asked about the possibility of reunification for Korea and learned of South Korean President Syngman Rhee's "desire for huge armaments which is inspired more by fear of Japan than of the Communists." Given these forces, however, North Korea would not consider negotiating. The Vice President knew by June 5 that he would be going to the Far East in the fall and he probably was researching his trip. Most of his itinerary was set by August, so he knew Korea was a stop. However, had Eisenhower attended the meeting, Nixon would not have pursued the topic as steadily.

The trip to the Far East helped Nixon move toward the role he hoped to play within the Administration. While he had established his interest in foreign relations years before, it was on this trip that he discovered how to explore this passion while serving a President who expressed no interest in furthering Nixon's education on the subject.

Nixon admitted in his memoirs that his first overseas trip as Vice President had "a tremendously important effect on my thinking and on my career . . . . it established my foreign policy experience and expertise in what was to become the most critical and controversial part of the world." During the trip he learned that Asia's view of the US was based on European and Communist propaganda, and that these people, long dominated by the West, wanted independence from colonial powers. Beyond the tangible facts, the trip had a profound impact on the role he would play in the Administration. It gave him the ability to discuss a foreign region where neither Dulles nor Eisenhower had as much knowledge.

It is not completely clear whether Eisenhower or Dulles first suggested the destination for Nixon's Fall trip. After the fact, Nixon claimed that Eisenhower offhandedly introduced the subject. In a 1965 interview, he reported that his trip was discussed just after Dulles had
returned from a tour to the Middle East (Dulles visited eleven countries in May). The Secretary explained to Eisenhower and Nixon that "he had found a great deal of misunderstanding as to what our policy was. And he said that just sitting down and talking to these men had an immensely good effect."

Dulles’ comment reflected his basic maxim that international incidents arose from misunderstandings. Garbled communication resulted in disagreements with allies and wars with enemies. To this end, Dulles built relations with allies and made it clear to enemies that the United States would not fold to their pressures or accept Communist infiltration.

According to Roderic O’Connor, Dulles believed "you had to make sure that the enemy knew that if he made a move, you were going to move. If the enemy had any doubt that you would move, that could lead to the misunderstanding and miscalculation that would start a major war." With allies, face-to-face meetings minimized misinterpretations and maximized solutions.

Perceiving Dulles’ direction, the President asked Nixon what his plans were for the Fall. Nixon responded "'Well, anything you like.' And he said, 'Well, why don't you take a trip to Asia.'" Nixon concluded, "It was Eisenhower's idea. He threw it out. Of course, Dulles then had to execute it." Nixon also cited Eisenhower as the originator in his memoirs. In fact, Dulles probably conceived of the trip, rather than Ike. The Secretary already had begun his mentorship, as well as his manipulation, of Nixon.

On June 5, Dulles and Nixon discussed the Vice President's plans to take a trip abroad in September or October. "The Secretary said he thought that the Far East (Korea, Japan, Formosa, The Philippines and possibly Djakarta) would be best. He has just returned from
the Near East, Milton E. is going to Latin America, and everybody goes to Europe." If Eisenhower already had expressed his desire for the Vice President to go to Asia, Dulles would not have brought up the subject as he did. Dulles suggested the destination without any reference to Eisenhower. Had he obtained prior approval from the President, he would have made it clear to Nixon.

Dulles provided the Vice President with a rationale for going to Asia prior to the conversation Nixon remembered having with Eisenhower. He presented a case that appealed to Nixon's desire for a visible role in foreign policy, and sweetened it when he explained why Asia was the best place for Nixon to visit in terms of Nixon's image, not US policy-making. While Nixon always considered his public image, later in the Administration he became more adamant about the foreign relations substance of his trips.

His interests often wavered between enhancing public image and increasing policy-making duties. But, when Ike reiterated the suggestion - probably spurred by Dulles - the Vice President had even greater motivation for taking the trip. He would need that motivation, since this trip lasted over two months.

Vice President Nixon and his wife Pat (brought along on the suggestion of Dulles) visited nineteen countries during their tour including, Taiwan, Korea, Indochina (Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia), Burma and Japan. The couple followed a pattern similar to the one Nixon developed on the Herter trip. They met and talked to the common people, visited families and shook hands. Nixon also consulted with the government officials of each country, asking about Communist influences, and listening to their concerns. He formed relationships with these leaders, while he assessed their abilities.
Nixon came to resent goodwill tours, but in 1953 he was too excited. No tour of this sort had ever been made by an American President or Vice President. He was thrilled with the opportunity and anxious for the experience. Dulles had assigned Nixon the task of scouting out Asia.

The public announcement about Nixon's first international trip came on July 7, 1953. Early that day, the Vice President called Dulles to advise him to issue a press release about the trip. Nixon explained that journalist Robert Allen had already revealed it in his column, and if Dulles held off, Eisenhower would face questions about the trip at his press conference the following day. Nixon suggested that the announcement emphasize the fact he was "going as representative of the President and the State Department." By reaction Nixon sought to give his assignment the presidential seal of approval. Dulles replied he would make the announcement in the same way the notice of Milton Eisenhower's trip had been made. He issued a statement explaining "the purpose of the visit will be for the Vice President and his party to become acquainted with leaders of the countries visited, to hear their views, to gain firsthand impressions and to convey the sincere greetings of the people of the United States to the peoples of the areas visited and carry the personal greetings of the President." In short, a goodwill trip.

Who leaked the plans for a trip was not discussed. One could speculate it was Nixon, himself. He was the only person in the Administration who benefitted by making the information public. He was also the person who suggested the leak be substantiated with an official announcement. Perhaps, the Vice President concluded that if the rumor was not confirmed, the media would not take notice. Despite the leak and the official statement,
White House correspondents ignored the announcement at Eisenhower’s next press conference.9 Nixon would have preferred it had come up, since without press coverage it was hard to promote his public image.

In some aspects, this trip shared similarities with the 1947 trip to Europe. As with the Herter Committee, Nixon received unsolicited advice from people about the regions he was scheduled to visit. A letter arrived from a Chinese businessman living in Saigon condemning Communist China. He told the Vice President "It happened like a bad dream that the whole China mainland - our home land - being devoured by the Communists." The exile claimed "we have come to know clearly by now that liberation is only meant for the Communists while we the real Chinese people are being oppressed and tortured out of our breadth [sic]." The letter confirmed every suspicion Nixon held about Communist regimes and reflected the typical conclusions reached by Anti-Maoists. For Nixon, it reinforced his view of mainland China. Following his trip, the Vice President would report that "Formosa is still a definite symbol to the many overseas Chinese communities. . . "10 The letter provided him with a first hand critique of the situation in Asia, which he reconfirmed while on the trip. It illustrated, once again, that Communism had to be guarded against everywhere.

In 1947, Nixon was a Representative from California considering the Marshall plan. Six years later he traveled from the United States as its second highest representative. With the new position, Nixon lost much of the scheduling flexibility that he had enjoyed as a Congressman. The State Department provided an itinerary instructing who to see and where to go. Nixon’s folder - labeled "Suggested Activities" - contained detailed plans on every aspect of the trip. If he hoped to repeat his adventurous approach of 1947, he would have to
unofficially modify some of the State Department's recommendations.

One of the first liberties Nixon took was to mandate that, whenever possible, he would meet foreign dignitaries alone - with no additional staff. Writing about himself in third person, as he often did, Nixon instructed "On this trip unless there is a necessity to have somebody for translating purposes the V.P. does not want to have anyone with him when he talks with representatives of foreign countries. He does not want any of his staff, any state dept. personnel or anyone else unless it is absolutely necessary for him to have an interpreter." Nixon concluded with the order "I want to talk to as many controversial people as possible. The natural tendency is usually to discourage them but I want to see them all if possible." Still the risk taker, Nixon sought to gain control over how the trip progressed.

His directions assured him full credit for any diplomatic achievements reached during the trip. By prohibiting other American officials from sitting in on talks, Nixon created an opportunity to dominate the trip. He put himself in charge. He also gained prestige by conducting one-on-one discussions with world leaders, and ensured confidentiality. Plus, the Vice President guaranteed himself media attention. A final benefit would be that he could impress Dulles by performing well in talks.

Nixon's specific effort to meet with "controversial people" reflected his experiences on the Herter Committee. He had debated Communist party members in 1947. Now he hoped for the opportunity again. His interest arose out of the propaganda possibilities for the US, as well as the advantageous news coverage he could gain from such confrontations.

The President perceived a single objective for Nixon: he was to obtain a commitment from Syngman Rhee to support the armistice that ended the Korean war. But, State saw
additional possibilities for Nixon's trip, in Korea and the other countries on his tour. Just before the Vice President left the United States, he received instructions from the State Department.

Dulles' people asked him to bolster the American Economic Coordinator in Korea by showing the man special attention in public. Privately, Nixon could relate to Rhee the respect Eisenhower had for the Coordinator. Essentially, this was a public relations ploy borrowed from campaign tactics and intended to improve the Economic Coordinator's position with Rhee. Here was a task Nixon could perform instinctually. He knew campaigning thoroughly. The more complicated assignment involved direct talks with Rhee.

State department advisors suggested Nixon serve as a negotiator, if he found the opportunity. In face-to-face discussions with Rhee "an idea might be hit upon for compromising the present deadlock over the hwan [won]-dollar exchange rate and related subjects, and in doing so, a formula might be found for dealing with the RK [Republic of Korea] President on other questions now and in the future." These instructions presumed Nixon would serve as diplomat as well as goodwill ambassador. Nixon's coincidental directive to meet alone with foreign leaders, ensured he had the opportunity to test his diplomatic skills at every possible opportunity.

The first stops on Nixon's itinerary were New Zealand and Australia. Both countries were American allies and the vice presidential visits were simply courtesy calls. Nonetheless, Nixon received high praise from the American Ambassador to Australia for his performance there. The Vice President attracted large and admiring crowds. He impressed the Australian Prime Minister and the opposition leader. The Ambassador wrote, "as one member of the
Cabinet expressed it, the visit fortified them in the desire of the leaders of both parties for increasingly close ties with America." The New Zealand/Australian portion got the trip off to a grand start, but Nixon found little of interest on these island countries. He expressed this indifference only after his return to America. The minutes taken during his State Department debriefing session stated "the Vice President merely described a few personal impressions of these countries but said little concerning our policies or the relationship between Australia and New Zealand with the other countries in Asia."13 Perhaps Australia and New Zealand were too civilized to appeal to Nixon's risk taking nature.

Several weeks into his trip, Nixon met the High Commissioner of Malaya, Sir Gerald Templar. Discussions with Templar greatly influenced his perception of Communist tactics. On October 26, Templar wrote Eisenhower thanking him for the note delivered by the Vice President. About Nixon, Templar added "he's so obviously a very fine man, and I am much looking forward to a long talk with him in my office before dinner this evening." It was from this talk that Nixon gained a tremendous respect for Templar and a new perspective on how to fight Communism in Asia.

The private meeting lasted an hour and a half. American foreign service officials complained that Nixon revealed few details about the conversation. But in his memoirs Nixon related some of the discussion.

Templar explained that the most effective method of fighting insurgent Communism in Asia was to enlist the natives. The indigenous people had to believe they were fighting for the independence of their country, not foreign colonialism. Nixon took the lesson as a truism and relied on it for his future analysis. During his post-trip debriefing, he stated the British
had kept Malaya safe from Communism and "General Templar is thoroughly familiar with the entire problem."

Templar made enough of an impression for the Vice President to mention the Brit again at an NSC meeting in May 1954. During the discussion about the Geneva conference on Korea and Indochina that had begun some weeks before, Nixon suggested that Templar join the US delegation because the High Commissioner "had a keen understanding of the realities of the Communist threat to Southeast Asia." 14 The Vice President considered Templar a foremost expert, otherwise he would not have made the comment.

Nixon found Templar's analysis compelling, if for no other reason than he placed great value in the support of the people. After three major campaigns, Nixon realized voters had to be convinced to elect candidates. He needed to offer them a reason to put him in office. A successful campaign against Communism had a similar element. If the natives grasped onto an inspiring cause - their freedom - they would vote, or in this case fight, for it. If Asians were asked to risk their lives to maintain a foreign regime, they would favor the alternative, Communism. In Italy and Greece, Nixon had seen how communism could mask itself in nationalist rhetoric and win support. It was a simple choice of which candidate had the more appealing platform.

Another reason Nixon latched onto Templar so quickly was that the High Commissioner's interpretation verified conclusions the Vice President had already reached. When Secretary Dulles and he met with the Cambodian President six months before, Nixon concluded the problem in Indochina was "the fact that the native peoples were unwilling to fight Communism in order to perpetuate French colonialism." 15 Templar applied the same
reasoning to Asia in general. This confirmation from the field solidified Nixon's conclusions.

One other individual during this trip left a permanent mark on the Vice President. South Korean President Syngman Rhee affected Nixon's perception of Asia and his foreign affairs outlook. Ike wanted Nixon to obtain assurances from Rhee that he would not attack North Korea. The State Department hoped Nixon could convince Rhee to cooperate more with America. Rhee granted both of these and also espoused his personal strategy for dealing with Communists. As with Templar, this unsolicited advice taught Nixon a lesson he added to his analytical lexicon.

Rhee complained that the United States insisted on publicly limiting his options. US officials stated that America would not support Rhee if he resumed hostilities against the North. The US even implied it would keep South Korea from making any such assault. The Korean President understood he could not act without US aid, but admonished that it was "foolish for the U.S. to 'tie his hands' publicly." America would be better off to foster the image of South Korea's President as a loose cannon, uncontrollable and therefore unpredictable. That would keep the Chinese and the Russians guessing. It would create an unknown factor that could deter Communist forces from pursuing their own aggressive aims.

Rhee also wondered why the US failed to take advantage of his country as a resource. He described South Korea as a pawn that Washington could manipulate in order to weaken the Communists. Rhee complained "'Why doesn't the U.S. use me as the Russians use their satellites - India, North Korea and China?'" He wanted American planners to use South Korea as a proxy. Of course, if that led to an attack on North Korea, he would be amenable.

Nixon probably appreciated the role Rhee suggested for his country. He had a similar
function, in microcosm, as Vice President. Nixon certainly valued the Korean's
determination to keep the Communists guessing. He recalled in his memoirs, "Rhee's insight
about the importance of being unpredictable in dealing with the Communists." He adopted
this principle of doing the unexpected to keep his own enemies guessing. The idea appealed
to Nixon because of his need to take risks and remain in the public eye.

For his immediate well being, Nixon obtained much more from this Asian trip than
two concepts on how to fight Communism. He returned from the trip with a working
knowledge of the political, economic and social problems that region faced, and an
acquaintance with most of the pro-western Asian leaders. Most important, the tour illustrated
to Dulles Nixon's effectiveness as a representative of the United States. Embassies
throughout Asia reported on the tremendously positive reaction resulting from Nixon's visits.

From Thailand came a telegram "Visit distinguished not (repeat not) only unusually
helpful warm exchanges with Thailand leaders but also unprecedented contacts between Nixon
and people. Visit did much further United States Objectives." An equally positive report
came from Hong Kong. The visit was particularly successful in "increasing goodwill toward
the United States among the people." The Vice President received special praise for meeting
with the populace, in addition to leaders. "On every occasion Vice President went out of his
way to shake hands with persons on fringes of crowds assembled to see him. When he raised
his arms to greet crowds, they frequently responded with clapping and cheering, a reaction
seldom witnessed in Hong Kong, where bystanders normally apathetic to visits of people in
high positions." Nixon utilized tactics he had developed on the campaign trail and during the
Herter Committee trip. The greatest change since 1947 was that as Vice President he had
attained celebrity status in foreign countries.

During the trip, Nixon sent a telegram to State relaying his recommendations about the Philippines. He reported that Ramón Magsaysay "combines two qualities needed for leadership in Asia: (a) magnetic appeal to all classes of people, (b) genuine regard for the people's welfare." Both attributes were desirable for any politician in the US. He suggested that the Filipino leader come to the United States once he had consolidated his power and address a joint session of Congress. Dulles penned "I agree with this" in the margin of telegram.¹⁷ Dulles' agreement illustrated Nixon's utility to the Secretary.

Ambassador George V. Allen in India also sent accolades. Allen wrote the visit "contributed notably to our prestige in India and to better understanding of our respective points of view." Allen concluded "I do not believe we could hope for any more beneficial results to be obtained from single visit."

There was reason to praise the Vice President. Nixon's visit reassured the Indians that America considered India a world power. Allen explained, "Mr. Nixon's presence here... [has] fitted in admirably with Indian desire to be consulted on world and particularly oriental problems."¹⁸ Nixon's trip gave Asian countries the impression that the United States respected their opinions. His trip resulted in better communication all around.

Nixon performed beyond expectations in Pakistan. He was instrumental in clarifying the American position about Afghani claims on Pashtoonistan. He received instructions from the Department of State to discourage hostility and encourage direct talks between Pakistan and Afghanistan. The United States would not act as a mediator. These positions, he explained, had the complete support of Dulles and Eisenhower. The American Ambassador
to Pakistan reported that Pakistani officials believed Nixon's candid talks with Afghan leaders helped to develop improved relations between the countries.\textsuperscript{19} Nixon was proving his international affairs skills as both a representative and a negotiator. Could Dulles hope for a more effective goodwill Ambassador?

In Libya, Nixon's visit brought further achievement. There Nixon succeeded in moving forward negotiations for an American military base, where previous efforts had been stalled. Henry S. Villard, of the American Legation, noted that Nixon's position in the US government gave him greater sway with the King. He "could speak in the name of the President and no higher authority could be cited to impress on the Libyans the need for action in this regard." Villard reported, "As concerns the base agreement, no more can possibly be done than was done by the Vice President of the United States to emphasize our desire to expedite the negotiations." The King assured Nixon that efforts would be redoubled after January 1, and an agreement reached soon there after.\textsuperscript{20} Nixon increased American prestige in Libya and helped move toward the establishment of a military base in that nation. Dulles had found a superior agent in the Vice President. Nixon's office gave him the authority of America and his persuasiveness got him results. The Secretary would deploy his protégé again after this test run.

The experience Nixon gained in Asia was mainly one of acquaintanceship. In 1947, he had established a formula for such trips. He continued to follow it, whenever he could. This trip confirmed many of his suspicions and certainly increased his celebrity in the United States. It gave him the unprecedented opportunity for the Vice President to talk privately with most of the leaders of Asia.
In terms of increasing Nixon's role in the Administration, the most important aspect was the overwhelming success of his trip. If Dulles harbored any doubts about the Vice President's qualifications, he abandoned them, given the tremendous praise that followed each stop. Nixon performed flawlessly. Plus, Nixon provided his benefactor with first hand reports on relations with all of the countries he visited. Dulles rewarded Nixon for his efforts. Beginning in 1955, and continuing until Dulles' death in 1959, Nixon traveled abroad at least once a year. The Secretary of State could rely on Nixon to carry the message he had in mind and reconnoiter for him. In return, Nixon could expect positive press coverage and a boost in his national and foreign prestige.

This trip was a great triumph in Asia and America. When the Nixons returned to Washington on December 14, they were greeted by a delegation from the State Department, all the Ambassadors from the countries they visited and a number of Senators. Nixon went straight to the White House, where Eisenhower met him on the porch.21

Nixon's experiences gave him the first visible block to build his reputation as an international relations expert. He returned to America with a new sense of foreign relations proficiency, which he immediately attempted to apply. The Vice President hoped to share his many insights about the regions he had visited. But, Eisenhower's interest focused on whether or not he had curtailed Syngman Rhee's aggressive behavior toward North Korea. Ambrose noted that "All Eisenhower seemed to care about was getting Rhee to promise not to fight; the President was not interested in what Nixon had to say about the situation elsewhere in Asia." Ike's dismissal of everything else must have been a blow to Nixon. He probably took some consolation, however, in the fact that he did achieve the President's primary goal.
Before arriving in Korea, Nixon received a telegram from Dulles instructing him to convince Rhee that America would not support aggression on the part of South Korea. One day after his arrival, Nixon could boast that Rhee had verbally pledged he would not attack unilaterally, without first informing Eisenhower. He and the Ambassador to Korea viewed this as significant progress. Rhee's statement implied a measure of autonomy from US control, but implicitly acknowledged the importance of American support if South Korea were to attack.

By the time Nixon landed in the United States, he could state that Rhee was under control. The day after returning, he reported to the NSC on his talks with Rhee. He concluded his presentation by stating, "I do not believe that Rhee will take any action of the sort we fear without prior notification to the President. Nor will he take any action unless he is assured that the U.S. will go along." That was the reassurance Eisenhower, and Dulles, had desired.

Nixon hoped that after completing his assignment he would be rewarded with an expanded foreign affairs role. Toward that end, a week after his return, Nixon sought to underscore his status as an international expert. On December 23, he made a second presentation to the NSC on South East Asia. He adopted two tactics in an effort to catch the attention of NSC members. First, he couched his analysis of the region in terms of Europe. This might attract Ike's interest. Second, reflecting his frustration with Ike's sole concern about Korea, Nixon de-emphasized the importance of Korea and concentrated on Indochina. Drawing on his talks with Templar, he explained the contradiction with France wanting to keep South Vietnam in the French Union and the South Vietnamese desire for independence.
Nixon closed, "I am convinced in my own mind that what happens in Indochina is more important, from the standpoint of strategic interests of Europe, than what happens in Korea." He disputed Eisenhower's conclusion. But his disagreement came in terms of European security, making it a well crafted position designed to intrigue, rather than upset Ike.

Nixon's talks were not limited to the Cabinet and National Security Council. On January 8, 1954, he made a presentation to the top 22 State Department officials, two CIA representatives and Defense department personnel. Certainly, Foster and Allen Dulles were among the attenders. Nixon reported for three and a half hours, and then answered questions for another one and half hours. The Vice President methodically noted his findings about each country. Emphasizing Communism, most of the remarks concerned which countries were in danger of infiltration (a theme prevalent in his Herter journal, as well). He generally concluded that Asians favored economic progress and independence, over Communism.

The trip to the Far East got a foot in the international affairs door. After it, Nixon considered himself an expert in Asian foreign policy. Although Nixon's experience on the continent in 1947 might have led him to emphasize his European knowledge, he never attempted to advise on that region. Nixon assessed the situation early in the Administration, perhaps when the Secretary explained why he could not go to Europe, the Middle East or Latin America. Eisenhower's primary concern and expertise was Europe. Ike had formed strong relationships with the leaders of free Europe during World War II. Dulles could also claim a proficiency in continental matters, and Ike's trust of the Secretary of State led him to consult with Dulles on European policy. Nixon had little hope of gaining any say in a region
where Ike was so well versed, and already had a competent advisor.

Dulles' expertise also included Asia, and to a lesser extent Latin America, where he had traveled during his career as a lawyer. On the latter, Milton Eisenhower (the President's brother) had claims. Nixon could not gain a hearing there - not early in the Administration, at least. In 1953, Africa and the Middle East were still considered Great Britain's problem, so American interests there remained limited.

That left Asia. With Dulles' primary duty to advise Eisenhower on Europe, Nixon could begin building his reputation as an expert on the Far East. The Secretary had an interest in the area, but his time was occupied by higher priority issues. His grandfather had worked for the Chinese around the turn of the century and Dulles had acted as a translator for the Chinese delegation at the Second Hague conference in 1907. Additionally, in 1950 Dulles had hammered out the Japanese Peace Treaty. Nixon capitalized on the Secretary's experience in Asia. He used his interest in Asia to catch Dulles' attention and gain a voice in the Administration.

Besides the niche to be filled, Nixon had just returned from an extensive tour of an extremely contentious area. Among top officials he had the most up-to-date working knowledge of the region. Asia represented a perfect opening through which Nixon channeled his ambitions for a role in American foreign relations policy-making. First, he had all he learned on his trip to use in any analysis. Second, he could act as an advisor for Dulles, while not encroaching on Eisenhower's domain.

Foreign travel enhanced the Vice President's credentials, but he did not go abroad again until early 1955. In 1954, most of Nixon's time was split between campaigning for
Republican candidates and dealing with Joseph McCarthy. Nevertheless, he pursued his foreign affairs inclination. He constantly sought to illustrate his Asian - and general foreign policy - expertise within the Administration. The best place for that was at National Security Council meetings. Through a combination of debating with Dulles, presenting of his own analysis and inserting arbitrary comments, Nixon did secure himself a minor role in the foreign policy aspects of the Administration.

At the January 14, 1954 NSC session, Secretary Dulles suggested that if France abandoned Vietnam, and allowed a Vietminh government to fill the vacuum, "we should be able to make as much trouble for this government as they had made for our side and against the legitimate governments of the Associated states in recent years." He proposed non-Communist natives could conduct guerrilla operations against the Vietminh regime. Nixon disagreed. "While Secretary Dulles' idea had merit, he was not clear as to where we would find the guerrillas." Jungle fighters did not spontaneously appear. The Vietnamese might be inspired to fight if the French withdrew, but they would not fight to preserve French rule. Nixon undoubtedly based his criticism on the lessons he mastered in South East Asia. But, he may also have been relying on his initial contact with guerrilla fighters to draw his conclusions. He had, in 1947, interviewed Communist guerrillas in Florina, Greece. To offer convincing testimony against Dulles might not have helped his relationship with the Secretary, but it went a long way toward proving his expertise. And, in fact, the Secretary probably respected Nixon more for arguing a good case against him.

Two months later, Nixon again raised his voice to comment at the end of a meeting discussing South East Asian policy. Much of the conversation concerned foreign aid to the
region. Although the method of assistance had not been directly addressed, Nixon offered his opinion on how best to provide aid for South East Asia. US aid to Asia often carried colonialist overtones for those who received the aid. He therefore recommended the use of U.N. auspices to deliver American money, noting in Asia the United Nations was seen as "a bulwark against colonialism." Since US assistance was intended primarily to "build up these countries, would it not be sensible to emphasize the channel provided by the UN agencies and to put less emphasis on direct US assistance?" American interests would be served in either case. No one in the meeting responded to his idea, but he had been heard and made a viable point.

In May, Nixon again took Dulles on in debate and reiterated his position on Asian perceptions of colonialism. The Secretary advocated a Five Power Staff Agency to oversee problems within the region. Nixon claimed "in his opinion the five-power arrangement would be almost as bad for the United States as would be Unilateral U.S. intervention, since it would be interpreted by the Asian nations as sheer colonialism." The Vice President had confidence in his Asian expertise. Dulles responded that it would not be five white powers in charge. The Agency would be an organizing group, not one intended to dominate the region. Nixon accepted this explanation, although he may not have been totally persuaded by it.

Twice in June, Nixon voiced his opinion during top level meetings. In both instances his comments concerned Asia, the only foreign area he seemed comfortable discussing in-depth. First, Nixon was given an opportunity to lecture NSC members when both Dulles and Eisenhower left the meeting early.

As the ranking official, Nixon took charge of a meeting at which he had been silent up
to that point. He immediately criticized the Administration decision to consult with allies before taking action, in the event of an attack by the People’s Republic of China on a non-Communist country. He exclaimed "if the Chinese Communists moved overtly against any free country in the Asian area, and the United States, with allies or without them, did not move to resist such an aggression, 'the jig was certainly up.'" The remark brought to mind his off the record comment made in April about "sending in the boys" into Vietnam, if Communist forces were on the verge of victory - another effort to gain a voice in foreign policy decisions. Later that month, he complained that the United States "watched, hesitated, and didn’t know what policy to choose; whereas our enemy knew his policy and proceeded to carry it out." He advocated a policy of action in Asia and he repeatedly called for it.

In August, Nixon's recommendations produced a tangible foreign policy step. A report dated the twelfth, mentioned a new Special Book Program in Asia. The program provided an additional $325,000 in aid. It was "undertaken as a result of Vice President Nixon's survey of the area. The funds have gone into an expansion of the USIA book program in the Near and Far East where Soviet activity in the field of publication is immense." While not a major policy initiative, it did prove Nixon's opinions had some influence. Nixon undoubtedly celebrated this minor triumph.

Another small victory came after eight months of harping on Asia. Nixon finally received some recognition of his knowledge from a peer on the National Security Council. Robert Cutler, the NSC staff coordinator, "pointed out the particular interest of the Vice President in the Asian area, and asked him to express his views." Unwilling to admit to his self-promotion, Nixon denied any expertise. He initially agreed with the conclusion Dulles