EXCURSUS II

John W. Sewell on
Scoring Points and Losing Ball Games

An uncomfortable ambivalence now pervades many observers in the U.S. who have decried the lack in recent years of *any* U.S. policy toward the developing countries. Having campaigned for years for recognition of the importance of the poor countries to the United States, they now find that Washington seems to have not one, but two sets of policies toward the Third World. And the interplay of the two resembles the classic interrogation technique where one questioner is gentle and sympathetic and the other harsh and brutal. Both our traditional allies and much of the Third World now face the difficult task of deciding which is the real U.S. policy.

Last fall the cooperative approach came first in the lengthy and detailed speech read for Secretary of State Henry Kissinger at the opening of the Seventh Special Session of the United Nations General Assembly. It marked the first positive U.S. response to the multiplying pressures from the developing countries for reform of the international economic system. The confrontation approach, of course, has been led by Daniel Patrick Moynihan, the U.S. Ambassador to the U.N. Moynihan, in a widely quoted article in *Commentary*, proclaimed the role of the United States in the United Nations as the head of the "liberty party," and he has set for himself the job of calling to task all those who impugn America's good name and the free enterprise system.

The existence of not one but two sets of policies is striking to those familiar with the trends of the last decade in U.S. policy toward the developing world. Not only has United States aid declined in terms of purchasing power (we are almost at the bottom of the list of donor nations in terms of aid as a percentage of national wealth), but until now we have also opposed almost every proposal by the developing countries for serious address of their problems. In addition, we have engaged in a brutal war on the Asian mainland, and have shown a marked preference for repressive regimes in Southern Africa and for displacing legitimately elected governments in countries such as Chile.

At the same time, the pressure from the developing countries for change has been growing. They have articulated a coherent set of proposals for changes in the structure of international economic relationships, just at a time when the "demonstration effect" of the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) has stimulated a search for new levers to move the rich countries. In effect, both the "new rich" OPEC nations and the "old poor" have found a natural alliance in opposing the industrial countries, which until now have been unwilling to meet their demands for change even halfway. By the spring of 1975 it had become clear to many in Congress and the executive branch that the U.S. had to accommodate this new reality or it would face a unified front of oil producers and developing countries in every major international meeting. The result, after much bureaucratic infighting, was a major shift in United States policy toward cooperation. The change was signaled by Kissinger's speech in the General Assembly in September, which included a lengthy series of proposals on such complex issues as trade, commodities, monetary reform, U.N. reform, industrialization, food and agriculture, and the transfer of technology.

It is often not understood in this country that in preparing for the U.N. Session this fall the developing countries made considerable efforts to meet the industrialized countries, especially the U.S., at least halfway. In particular, there was a determined effort to head off the threat to expel Israel from the United Nations, a measure that clearly would have ended any hope of American cooperation. Indeed, the moderates among the developing countries fought hard at both the meeting of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) in July and at the Lima meeting of the Non-Aligned Nations in August to prevent a resolution calling for Israel's expulsion. Developing-country moderates were also helped by the Middle East settlement negotiated by the United States in late spring. In effect, the alliance between OPEC and the nonoil producing countries was weakening. The returns to the poor countries from OPEC's gains were not as great as expected, and they saw again that the industrialized countries held the key to any real changes in an international economic system. As a result, Kissinger's speech was greeted with general approbation, even though it did not go very far in meeting the demands of the developing countries.

It is not yet widely understood that the outcome of the Special Session signals the opening of the most extensive period of international negotiations since World War II, and perhaps before. The coming "year of negotiations" marks a rare and perhaps short-lived opportunity for the nations of the world to forge a new series of global bargains on such crucial topics as energy, food, development, an oceans regime, raw materials, trade, and a new monetary system.

Successful conclusion of these negotiations is as vital for the rich as for the poor. The industrial countries are increasingly worried about access to needed raw materials and are searching for ways to restore the growth patterns of the 1960's without disruption in markets and sources of supply. The poor are faced with a diminishing flow of aid, as well as steeply increased costs for fuel, food, and the manufactured goods they need for their de-

velopment. If the negotiations end in failure, addressing these problems that affect nearly all of humankind is likely to be put off for at least several years, at some considerable cost to both rich and poor.

And herein lies the danger in Ambassador Moynihan's "liberty party" posturing at the East River. In the year of negotiations that lies ahead the serious bargaining will take place not in New York but at such widely separated locations as Paris, Nairobi, Geneva, Washington, and Rome. But United States newspaper coverage and congressional discussions are likely to be dominated by Moynihan's verbal pyrotechnics, simply because they make good copy (the debate looks like the "good guys" versus the "bad guys"), and because they take place in the media capital of the world. The result may well be to obscure the crucial negotiations going on elsewhere, to dampen the impetus in the developing countries to cooperate, and to call into question further the seriousness of the American intentions to negotiate.

The anti-Zionism resolution illustrates quite clearly the costs of confrontational politics to all sides. Faced with a growing rapprochement between the U.S. and the developing countries and the possibility of accommodation between Israel and Egypt, the militant Arabs used a classic guerrilla warfare ploy—provoke your more powerful enemy to overreact and alienate a large part of the population. The provocation was the resolution linking Zionism with racism. The countries of the Third World, particularly the Africans, were already angered by Moynihan's implication, in a speech made in San Francisco, that General Idi Amin of Uganda had been named head of the OAU with the approval and support of most African leaders. (Actually, he became head because Uganda's turn on the alphabetical rotation had been reached.) Moynihan's public threats that the United States would "punish" any nation voting for the resolution added further fuel to the fire, and, in an age in which newly independent countries are extremely sensitive to charges of neocolonialism, most delegations had no alternative but to support the resolutions. As a result, the resolution was approved, although a number of developing countries voted against it or abstained. Many observers felt that skillful U.S. diplomacy could have mustered at least enough votes to postpone the vote until next year.

The outcome helped neither the industrial nor the developing world. The United States jeopardized international support for a settlement in the Middle East, an issue it considers of great importance. Those developing countries that supported the resolution risked creating a climate of public opinion in this country and abroad that will make international economic cooperation more difficult. Therefore, both sides face a choice in their politics toward each other. The developing countries have to decide how far they think they can push the United States on issues it considers of great importance. The U.S. has to decide whether it wants to make debating points about the inequities of the world and play for applause in the galleries, particularly in the press and Congress, or seek a new basis for long-term economic cooperation among states both rich and poor. The rest of the world will be eagerly awaiting our choice. Sometimes the current turmoil is almost enough to make one wish for the benign neglect that had characterized United States relations with the Third and Fourth worlds since the mid-1960's!

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EXCURSUS III

Lawrence Nevins on Spiritual Politics

The article I have translated below appeared in the *Portuguese Times* of August 28, 1975. A national weekly published in New Bedford, Massachusetts, the *Portuguese Times* probably is the best Portuguese-language newspaper in the United States. Critical of the Caetano government's colonial wars, it welcomed the coup of April 25, 1974, with genuine enthusiasm. It later became disillusioned with the course of revolution and has won some notoriety in Portugal as a vehicle for the promotion of the Azorean independence movement.

As readers of Kipling's *Captains Courageous* may recall, there have been Portuguese immigrant communities in New England—as elsewhere in the United States—since the nineteenth century. In the past decade, after the revision of the quota system, a new wave of immigrants rejuvenated the old settlements and pioneered new ones. Few substantial Portuguese American communities are without a church dedicated to Our Lady of Fátima, whose devotees—not only in Portugal but throughout the world—number in the millions.

Religious pilgrimage in Portugal responded to a poor, undereducated, hardworking people's longing for supernatural sustenance; for many Portuguese peasants it also has been a kind of socially approved form of tourism. With loved ones scattered all over the world, people who cannot easily communicate find in the spiritual telepathy of prayer an expression for their deepest concerns. The Portuguese faithful have prayed for the sick, the emigrants, and the young men in Africa who sometimes returned with missing limbs and sometimes never returned at all.

Obscurantism is a term educated Portuguese