

# DWIGHT EISENHOWER TO WINSTON CHURCHILL

April 4, 1954

Excerpts:

- It is difficult to see how **Thailand, Burma and Indonesia** could be kept out of Communist hands. This we cannot afford. The threat to **Malaya, Australia and New Zealand** would be direct. The offshore island chain would be broken. The economic pressures on **Japan** which would be deprived of non-Communist markets and courses of food and raw materials would be such, over a period of time, that it is difficult to see how Japan could be prevented from reaching an accommodation with the Communist world which could combine the manpower and natural resources of Asia with the industrial potential of Japan.
- I can understand the very natural desire of the French to seek an end to this war which has been bleeding them for eight years. But our painstaking search for a way out of the impasse has reluctantly forced us to the conclusion that there is no negotiated solution of the Indochina problem which in its essence would not be either a face-saving device to cover a French surrender or a face-saving device to cover a Communist retirement. The first alternative is too serious in its broad strategic implications for us and for you to be acceptable. . . . [I]t would [even] have the most serious repercussions in **North Africa, in Europe and elsewhere**. . . . Somehow we must contrive to bring about the second alternative. . . . [The best way would be a coalition of the **U.S., England, Australia, New Zealand, Thailand** and the Philippines to check communist expansion in Southeast Asia.] I do not envisage the need of any appreciable ground forces on your or our part.
- [W]e failed to halt Hirohito, Mussolini and Hitler by not acting in unity and in time. That marked the beginning of many years of stark tragedy and desperate peril. May it not be that our nations have learned something from that lesson.