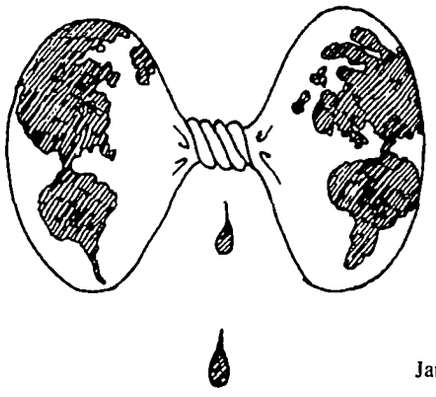
Soviet Union, and a very few others) with the advanced marine technologies to drill for oil and gas and mine the seabed minerals on their own initiative and authority. The developing-country bloc would be well advised to take a fresh look at this idea before it is too late—if it isn't too late already.

The developing-nation bloc has also been insisting, in U.N. debates and elsewhere, on rigid roles of national sovereignty over natural resources. The historical reasons for this insistence, the resentment of colonial preemption of their land and labor, are thoroughly understandable. But they are also thoroughly dated.



Janice Stapleton

A study of where future minerals and metals are likely to be found reveals that (except for the oceans) the favored expanses of resource-rich territory are already under the sovereign control of a very few nations with the most square kilometers of the world's surface—the U.S., Canada, Brazil, USSR, South Africa, Australia, Indonesia, and China. The forward-looking interest of most geographically smaller countries would clearly be to maximize international jurisdiction over (and therefore their own participation in decisions about) the key world resources they will *need*, but do not *own*, for their own development—oil, coal, iron, copper, uranium, manganese, nickel, and the rest. Yet "sovereignty over natural resources"—a doctrine that, looking ahead, will heavily benefit a few nations—is still the backward-looking battle cry of the many.

Those who now control these nonrenewable minerals, and those with the greatest capacity to produce renewable riches such as food and fiber, are prone to regard them as "gifts from God." That's how the Iranian planners describe their storehouse of oil and natural gas. In the United States our national hymn implies that our "waving fields of grain" are the consequence of God's grace especially shed on America.

The gifts of abundance scattered so unevenly on and under the earth's surface, and in and under the oceans, are certainly gifts *from* God. But does it follow that they are gifts *to* the people who happen as of 1976 to have conquered or inherited them? A more logical, equitable, and persuasive theology would make them gifts to humankind, to be conserved and exploited through international cooperation to meet the minimum needs of people regardless of race or creed or nation—and the needs of the unborn who have an interest in these resources if not yet a voice in their disposition.

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EXCURSUS II

Barry Rubin on Misunderstanding Lebanon

Misconceptions abound in the popular misunderstanding of recent events in Lebanon. A country that has for years been the symbol of stability in the Arab world has for more than a year now been torn by a bitter civil war that has left over 15,000 dead and tens of thousands wounded and homeless. It is easy, viewing pictures of Beirut's modern sections, or of fighting over the Holiday Inn and the Hilton, to see the strife in Western terms. That perception is misleading on at least three issues.

First, it is said that since the struggle is not "religious" in a theological sense, the real cause must be sought primarily in economic or ideological motivations. Religious differences in the Middle East, however, are not so much covers for these factors as they are indicators of competing nationalisms.

In the West, for better or worse, "religion" has come to mean a once-a-week affair—a matter of private conscience, of personal belief, which has (or in theory should have) relatively little to do with politics of identity. Not so in the Middle East. "The primary divisions inside the Near East," writes Albert Hourani, "are, as they have been for over a thousand years, religious: whether a man is Moslem, Christian, or Jew, and which branch...he belongs to." Historically, the empires ruling the Fertile Crescent distinguished among their citizens in terms of rights, duties, and position in society on the basis of their religion. Jews and Christians were accepted and "protected" only as second-class citizens. The idea of a Christian or Jewish-ruled state was intolerable in this scheme. Arab nationalism became integrally related to Islam, which is more than what most Westerners mean by "religion"; it is a worldview, a set of laws and way of life, a self-conscious political reality.

Any attempt to apply American "melting pot" concepts to such societies can lead only to confusion. In a region where every Arab state (except Lebanon) has declared Islam the state religion, the idea of a "secular, democratic state" is a prop-

aganda device produced to appeal to Western, not to local, audiences.

Lebanese "communities," then, are nations. They have their own home regions, heroes, economic functions, foreign allies, and domestic élites—and their own political goals. Lebanon's political structure, although badly in need of reform, made sense in this context: balancing off the communities, allowing them to maintain some internal autonomy while providing rules for coexistence. Present options are to reform this system by giving Muslims their fair share of power or for the Muslims to conquer the Christians with all the oppression that would entail.

A second prevalent myth is that the war is between "leftist Muslims" and "rightist Christians." This describes neither the composition (Muslims versus Christians) nor the ideologies (left versus right) of the combatants.

There are actually three forces in Lebanon: Muslim Arab nationalists, Christian Lebanese nationalists, and the "secular" left. This last group is drawn mostly from the smaller Christian groups—primarily Eastern Orthodox and Protestant intellectuals—and now from the Druses as well. This "third force" has been allied with the Muslim camp, although neither the Muslim nationalist leadership nor the Syrians have any intention of ever letting them take over. The Christian-dominated leftist groups within the PLO support this Lebanese left, not because they desire social change in Lebanon, but because they want to use that country more freely as a base for terrorist attacks into Israel. The Muslim-Syrian-Arafat wing of this coalition is, however, the inevitable senior partner.

Further, the "left" is not so leftist, nor the "right" so rightist. The key party of the "Muslim left" is the Progressive Socialist Party (PSP), which, as one commentator put it, is neither progressive, socialist, nor a party. The PSP is primarily based among Druse mountaineers who follow Kemal Jumblatt as the hereditary feudal leader of one of their clans. Jumblatt himself was educated in Jesuit schools. His political philosophy is a peculiar combination of humanism, pacifism, and European democratic socialism, sometimes coupled with fierce "anti-imperialist" rhetoric on international issues. For two decades Jumblatt tried to develop a party cutting across Lebanese religious lines, but he has failed to do so.

The leading Christian party, the Phalangist (*Al-Kata'eb*), is usually described as being extremely reactionary, but it too draws heavily on French liberal and social democratic thinking. It fought with determination against French colonialism in the 1930's and 1940's, and has often backed social reform programs. Although strongly Christian nationalist, it is no more fascist than the PSP is Communist.

The third myth is that the struggle is a class conflict between rich and poor. Actually it is a conflict between national groups—both led by traditional élites. The issues at stake have been mainly over foreign policy—relations to the PLO and the Arab world—rather than over differing stands on social change. The extremists in the Muslim camp are extreme in terms of their nationalism, not in terms of the left-right spectrum familiar to the West. The kind of peace settlement advocated by the Syrians and the urban Sunni Muslim élite they support illustrates the primacy of national issues: a 50-50 division of Parliament between Christians and Muslims, strengthening the Muslim premier, opening up the army to more Muslim officers, and so forth.

A main feature of international politics in recent history is the growth of nationalistic feelings. Previously, it had been conventional wisdom to expect the imminent withering away of such sentiments and their replacement by new loyalties along humanistic or class lines. That expectation has been around for a long time. In his "Admonition to Prayer Against the Turk" (1541) Martin Luther warned that poor European peasants, oppressed by greedy princes, landlords, and burghers, might prefer Muslim to Christian rulers. Now, as then, there is no evidence of this happening. In Lebanon, even those Christians allied with the Muslims have taken this position on the basis of their own communal identity, with a program seeking to avoid Muslim domination.

The increasing gaps between national groups in the Middle East in no way contradicts modernization. Samuel Huntington writes: "Modernization means that all groups, old as well as new, traditional as well as modern, become increasingly aware of themselves as groups and of their interests and claims in relation to other groups." Protection of minorities within countries and regions should be one of the highest priorities of those concerned with human rights today. In the Middle East this means opposition to Muslim Arab attempts to subjugate blacks in southern Sudan, Kurds in Iraq, and to destroy the Jewish nation, Israel.

Without a compromise settlement events in Lebanon also could move toward permanent subjugation and even destruction. Only Western support for responsible Lebanese leaders can prevent this further tragedy.

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EXCURSUS III

Wilson Carey McWilliams on Conscription and Public Service

Like so many of the once-trumpeted triumphs of the Nixon Administration, the "all-volunteer" military proves to be half conscious deception, half moral evasion. Washington researchers have informed