

New Asiatic Policy By Marquis Childs

Two Possible Conflicts Foreseen

A NEW activist policy in Asia, if it is to be pressed with the decision on Formosa merely a beginning, seems likely to



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generate two major conflicts. The first will take place largely behind the scenes. The second could develop into a fierce national controversy on the order of the great debate over lend-

lease and the destroyers for Britain that preceded Pearl Harbor.

The first dispute will concern priorities for the supply of tanks, guns and planes from American production lines. Great as that output is, the demand is even greater and the total is being divided among Korea, the arms build-up here at home, Western Europe, Indo-China and other claimants. Chiang Kai-shek's Nationalists on Formosa have been getting a small share.

Already the pressures are growing to give the Generalissimo a bigger portion. The pressure will be strong on Capitol Hill, where many Republicans now in key positions have long wanted higher priority for Asia even at the expense of Europe. They are now in a position to demand a change in the order that has prevailed.

The pressure also will come from military men urging a more active Asian policy. Chief among these is Admiral Arthur W. Radford, commander of the Pacific Fleet who accompanied then President-elect Eisenhower on his Korean tour. Radford is reported to have told the House Armed Services Committee that Chiang should soon be getting jet planes in much larger numbers. Nationalist pilots already trained could use these jets to attack rail and other

communications systems on the mainland.

BUT THESE same jet planes are needed for the build-up in Europe where air power—and especially tactical air strength—has been one of the serious deficiencies. Secretary of State John Foster Dulles will find that he has a job cut out for himself in preserving whatever program may finally be decided on to continue the arming of the European defense community. What with the urge for economy on one hand and the pressure for the Nationalists on the other, the case for the claimants in Europe will have to be ironclad.

The second conflict will develop if the demand for a blockade of the Chinese mainland becomes irresistible. The question almost certain to arise is whether this can be done without a declaration of war by Congress against Red China. Again, both in the military organization and in Congress are those who hold the deep conviction that such a step cannot be taken without the sanction of Congress in accord with the Constitution.

In part, such a debate would be along party lines. Leading Democrats in the Senate have already demanded to know where the new policy was going to lead. But there are strict constitutionalists among the Republicans who have denounced former President Truman for failing to get the consent of Congress for participation in the war in Korea. In the view of isolationists in the pre-Pearl Harbor era, Franklin Roosevelt led the country into war by a series of indirect steps that violated his constitutional oath.

Interestingly enough, it is these same former isolationists who are in many instances today ardent advocates of action in Asia. It is as though they said, now, this is our inning and we mean to take it.

SENATOR Robert A. Taft of

Ohio, now majority leader in the Senate, was one of the most active and articulate in opposing any kind of American intervention in Europe in 1939 and '40. Now in his powerful position as, in effect, Mr. Congress he has gone so far as to say that if it seems advisable to assist Chiang's forces to land on the mainland "we would help and send out troops to do it." Taft's outspoken demands for action in Asia in 1953 sound strangely like some of the declarations of Americans in 1940 on the Committee to Defend America by Aiding the Allies. The latter was the activist group convinced that only American might could prevent a Nazi conquest of the world.

Admiral Radford outlined to the House committee several different kinds of blockades which he said the Navy was prepared to carry out. He suggested that a limited blockade could be put into effect with the consent of the other United Nations countries participating in the Korean War. This, as the committee understood it, would not constitute an act of war, and Radford was confident such a blockade would not increase the danger of World War III.

Whether Britain, France and the other leading U. N. powers would approve even a limited blockade is highly doubtful. From British sources the indication has come that no blockade must be undertaken without greatly strengthening the garrison at Hongkong, the British colony on the mainland of China. Two additional divisions would be necessary to checkmate a reprisal attack by the Communists. No one has suggested where these divisions can be found. In fact, most of the realities of money and men are still to be confronted.

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See Marquis Childs on "Washington Spotlight," Friday at 7:15 p. m. on WNEW, Channel 4.