [the] ensuring of the economic self-sufficiency of [Japanese] military personnel'. Also the reiteration of these 'Principles' in March 1942, with the additional mention of guiding the newly-won territories to co-operate in establishing a Coprosperity Sphere 'under the leadership of the Empire'. Benda *et al.*, *Japanese Military Administration in Indonesia*, documents Nos. 1 and 6. Also, e.g. General Tojo's speech in the House of Peers, 20 Jan. 1942, in which he made independence for Burma and the Philippines conditional upon their total collaboration with Japan, and promised that any resistance, as on the part of Chiang Kai-shek, would be 'crushed'. Lebra, *Japan's Greater East Asia Coprosperity Sphere*, 78 ff. Also *Manila Tribune*, e.g. 7 Feb. 1942.

<sup>4</sup> Takeda, 'The Great East Asia War and Ideological Warfare', 1943, *loc. cit.*

<sup>5</sup> Leading Japanese historians of the period have suggested to the author that perhaps 20 per cent of all Japanese genuinely believed in the idea of a mission on behalf of all Asians, and that nearly all civilian officials and senior officers in occupied China, for example, were essentially cynical regarding the Coprosperity Sphere concept. Interviews with Professors Hosoya Chihiro and Usui Katsumi, 19 July 1979. See also Emmerson, *op. cit.* 173.

Allies until January 1943. And although attempts were made to broaden the basis of Chinese support for Japan (notably through the Hsin-min Hui organization) and even to reach an understanding with Chiang Kai-shek, all dynamic forces and prospects for change in Chinese society pointed in a fundamentally anti-Japanese direction.<sup>1</sup> Moreover, the rule of the Japanese in their Empire was often marked by arrogance and sometimes by brutality. In the case of the East Indies, thousands of Indonesians were enlisted as 'economic soldiers' (*prajurit ekonomi*) and shipped off to labour overseas for their new masters, many of them never to return. The economy of the Indies themselves, meanwhile, was ravaged for Japan's benefit.<sup>2</sup> In Burma, the arrogance of the Japanese military increasingly alienated even those who had at first welcomed their arrival, thus contributing to the decision of Aung San to switch over to resistance, and eventually to co-operation with the Allies.<sup>3</sup> Likewise, the first set of leaders of the Indian National Army in south-east Asia (notably, Captain Mohan Singh and Colonel Naranjan Singh Gill) became convinced that Tokyo was seeking to exploit the Indian nationalist movement for its own ends, declined to collaborate further, and were imprisoned by their erstwhile allies.<sup>4</sup> 'The Japanese', subsequently testified an Indian leader in Malaya, 'behaved like animals whose language we could not understand.'<sup>5</sup>

Yet even alienation from or resistance to their 'liberators' could serve to reinforce those changes of attitude which the swift departure of the white man and the chaos of war had already fostered. In the Philippines, for example, the Hukbalahap movement, which had opposed the invader from the outset, declared its fight to be against, not only the Japanese, but 'all oppressors'—who included that landed, ruling class among Filipinos which had worked hand-in-glove with the Americans.<sup>6</sup> Where the East Indies were concerned, the consequences of a more belated hostility towards the Japanese were described by Sjahrir in the following terms:

<sup>1</sup> See Iriye, *Power and Culture*, 46, 98 ff., 173, and in *The Chinese and the Japanese*.

<sup>2</sup> Aziz, *op. cit.* 182 ff. On the threat of starvation in the Philippines, see *Manila Tribune*, e.g. 6 and 9 Jan. 1944, and Steinberg, *op. cit.* 86 ff.

<sup>3</sup> e.g. Maung Maung, *op. cit.* 64.

<sup>4</sup> Gill transcript, p. 34, Nehru Memorial Library; minutes of the Indian Independence League Council of Action for 1942, K. P. K. Menon Papers, folders 5, 6, and 8.

<sup>5</sup> Goho Report, K. P. K. Menon Papers, folder 2.

<sup>6</sup> See R. Payne, *The Revolt of Asia* (London, 1948), 269; Steinberg, *op. cit.* 93.

Everything in the Indonesian community was shaken loose from its moorings . . . All layers of society came to see the past in another light. If these [Japanese] barbarians had been able to replace the old colonial authority, why had that authority been necessary at all? Why, instead, hadn't they handled the affairs of government themselves? Under the Japanese, the people had to endure indignities worse than they had known before . . . [But] the national self-consciousness of the Indonesian people developed a new and powerful drive . . .<sup>1</sup>

Nor was this drive confined to those within the area of Japanese conquest, or to the educated minority of which Sjahrir himself was a part. For example, in April 1943 the chairman of the Netherlands Indies Commission in the USA was writing privately:

No point in the Queen's speech [i.e. Queen Wilhelmina's broadcast of December 1942 on the constitutional future of the Dutch Empire] has made more impression on the Indonesians in the Diaspora than the point [about the] abolition of racial discrimination . . . The matter, even for the simple Indonesian crews [i.e. on Dutch ships, who were paid much less than European seamen] . . . has become one of principle, a principle which they understand and about which they feel deeply now that they are running the same risks and are, more than ever, mixing with men of various nationalities.<sup>2</sup>

At the same time—despite the growing hostility towards Japan; despite the anthropological enormities involved in treating Asia as a single entity; and despite the inherent improbability of a truly Pan-Asian movement ever coming about—the notion was increasingly voiced that 'Asia' was asserting itself against 'the Anglo-Saxons' or 'the West' as a whole.<sup>3</sup> Such a belief tended to be attached, for example, to the admiration which other Asians expressed for China's continuing struggle against Japan. We have already seen that country being hailed by the *Bombay Chronicle* in March 1942 as 'an embodiment of Asia's hope for the future'.<sup>4</sup> Nehru, too, in his private correspondence with Madame Chiang Kai-shek, had even before Pearl Harbour been identifying India's cause with that of China, and had also expressed to Rabindranath Tagore the increasing attraction that he felt towards 'the countries of the East' which, he now realized, had so

<sup>1</sup> Sjahrir, op. cit. 249.

<sup>2</sup> G. C. H. Hart to van Mook, 15 Apr. 1943, van Mook Papers, folder 2.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. the way in which the term 'Europe' came to the fore in the later Middle Ages, probably with greater justification, anthropologically speaking. See, e.g. D. Hay, *Europe in the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Centuries* (London, 1966), 397.

<sup>4</sup> *Bombay Chronicle*, 7 Mar. 1942.

much in common.<sup>1</sup> The achievement of independence by India herself was seen by the leadership of the Congress Party as a goal which would in turn become 'a prelude to the freedom of all Asiatic nations now under domination'.<sup>2</sup>

On the Chinese side, too, Chiang Kai-shek was writing to Nehru of the need for 'a united struggle of all our Asiatic peoples',<sup>3</sup> while in public that most Westernized of the Kuomintang leadership, T. V. Soong, warned his audience at Yale that 'Asia' was 'tired of being regarded only in terms of markets and concessions'.<sup>4</sup> Some versions of the perceived dichotomy that was involved also embraced the notion previously advanced by Tagore among others: that of an essentially 'materialist' West being confronted by a fundamentally 'spiritual' East. This interpretation was to be heard again after the war, for example at the 1946 Asian Relations Conference in New Delhi.<sup>5</sup> By then, a sense of kinship among Asian peoples under imperial rule had created indignation in India over the use of troops of the Indian Army in Indonesia, where Soekarno was striving to prevent the Dutch from subduing his newly-proclaimed Republic.<sup>6</sup> And indeed the continued strength of the idea of a world divided into two opposing units along these lines was to be such as to lead G. F. Hudson to write in 1952 an essay which he entitled: 'Why Asians Hate the West'.<sup>7</sup>

Meanwhile, despite the much-increased admiration for the Soviet Union that was displayed in several parts of Asia during the war (for example, in India and Burma),<sup>8</sup> the growing strength of Mao Tse-tung's Yenan regime in China was only one, major

<sup>1</sup> Nehru to Mme Chiang Kai-shek, 12 July 1940, Nehru Papers, Correspondence, vol. 113; Nehru to Tagore, 19 Aug. 1939, *ibid.*, vol. 98.

<sup>2</sup> Working Cttee. resolution, 7 Aug. 1942, AICC Papers, G-22, part II.

<sup>3</sup> Chiang Kai-shek to Nehru, 18 Oct. 1940, Nehru Papers, Correspondence, vol. 12.

<sup>4</sup> Report in *Bombay Chronicle*, 12 June 1942.

<sup>5</sup> See Iyer, *op. cit.* 9. On the colour-consciousness and 'Asianism' present at the Bandung Conference in 1955, see R. Wright, *The Colour Curtain* (London, 1956).

<sup>6</sup> See Thorne, 'Engeland, Australië en Nederlands Indië', *loc. cit.*

<sup>7</sup> G. F. Hudson, *Questions of East and West* (London, 1953). And see, e.g. Robert Payne's conclusion in 1948: 'Asia is conscious of herself and the Asiatic century has begun . . . Asia from now on must be regarded as one.' *The Revolt of Asia*, 9, 300.

<sup>8</sup> e.g. *Bombay Chronicle*, 23 Jan. and 28 July 1942; AICC Working Cttee. draft on USSR and China, 28 Dec. 1941, AICC Papers, file 2 part 1; Dorman-Smith to Amery, 25 June 1945, Dorman-Smith Papers, MSS. Eur. E. 215/59 (India Office Library, London).

aspect of a movement towards what the leading students of the subject have termed 'un communisme asiocentrique'.<sup>1</sup> Here too, on the Left, in other words, Western precepts and leadership were, by implication at least, coming under question. Post-war protests from the 'Third World' against domination of the international order by the Great Powers (including the Soviet Union) were also being anticipated. 'The design is clear', warned the *Bombay Chronicle* after the Cairo and Tehran Conferences:

Two worlds are being constructed—one the world of white and Imperialist 'Europe'—which includes America—and the other the world of its coloured 'dependencies' of Asia and Africa, with a few countries like China accepted as independent, but not allowed political and working equality in world affairs. It will be a 'Trinity' that will rule.<sup>2</sup>

This essay has dealt largely with war-time perceptions. It has centred upon a major conflict that was viewed in entirely different perspectives as between, say, the Indian judge at the Far Eastern War Crimes Trial, Mr Justice Pal (who argued that Japan's aggression was no different in kind from that which had earlier secured empires in Asia for the West),<sup>3</sup> and his Western colleagues;<sup>4</sup> between Nehru's sister, Mrs V. L. Pandit (who toured America in 1945 insisting that racial conflict and the gulf between an enslaved Asia and a selfish West had lain at the heart of the war),<sup>5</sup> and Field Marshal Sir William Slim, who was to write that 'If ever an army [i.e. his Fourteenth Army in Burma] fought in a just cause, ours did. We coveted no man's country; we wished to impose no form of government on any nation. We fought for the clean, the decent, the free things of life.'<sup>6</sup> And if, in retrospect, Mrs Pandit's summary, for example, appears simplistic and incomplete, it has nevertheless to be acknowledged at the same time that the very fact that she and many others did see the war as a whole, or at least some of the main ingredients, as being bound up with racial matters, is itself historically significant.

<sup>1</sup> D'Encausse and Schram, op. cit. 156.

<sup>2</sup> *Bombay Chronicle*, 4 Dec. 1943.

<sup>3</sup> International Military Tribunal for the Far East, Judgement, vols. 157-8 (typescript; Imperial War Museum, London).

<sup>4</sup> For a 'revisionist' view of the trial as a whole, see R. H. Minear, *Victors' Justice: the Tokyo War Crimes Trial* (Princeton, 1971).

<sup>5</sup> Dennett memo., n.d., Institute of Pacific Relations Papers, box 362; G. Hess, *America Encounters India, 1941-1947* (Baltimore, 1971), 152-4; V. L. Pandit, *The Scope of Happiness* (London, 1979), cap. 28.

<sup>6</sup> W. Slim, *Defeat Into Victory* (London, 1960), 139.

Moreover, such perceptions did have some justification in their own right. In order to attempt a full examination of the matter, it would of course be necessary to embark upon a second essay: one which would be entitled, not 'Racial Aspects' but 'Racial Consequences' of the war, and which would explore post-war developments in some detail. The task would be far from easy, as is evident as soon as one considers the kinds of questions that could be involved. Did the comparatively swift end to the European empires in south-east Asia after 1945 owe anything to a decline in white confidence and/or an increase in the confidence of non-whites, and if so, how did such an element weigh as against, say, the consequences of the changed distribution of military, industrial and financial power that emerged from the war? When a survey of the Philippines, for example, conducted in 1976, observes that that country is above all 'attempting to cast off the alien influences of [her] long association with the West and to reassert [her] essential character as an Asian nation',<sup>1</sup> to what extent should this be linked with the Philippines experience between 1941 and 1945? Did certain American attitudes towards the Vietnamese as opponents and as a people during that subsequent war owe anything to the popular images of those other 'yellow' enemies that had been cultivated during the Pacific conflict? And so on.

Certainly, if a line is drawn at the point when Japan surrendered in 1945, the evidence for major changes having taken place along lines of colour and race is far from clear-cut. To many Americans at the time, for example, their country's overwhelming military and industrial triumph in the Pacific had helped foster an enhanced confidence and sense of opportunity or mission where the Far East was concerned. ('It is now our turn to bat in Asia', remarked one American official to a British colleague.)<sup>2</sup> In Western Europe, too, old attitudes *vis-à-vis* non-white peoples remained deeply entrenched. China, far from appearing to be worthy of that Great Power status which Roosevelt had bestowed upon her, or ready to provide a focus for a burgeoning 'Asiocentric Communism', seemed to be sliding deeper into chaos and internecine strife. The danger of a further world war was once again centred, it seemed, upon Europe. The new United Nations rested upon concepts and preoccupations of white men. The challenge of the Third World within that institution was scarcely foreseen; no more were questions of the kind which have since

<sup>1</sup> *The Times*, 3 Aug., 22 Sept., 1976.

<sup>2</sup> See Thorne, *Allies of a Kind*, 502-4, 536-7, 555, 664-7.

been summarized, for instance, by Dr Bozeman in her book, *The Future of Law in a Multicultural World*.

And yet, as Victor Purcell recognized in south-east Asia, Sir Frederick Maze in China, Soetan Sjahrir in the East Indies and Gunnar Myrdal within the United States, attitudes and expectations involving relationships across lines of colour or race, or what was thought of as the divide between 'Asia' and 'the West', had undergone a significant degree of change during and in part as a consequence of the Far Eastern War. Indeed, Dr Margery Perham had gone so far, as early as March 1942, as to declare: 'Japan's attack has produced a very practical revolution in race relationships.'<sup>1</sup> True, many contemporaries were viewing the war in terms of other issues entirely. True, many were in any case inclined to resist, rather than to recognize, any such revolution. True, it was to take a considerable while before that revolution stamped a deep impress upon world politics. There remain, none the less, strong reasons for concluding that Dr Perham's judgement was essentially correct.

During the course of the Second World War, the struggle against Nazi Germany, both overtly and by implication, placed racist notions in a new and harsher light. It was the Far Eastern War, however, which ensured that relations between whites and non-whites, and not anti-Semitism alone, became the object of greatly increased attention and passion. Even where the consequence was a growth of fear or hatred, or a reinforcing of existing racist beliefs, the context was one of change and newly-strengthened challenge. Even where other, seemingly non-racial aspects of the war were concerned—economic and commercial ones, for example, and ideas about new international orders for the post-war Far East and beyond—there were many, above all East of Suez, for whom these, too, involved fundamental issues that centred upon the relationships between the white man, or 'the West', on the one hand, and Asian peoples, or even all 'coloured' peoples, on the other. From a vantage-point forty years on, and within a framework of that 'history of the world' which Raleigh himself was bold enough to adopt, what stands out is surely not so much the over-simplifications of such contemporary judgements as the extent to which they anticipated and foreshadowed greater changes to come.

<sup>1</sup> *The Times*, 13 and 14 Mar. 1942, quoted in M. Perham, *Colonial Sequence, 1930-1949* (London, 1967), 225.