

Chapter 7

Bonds of vassalage

Europeans celebrate the memories of German Chancellor Konrad Adenauer and of Robert Schuman, the French Foreign Minister, for their role in the European unification. However, President Truman and Secretary of State Dean Acheson also played a key role and would deserve great credit. If such a statement seems somewhat surprising nowadays it is only because the historical context of the 1940s has vanished from our memories. In response to the constitution of the Eastern Bloc under Soviet leadership, president Truman strongly backed the creation of a European Union as early as May 11, 1947 (Le Monde p. 1). As a matter of fact, the expression “European Union” appears in 567 of the articles published in the New York Times between 1 January 1945 and 31 December 1949. The expression “United States of Europe” appears in 182 articles; see below the titles of three of these articles.

Year	Date	Page	Title
1945	Jan 1	8	Plan for Europe hailed: proposal for confederation gets support of 3 senators
1946	Nov 25	16	Winston Churchill goes ahead with his plan to form United States of Europe
1947	Apr 18	12	81 prominent Americans sign petition for United States of Europe

Moreover Acheson’s support was essential in the crucial move which lead to the creation of the European Coal and Steel Community often considered as the first step in European unification. Before delivering his famous declaration in the late afternoon of May 9, 1950, Schuman had consulted two persons apart from his own government: Dean Acheson whom he met at the U.S. embassy in Paris on May 8

¹and Konrad Adenauer to whom the project was submitted in the morning of May 9. The project was officially hailed by Acheson on May 11 and by President Truman on May 19 (New York Times May 11, p. 1 and May 19, p. 3).

How many historical accounts of the European construction mention the role played by the American diplomacy? An honest answer is that almost no account devotes to this question more than a few lines; see for instance the accounts given in Bitsch (1996) or Zorgbibe (1978, 2000) which reflect fairly well the mainstream literature. Even more telling is the omission made by Georges Bidault in his memoirs (Bidault 1965, p. 182). He was Prime Minister of the French government in May 1950 and gives a fairly detailed account of this historic and consequential episode, yet without acknowledging any contribution of the U.S. diplomacy nor any contact or meeting with the U.S. Secretary of State on this matter.

Bidault's omission is typical of a behavior which is very common. In a general way, political leaders and historians are reluctant to recognize that exogenous factors play a crucial role in the history of their countries. In the language of system theory this attitude can be summarized by saying that systems which are subject to many exogenous forces are in fact described as if they were closed. Naturally, this has disastrous effects on the soundness of the description. A physical parallel would be a pendulum which is swinging outdoor and exposed to gusts of wind and whose trajectory one would try to explain without taking the influence of the wind into account. Nowadays, even the smallest countries are reputed to be fully independent and not in the least influenced by powerful neighbors. Saint Kitts and Nevis (42,000 inhabitants), a former British colony in the Caribbean which became independent in 1983, has a Prime Minister and a National Assembly of 14 members. Any allegation that the country might belong to the British or American sphere of influence would

¹In a letter to Dean Acheson dated April 22, 1950, Jean Monnet who set up the project writes: "During the elaboration of the plan we have had several exchanges about its overall objectives". Thus, Acheson was already informed about the project when he met Schuman on May 8. On the contrary, Ernest Bevin the British Foreign Secretary was only officially informed on May 10, which aroused his anger. (Roussel 1996)

pass as unreasonable and misplaced.

It is important to realize that such a conception is relatively recent. In the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries the notion of zone of influence was a concept which was commonly acknowledged and used in diplomatic matters. For instance, a secret Anglo-French pact of 1916, the so-called Sykes-Picot agreement, put Syria in the French zone of influence and Iraq in the British zone. Subsequently, the League of Nations formalized this situation by giving France and Britain mandates over Syria and Iraq respectively. Nowadays, at least officially, there are no longer any mandates, protectorates, colonies or zones of influence. The fact that these expressions have been banned from our vocabulary made it difficult to find a title for this chapter. The expressions “satellite state”, “vassal state” or “puppet state” have become so derogatory that it is hardly possible to use them. This is why we resorted to the medieval notion of vassalage. Lord and vassal were interlocked in a web of mutual rights and obligations; whereas the lord owed his vassal protection, the vassal owed his lord military service and/or financial benefits. The relation between the United States and Australia is a case in point. In spite of the fact that it is the Queen of England who is Australia’s head of state, the history of the country since World War II seems to suggest that it is the United States who is its real lord². In 1942 U.S. troops protected Australia against a possible Japanese invasion; in return Australia has contributed troops in all major conflicts waged by the United States from Korea, to Vietnam, to Somalia, Afghanistan and Iraq³.

In this chapter we try to answer two related questions.

- 1) To what extent, in time of peace, can the history of a nation be affected by the interference and influence of powerful neighbors?
- 2) How it is possible to detect and assess this influence despite of the fact that

²One should recall that in its medieval meaning the notion of vassalage refers to a hierarchy of bonds extending in descending degrees from the king (or emperor) down to the dukes, counts (or earls), barons and knights. Multilevel bonds may also exist in our present world; U.S. — Britain — Australia may be an example of a two-level system.

³Because, its constitution does not allow Japan to send troops abroad, Japan contributed financially to some of these conflicts. Iraq was the first country to which Japanese troops have been sent.

the two parties usually prefer to keep it secret?

The second question calls for a method of investigation capable of seeing through standard historical accounts. In this chapter we propose and illustrate two methods. The first one relies on the identification of what we call *historical anomalies*, the second one is based on the observation of *coincidences*. This second approach parallels the coincidence method in particle physics in which one focuses on signals registered in coincidence in two (or several) counter tubes. As such coincidences can only come from two particles emitted in the same collision event, this method eliminates the influence of background noise and, by comparing the information provided by the two counters, allows identification of the event which produced the particles.

1 Role of the United States in the First Vietnam War

After 1945 the United States became the leading power of the Western World. In a typical vassalage relationship, the U.S. covered 80% of the cost of the war that French troops were waging in Indochina against the Vietminh (Quid 1997, p. 1419 c). Nobody would expect a country to cover almost all the costs of a conflict without having a say in strategic decisions and in the conduct of the war. This was even less likely in this case because of the overlord status of the United States, its superior warfare technology and the prestige of its generals. Yet, French historical accounts of the Indochina War contain almost no mention of the role played by the United States; see for instance the works by Lucien Bodard (1972-1973, 5 volumes) or Georges Fleury (1994) which reflect fairly well the rest of the literature. It is this dichotomy and paradox which constitutes what we call a *historical anomaly*.

First, let us recall that there were three main phases in the war.

- The period **1945-1948** was marked by the end of World War II, the evacuation of the Japanese, the return of the French and lengthy negotiations between the French government and Ho Chi Minh, the leader of the Vietminh.

- **1949-1952** The victory of the Communists in China was a watershed. All of a sudden the United States became much concerned about the spread of Communism in Indochina. Despite of substantial military aid to the French troops the struggle remained uncertain however.

- **1953-1954** In early 1953 Secretary of State John F. Dulles advocated a more offensive strategy. This led to the replacement of General Salan by General Navarre and to the adoption of the so-called Navarre plan. Unfortunately, as recognized later on in an article of the New York Times (May 16, 1954), this plan relied on faulty assumptions; it led to the defeat of Dien Bien Phu on May 8 1954 and to the withdrawal of all French troops.

In a sense this outcome was predictable because of a fundamental opposition between French and American goals. While the French tried to restore and preserve the former colonial rule, the U.S. government proclaimed repeatedly that it favored the full independence of Vietnam provided it was not under a Communist government (see the chronology at the date of Feb. 18, 1954). This opposition was illustrated by two episodes (i) U.S. aid to nationalist movements such as the Caodaists (see the chronology at the dates: Nov 5, 1950; Mar 14, 1952) (ii) American attempts to make agreements with the Vietnamese government over the head of the French (see the chronology on Jun 30, 1951). In 1954 there was another obstacle, namely the disagreement between Dulles's ambitious plan and president Eisenhower's intention to limit American involvement (see the chronology at the dates of Jul 13, 1953 and Feb 11, 1954).

Regarding the diverse aspects of the American involvement, the chronology 7.1 suggests the following conclusions (the dates preceded by the letter "C" refer to the chronology).

U.S. aid The aid consisted in supplies, air force technicians and pilots (C: May 8 (a) and Jun 8 1954), pay of French and Vietnamese troops (C: Mar 1, 1953), training in psychological warfare (C: Mar 8, 1954) and economic aid (C: Nov 5 and 20,

1950).

Monitoring Between 1950 and 1954 there was an uninterrupted stream of high-ranking American officers, Senators and political personalities who visited Indochina. For instance the U.S. Army Chief (C: Oct 23, 1951), the U.S. commander in the Pacific (C: Apr. 26, 1953), Senator Mansfield (C: Sep 16, 1953), General O’Daniel (C: Apr 3, 1953, Jul 1953, Apr 16, 1954). In addition there was a permanent U.S. military assistance group headed successively by General Francis G. Brink, ambassador Donald R. Heath and General John O’Daniel. Often strategic decisions were made during conferences held in Washington with French officers and political leaders (C: Feb 16, 1954).

Recommendations The French Commander, General Navarre, had 5 American advisers (C: Jan 30, 1954). In addition he had to submit his plans in writing to the Pentagon or to U.S. officers who visited Indochina on inspection tours (C: Apr 21 1953 and Jul 10 1953). American aid was continued only on approval of the plans and were conditioned by further supervision (C: Aug 28 1953). We will probably never know to what extent American pressure has been determinant in the replacement of General Salan by General Navarre, but we know that the plan which subsequently became known as the Navarre plan was submitted to the Pentagon in April 1953 that is to say a few weeks before the nomination of General Navarre as Commander in Chief in Indochina. It can also be observed that in the first months after the “Navarre plan” was put into effect, the accounts of the New York Times became surprisingly optimistic (see C: Feb 20, 1954)

It is difficult to assess how much leeway was left to French officers. American military planners are renowned for their attention to details which would imply what U.S. recommendations reached down to tactical level. If this assumption is true, it provides a possible explanation of the overall failure; indeed from a network science perspective the fact that the decision makers are located far away from the war theater creates a inherent liability and weakness; this effect will be examined in a

subsequent chapter under the name of *absentee landlord syndrome*.

In the present episode it is fairly clear that the continuation of the financial and technical aid was the main means of control; however, one may wonder what are more generally the ways and means used by a country in order to influence another? Some answers are provided in the next section.

2 Ways and means

In accordance with the notion of vassalage the most natural way to establish a control over another country is by guaranteeing its security and defense. Naturally, the degree of dependence can greatly vary from case to case. After World War I, in face of the threat (real or supposed) of a Soviet invasion, almost all West European countries were dependent on the United States for their defense. The following episode illustrates how this lever could be used. In January 1946, after the resignation of General de Gaulle, the formation of a Socialo-Communist coalition government was contemplated in France. During a crucial party meeting an urgent letter was delivered by a motorcyclist. It was written by General Billotte, the deputy Chief of Staff and explained that “a Sociolo-Communist government would be seen as a threat by our Allies; as a result they may consider reducing their commitment to guaranty our security” (Demory 1995). Eventually, a coalition government was formed which, apart from the Socialist and Communist parties, also comprised the Christian Democratic Party (MRP). Probably we will never know what had been the real influence of General Billotte’s letter. As echoed by the New York Times, a similar warning was given to French politicians in May 1958 during another political crisis: “United States military officials, deeply concerned over the developments in France, are re-considering proposals to relocate important European military installations. (NYT May 19, 1958 , p. 1)

A fairly discrete way of keeping a handle on public opinion is to impose some form of control on the medias. We used the term control rather than the term censorship

to emphasize that usually it is a double-effect control in the sense that some news are amplified while others are restricted or suppressed. As illustrations of the amplification effect one can mention two episodes (i) On March 5, 1946 a German editor at the *Neue Zeitung* received a phone call from General Eisenhower's Headquarters asking him to devote the entire front page of the next edition to Churchill's Fulton speech [held in Fulton Missouri it introduced the phrase "Iron Curtain" to describe the division between Western powers and the area controlled by the Soviet Union and is considered as marking the beginning of the Cold War]. He complied but left the *Neue Zeitung* on March 11, 1946. (ii) During the Cold War, German radio stations participated in anti-Communist campaigns in that they were required to grant airtime to the Allied Military Government for its broadcast. An example of the restrictive aspect is provided by the "Allied High Commission Law concerning the Freedom of Press, Radio, Information and Entertainment" which was issued in Germany on September 22, 1949. Its first article says: "The German press and radio shall be free". Yet, it is immediately corrected by Article II which stipulates that "any person engaged therein shall not act in a manner likely to affect prejudicially the prestige and security of Allied forces. Where in the opinion of the Allied High Commission a person has violated this provision, the Commission may prohibit the person from continuing its activities" Article III completes the control by providing that "no new radio broadcasting or television shall be set up without the authorization of the Allied High Commission" (Hartenian 1984, p. 125,126,185).

The discrete presence of liaison officers or financial experts is a key technique for supervising another country. This can be illustrated by an example drawn from the British occupation of Iraq in the 1920s. Intelligence agent Gertrude Bell played a major role in setting up the Iraqi government under British supervision. In a letter to her father (Bell 1924), she explains that by the treaty between Britain and Iraq there are 18 reserved posts for British officials in Iraqi ministries and 5 posts as judges. Furthermore, apart from these reserved posts Ministers had to put up lists of British

advisers whom they considered necessary. Altogether there were 17 British advisers in the Ministry of Interior and 15 in the Police Department. These advisers were appointed under long term contracts for periods varying from 5 to 15 years and most of them remained in their posts even after the country became formally independent in 1932. As this example shows peace treaties are frequently used to impose constraints limiting the sovereignty of the dependent government. As another illustration one can mention the Cuban treaty of 1904 with the United States. Under this treaty it was impossible for Cuba to enter into any foreign alliance or to make broad changes in internal policy without the acquiescence of the United States. Often, especially for small countries, entering into a loan arrangement with a big power is the beginning of vassalage; first the loan may impose drastic guarantee conditions such as for instance the fact that import and export duties may go to the lender if interest payments are delayed. In a second phase a financial commission headed by representatives of the lender may be appointed which has the power to control the whole financial sector (Nearing et al. 1926) .

In many cases it is not possible to get direct information about moves which take place behind the scene. In such cases one can nevertheless detect exogenous forces provided they affect several countries. The next section gives an illustration of this method.

3 Identification of interference through the coincidence method

Communism has been a concern for the U.S. government at least since 1917 but the year 1950 marked a climax of anti-Communist activity. This is shown in a quantitative way in Fig. 7.1. The fact that the curve peaks in 1949 is quite understandable for it is in this year that the Communists came to power in China and that the Soviet Union successfully experimented its first atomic bomb. Finally, after the outbreak of the Korean War in June 1950, the Cold War became a real war. In such circumstances broad scale initiatives and actions aimed at containing Soviet influence could

be expected. We will see that this led to the creation of several anti-Communist organizations in the months after June 1950. Table 7.1 lists some of these episodes but it is by no means exhaustive. In fact, there were also similar episodes in Belgium, Denmark, Switzerland, Greece, Turkey (Dubois 2003)⁴. Even more than the near simultaneity of their creation, it is the fact that these movements are built on the same pattern that points to a common origin. This can be illustrated by the cases of France, Germany and the Netherlands.

- **France** In September 1950, with the support of Prime Minister René Pleven, Jean-Paul David, deputy of Seine-et-Oise, created the organization “Paix et Liberté” (Peace and Freedom) in order to counter the influence of the Communist party. During a visit in Washington in February 1952, Jean-Paul David met with Secretary of State Dean Acheson as well as with John Foster Dulles who was to succeed Acheson in 1953. Among the means and medias that were used by the organization one can mention: (i) Billboard campaigns: a total of 38 million color posters were printed over a period of time which goes approximately from 1950 to 1956. (ii) Cartoon booklets (iii) Specific publications destined to teenagers and women (iv) An information bulletin entitled “Défendre la vérité” (i.e. Supporting the truth) (v) Movies, one of them celebrated the French contingent in Korea.

- **Germany** The “Volksbund für Frieden und Freiheit” (i.e. the People’s Union for Peace and Freedom) was created on 29 August 1950, that is to say, a few weeks before its French counterpart. It was funded by the United States but was also supported by the German government. In March 1952, the VVF was granted the status of a state-approved organization. The propaganda means used by the VVF included posters, booklets, movies, and an information bulletin entitled “Die Wahrheit” (the Truth).

- **The Netherlands** The organization “Vrede en Vrijheid” (i.e. Peace and Freedom) was created in 1951 with official support from the government. Its bul-

⁴Unfortunately, no detailed information is available for these cases.

letin entitled “De Echte Waarheid” (i.e. the Real Truth) contained cartoons, some of which were contributed by Fritz Behrendt one of the most famous Dutch illustrators.

By our present standards the fact of making use of color posters, cartoons, and movies does not seem surprising or unusual. However, in the early 1950s very few European political parties were using such promotion means. In contrast, such modern public relations techniques were commonly used in the United States. As mentioned in an earlier chapter, the National Association of Manufacturers used cartoon services, vast billboard campaigns, radio programs and movies.

The synchronicity, the similarities in names, titles and methods are so obvious that one can hardly doubt that these organizations were set up on the same mold and have a common origin. This shows the power of comparative analysis; no similar conclusion could have been drawn from an analysis conducted at the level of only one country.

Chronology 7.1 The role of the United States in the First Indochina War

1945

1945, Sep 28 Lieutenant Colonel A. Peter Dewey, an OSS officer, was shot and killed and Captain Joseph Coolidge of New Hampshire was seriously wounded by Vietnamese during a revolt in Saigon against the return of French colonial rule. (NYT 27 September p. 27 and 28 September p. 1, Salisbury 1980, p. 38)

1945, Sep 29 Admiral Lord Louis Mountbatten, chief of the Allied Southeast Asia Command, has sent reinforcements to Indo-China, where Vietnamese have been rioting for weeks. (NYT p. 5)

Between 1946 and 1948 the French re-occupy Indochina; this turns out to be much more difficult in the north than in the south. American involvement remains very limited during this period of time.

After the Communist victory in the civil war in China, Indochina becomes an important strategic asset. As a result, the American Government becomes willing to back the French in their war against the Vietminh. At the same time, however, it does not wish to appear to support colonialism which explains the contacts between American aid agencies and pro-independence, anti-communist forces such as for instance the Cao daoists.

1949

1949, Jan 25 The French government has received assurance that Washington favors its efforts to check the Communist influence from the north that is expected to be intensified by the victory of the Communist forces in China. (NYT p. 18)

1949, Apr 1 The French want U.S. planes. (NYT p. 11)

1950

1950, Feb 28 France asks U.S. arms to fight Indo-China war. (NYT p. 20)

1950, Apr 25 To facilitate the extension of military aid for the defense of Indo-China, U.S. officials have asked the French government to draw up a plan for the future. (NYT p. 15)

1950, Jul 11 Indo-China awaits U.S. military mission. (NYT p. 3)

1950, Oct 5 General Brink will supervise U.S. aid to Indo-China. (NYT p. 4)

1950, Oct 14 France asked the U.S. to furnish her a total of \$ 3.1 billion in military assistance during the next year. (NYT p. 1)

1950, Nov 5 U.S. aid mission from the Economic Cooperation Administration (E.C.A.) is hailed in Tayninh, home district of the Cao daist movement. Cheering and flag waiving groups welcomed the U.S. visitors (NYT 14 Oct, p. 10). Cao Daism is a religion founded in Vietnam in 1926, which claims to combine the major religions of the world: Buddhism, Christianity, Confucianism, Hinduism, Islam and Spiritualism. In 1930, Cao Dai claimed 600,000 adherents; in 2005 it had an estimated 7 million adherents mainly in Vietnam. The Cao Dai Holy See is located in Tay Ninh, Southern Vietnam (NYT 28 February 1930, p. 9 and Wikipedia, 2005). Cao Daism played an important part in the agitation for independence in the 1920s and 1930s. In June 1951, dissident Cao daist general Trinh Minh The broke away with a troop of about 1,000 supporters.

1950, Nov 20 William C. Foster, Director of the Economic Cooperation Administration, avoids an ambush by Vietminh guerrillas outside Saigon (NYT p. 4). The ECA is a board created in 1947 by President Truman to organize the economic aid provided by the Marshall plan.

Between 1951 and 1954, the war in Indochina gets progressively higher priority at the Pentagon and

State Department. A continuous stream of high-ranking U.S. officials visit Indochina in succession. In Saigon a number of U.S. teams are in charge of dispatching the aid and advising the French military.

1951

- 1951, Jan 21 Americans arrived in Hanoi to visit the front. (NYT p. 13)
- 1951, Feb 21 Saigon: Communist-led Vietminh guerrillas fired mortars at the United States escort aircraft carrier Windham Bay in the Saigon River this morning and tossed six hand grenades into a bar crowded with United States sailors on shore leave from the ship this evening. (NYT p. 6)
- 1951, Jun 30 Preparation for signing Vietnam's first bilateral pact [between the United States and Indochina] namely a E.C.A. agreement, were suddenly canceled because the procedure displeased Paris. (NYT p. 2)
- 1951, Aug 1 A "human bomb" killed a French general, an Annamite provincial governor and himself with a grenade attack today in a crowded main street of Sadeq, a village sixty miles south of Saigon. (NYT p. 1)
- 1951, Sep 14 General De Lattre de Tassigny, French Far East commander arrives in New York for a two week stay. He stated that a major purpose of his mission was to bring more information about the critical situation in Southeast Asia. (NYT 14 Sep p. 3, 15 Sep p. 14 and 26 Sep p. 2)
- 1951, Oct 2 A shipload of United States Army Garand rifles, enough to equip four divisions [about 60,000 soldiers] was received in Saigon and turned over to Vietnam's army. (NYT p. 5)
- 1951, Oct 23 General Collins, U.S. Army Chief, is in Indochina to visit the front and confer on the war against the Vietminh (NYT p. 4). In October, there is also the visit of Congressman John F. Kennedy on a study tour of the Middle East and Asia (Statement of Senator J.F. Kennedy, 6 April 1954)

1952

- 1952, Jan 25 A dissident group of Caoadaists, and not the Communists-led Vietminh forces [as announced in the January 10 edition of the New York Times] is held responsible for the latest outbreak of terrorism in Saigon. Twelve persons have been killed and more than eighty-five injured by delayed-action explosive charges set off on January 9, 1952 (NYT p. 3). [Subsequently, this attack was picked up by Graham Greene as the theme of his novel "A Quiet American" published in 1956.]
- 1952, Jan 29 In the 16 months since August 1950, 100,000 tons of U.S. military supplies have been delivered to forces fighting the communist-led Vietminh insurgents. (NYT p. 3)
- 1952, Jun 25 Brigadier-General Francis G. Brink, Indo-China team chief, who returned to Washington two weeks ago was found shot in an office in the Pentagon building and died in an ambulance en route to Walter Reed Hospital. (NYT p. 15)
- 1952, Jun 27 Ambassador Donald R. Heath leaves for Saigon post. (NYT p. 6)

An ambitious plan is set up in the Spring of 1953 through which a decisive victory is expected. After the plan gets the approval of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, General Navarre is put in charge of its implementation, advised by a group of four American liaison officers. The flow of American visitors intensifies. The new strategy of establishing strongholds in isolated places to lure and wear out Vietminh forces was at first successful as reflected in the optimistic comments of the New York Times. After the set-back of Dien Bien Phu the government of Pierre Mendès-France takes the decision to end French involvement in Indochina and to negotiate an agreement with the Vietminh. In Saigon, the United States back Ngo Dinh Diem and, in January 1955, begin to train Vietnamese forces.

1953

- 1953, Mar 1 John Gunther Dean arrived in Saigon as a financial adviser. In an interview given on September 6, 2000 he declared: "Few people realize today that the French Expeditionary Corps and the Vietnamese Armed Forces were all financed by the United States. My job was to document how the

money was spent for example for pay, ammunition training of Vietnamese or Cambodian pilots, etc. (<http://www.jimmycarterlibrary.org/library/oralhistory>)

- 1953, Mar 20 General Mark W. Clark, the U.S. Commander in the Far East arrived in Saigon for a four-day visit to Indo-China. (NYT p. 1)
- 1953, Mar 27 The United States agreed to increase its contribution [to the Indo-China war] but insisted that France in return should produce a program for winding up hostilities in a victory. (NYT p. 1)
- 1953, Apr 3 General John W. O'Daniel visits Saigon. (NYT p. 5)
- 1953, Apr 8 Mr. Adlai Stevenson, former U.S. delegate to the United Nations, held a press conference in Saigon at the end of a week's visit to Indo-China. (Times p. 5)
- 1953, Apr 21 In a memorandum for the secretary of Defense dated 21 April 1953, subject "Proposed French strategic plan for the successful conclusion of the war in Indochina", the Joint Chiefs of Staff pointed out certain weaknesses of the French plan but felt that it was workable. (Pentagon Papers, Volume 1, Document 17)
- 1953, Apr 26 Admiral Radford, U.S. Commander in the Pacific, arrived in Hanoi this evening. He is worried by the Vietminh invasion of Laos. Its capital, Luang Prabang, is supplied by the French Air Force which uses a number of transport planes on loan from the United States Far East Air Force. (NYT p. 4)
- 1953, May 9 Criticized on the war, the French Cabinet named General Henri Eugène Navarre as commander in chief in Indo-China in replacement of General Raoul Salan. General Navarre was previously Chief of Staff of the Allied ground forces in Central Europe under General Matthew B. Ridgway. (NYT p. 1)
- 1953, Jul 10 Lieutenant General John W. O'Daniel, Commander of the U.S. Army forces in the Pacific, said tonight as he wound up a three-week survey tour of Indo-China that he would recommend an increase of U.S. military aid (NYT p. 2). During his visit, General Navarre submitted in writing to him a paper entitled "Principles for the conduct of the war in Indochina" which presents a marked improvement in French military thinking. Repeated invitations were extended to the U.S. mission to return to witness the progress the French will have made. To improve the chances of success, [U.S.] support should include close liaison with French military together with friendly but firm encouragement and advice where indicated. (Pentagon papers, Volume 1, Document 17)
- 1953, Jul 13 John Foster Dulles, Secretary of State, expressed great satisfaction today with a new French military plan designed to regain the initiative in the offensive against Communist forces in Indo-China. (NYT p. 1)
- 1953, Jul 21 Highly successful French paratroop raid on the Communist supply base at Langson. (NYT p. 22)
- 1953, Aug 28 U.S. support should be conditioned upon French willingness to receive and act upon U.S. military advice. Further, the French should be urged to vigorously prosecute the Navarre concept to the maximum extent of their capabilities. (Excerpts from a memorandum of the Joint Chiefs of Staff for the Secretary of Defense, Pentagon Papers, Volume 1, Document 17)
- 1953, Sep 16 The Senate Foreign Relations Committee dispatched Senator Mansfield on an inquiry mission to Indo-China. (NYT p. 1)
- 1953, Oct 27 The United States Legion of Merit was awarded today to a French woman Captain Valérie André, an army doctor and pilot, for her valiant services in Indo-China. (NYT p. 2)
- 1953, Dec 19 French-Vietnamese forces set up a base in Dienbienphu to harass communist flanks. (NYT p. 3)

1954

- 1954, Jan 30 During a meeting of the President's Special Committee on Indochina, Allen W. Dulles [head of the Central Intelligence Agency] inquired if CIA colonel Ed Lansdale could not be added to the group of 5 liaison officers to which General Navarre had agreed (http://www.totse.com/en/politics/-central_intelligence_agency/166660.html)

- 1954, Feb 11 President Eisenhower asserted today that he could conceive of no greater tragedy than for the United States to become involved in an all-out war in Indo-China. (NYT p. 1)
- 1954, Feb 16 The United States has asked René Pleven, French Minister of National Defense, to visit Washington after he completes his investigation of the Indo-China situation. (NYT p. 3)
- 1954, Feb 18 President Eisenhower asserted that the United States was not trying to help anyone maintain colonialism in Indo-China. He repeated that the war there is a fight for the independence of the Vietnamese people. (NYT p. 1)
- 1954, Feb 20 Vietminh's defeat in 1955 is predicted. Foe are checked on all fronts. (NYT p. 2)
- 1954, Mar 7 The French destroyed key bases of Caoodaists. (NYT p. 3)
- 1954, Mar 8 U.S. Information Agency unit spreads ideas in Vietnam. (NYT p. 11)
- 1954, Mar 13 Lieutenant-General John W. O'Daniel will head the U.S. military assistance group in Indo-China. (NYT p. 2)
- 1954, Mar 23 Immediate dispatch of a new group of 25 U.S. B-26 bombers to Indo-China to reinforce French Air Force. (NYT p. 1)
- 1954, Mar 26 Fire bombs halt Vietminh attack. (NYT p. 2)
- 1954, Mar 26 Admiral Radford proposed to General Ely the support of American bombers based in Manilla: about 60 B-29 bombers would mount night raids dropping 450 tons of bombs each time. They would be escorted by 150 fighters from aircraft of the Seventh Fleet. Their objective would be to pulverize the ground round Dien Bien Phu from which the Vietminh were mounting their offensive. Paris gave its agreement to this scheme, but "Operation Vulture", as it was code-named, was vetoed by Congress on April 5. One month later, on April 23, prime minister Georges Bidault asked Mr. Dulles if the U.S. could not reconsider its decision and authorize the carrying out of "Operation Vulture"; the request was rejected by Mr. Dulles on the next day. (Times 20 January 1960, p. 10)
- 1954, Mar 27 General Paul Ely, French Chief of Staff, flew back from Washington to Paris with a promise of 25 additional B-26 light bombers for Indo-China. (NYT p. 2)
- 1954, Apr 6 "If the French persist in their refusal to grant the legitimate independence desired by the peoples of the Associated States [of Cambodia, Indochina and Laos], it is my hope that Secretary Dulles will recognize the futility of channeling American men and machines into that hopeless internecine struggle." (Statement of Senator J.F. Kennedy in Congress)
- 1954, Apr 8 The cornerstone of the U.S. and French strategic policy in Indo-China for the last year has been the so-called Navarre plan. But Dulles' view are now considered to be too optimistic. (NYT p. 4)
- 1954, Apr 16 Major-General John W. O'Daniel arrived in Saigon. (NYT p. 2)
- 1954, May 8 (a) Two U.S. pilots die in Indo-China war. Their Flying Boxcar blew up yesterday on a supply drop mission to Dienbienphu killing its two U.S. civilian pilots and the French crew chief. (NYT p. 2)
- 1954, May 8 (b) Dienbienphu is lost after 55 days. Dulles says that unity can check reds. France is sending more men to war. Shock of loss seems to unify deputies. (NYT p. 1)
- 1954, May 16 Lessons of Dienbienphu: U.S. military policy was based on faulty intelligence. The French arrested intelligence agents working for the United States. (NYT p. E5)
- 1954, Jun 8 The Defense Department plans to replace man for man the 200 Air Force technicians it is recalling from Indochina. (NYT p. 1)
- 1954, Jun 7 The Washington Post and Times-Herald said today that twice during April the United States proposed using Navy and Air Force planes based in the Philippines to intervene in the Indochina war, provided Congress and allied nations agreed. (NYT p. 3)
- 1954, Jul 22 President Eisenhower reluctantly accepts the Indochina accord signed in Geneva. He asserts that the U.S. will not be bound by armistice terms. (NYT p. 1)
- 1954, Aug 21 The U.S. expects the French to leave behind for the Vietnamese army the military equipment that it supplied for the Indochina war. (NYT p. 3)

1954, Oct 9 Anti-Communist refugees are taken by the U.S. Navy from Hanoi to South-Vietnam. (NYT p. 3)
1954, Dec 12 The United States will take over the training of South Vietnam's National Army about January 1, 1955. (NYT p. 4)

Notes: "NYT" means "New York Times". The table provides a glimpse of U.S. involvement based on American sources; in order to get a more comprehensive picture, Vietnamese sources would certainly be useful as well. Parallel episodes are (i) the aid brought by British troops to the Dutch in the warfare against independence movements in Indonesia (1945-1947) (ii) the aid provided by the United States to Guomintang forces in the Civil war against Communist forces (1945-1949). These cases are interesting because they show a gradation in the forms of the support. In Indonesia there were 20,000 British (partly Indian) troops which took part in the fighting, in China there were 65,000 U.S. troops which did not take part in the fighting. In Indochina there were no U.S. troops (except for a few hundred airmen) but the U.S. covered about 80 percent of the expenses of the war. Many thanks to my colleagues Olivier Gérard and Dietrich Stauffer for their help in establishing this chronology.

Table 7.1 Anti-Communist organizations that sprung up in the early 1950s

	Country	Year	Month	Organization	Bulletin
1	West Berlin	1950	Jun	Congress for Cultural Freedom	
2	Germany	1950	Aug	Volksbund für Frieden und Wahrheit	Die Wahrheit
3	Italy	1950	Aug	Atlantici d'Italia	
4	Belgium	1950	Aug	Paix et Liberté	
5	France	1950	Sep	Paix et Liberté	Défendre la Liberté
6	Netherlands	1951		Vrede en Vrijheid	Die Echte Waarheid
7	Australia	1951		Australian Ass. for Cultural Freedom	
8	Europe	1951	Aug	Comité Européen Paix et Liberté	
9	Italy	1953		Pace e Liberta	

Notes: In two of these cases namely (1) and (2) funding by the Central Intelligence Agency is well established; in the other cases it can only be inferred from the similarities between the movements. The “Congress of Cultural Freedom” organization was founded on June 26, 1950; it sponsored about 20 publications in various countries, e.g. *Encounter* in the U.K., *Preuves* in France *Quadrant* in Australia, which were specifically destined to intellectuals. In Belgium the organization “Paix et Liberté” was headed by Marcel de Roover, an industrialist who later took part in the creation of the “World Anti-Communist League” (Taipei 1967).

Sources: Flamigni (2004), Delmas et al. (1999), Depraetere (1986, p. 83,91,244); <http://www.lurojansen.nl>.

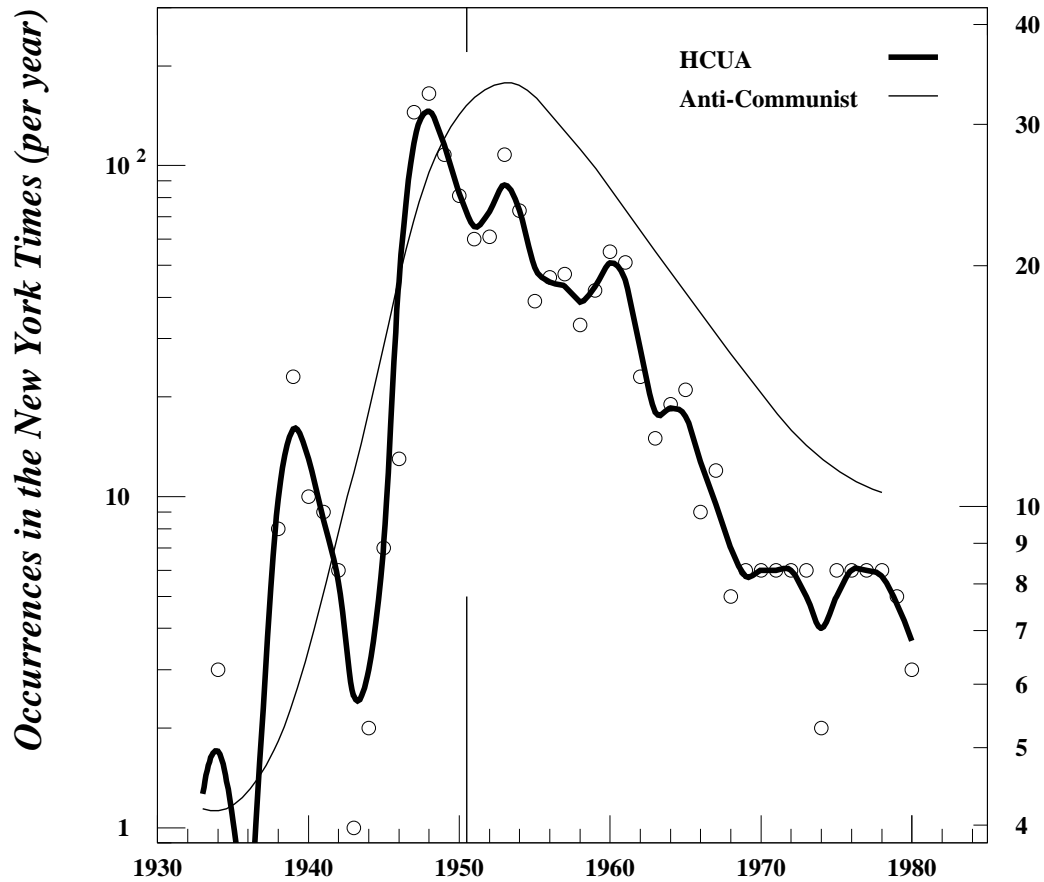


Fig. 7.1 Fluctuations of anti-Communism in the United States. Thick solid line: number of New York Times articles per year containing the two expressions “Communists” and “Committee on Un-American Activities”; thin solid line: number of New York Times articles (in five-year intervals) containing the word “anti-Communist” (right-hand side scale). The vertical lines signal the beginning of the Korea War. The House Committee on Un-American Activities (HCUA) was set up in 1933; its mandate was to get information on how foreign subversive propaganda enters the United States and about the organizations that are spreading it. *Source: Electronic index of the New York Times.*