

# EXCURSUS 1

## Ralph Bultjens on THE GANDHI VISIT AND INDO-AMERICAN RELATIONS

Foreign policy is a multilayered activity embracing three levels of relationships: policy as made by political leaders, execution as carried out by bureaucrats and diplomats, and public opinion as reflected in the perceptions and attitudes of average citizens. There is a direct linkage between each of these levels. An effective foreign policy requires clarity of policy, effective execution, and a cultivation of public opinion.

To evaluate the impact of Prime Minister Indira Gandhi's recent U.S. visit on Indo-American relations we must examine it within this context. Indian foreign policy has been clearly articulated, with a philosophic consistency, by Mrs. Gandhi during the past decade. Its essential components have been a commitment to nonalignment in world affairs, a resistance to racism and big power interventions around the world, support for humanitarian and development economics issues, and a dedication to India's integrity and security.

American foreign policy, although oscillating in some areas during the four administrations of the past decade (Nixon, Ford, Carter, Reagan), has had the logic of a superpower. It has, of course, its own alignment in global politics and seeks to bend the policies of other nations to conform with its objectives. It has supported, underwritten, and activated interventions around the world. It has been lukewarm on development economics issues and selective on humanitarian matters. And the basic thrust, or "till," of American foreign policy toward Pakistan has endangered India's security. As Mrs. Gandhi said in Washington: "It is difficult to imagine two nations more different than ours."

Mrs. Gandhi's visit was an object lesson in diplomacy. Unlike most heads of state, who generally confine their passage through America to a protocol-dictated schedule, she reached out to touch the widest range of constituencies—the media, intellectuals, cultural groups, scientists, businessmen, the Indian community, old associates of pre-

freedom days. Many of these contacts were initiated by her personally. For several days she virtually captured the media—a triumph of personality and grace over inherent hostility.

Substance accompanied style. The visit influenced many elements of the Indo-American relationship. In the areas of policy, deep differences remain, but American leaders came to understand the reasons for these differences. Mrs. Gandhi expounded the logic and principles behind Indian foreign policy with a clarity and precision lacking in the usual channels of diplomacy. She proved that good diplomacy is not only good talking; more important, it is good listening. It is too early to evaluate the impact of Mrs. Gandhi's discussions with an American administration that is conspicuously insensitive to the needs, interests, and aspirations of developing countries. Yet the Indian case was never better presented. As the prime minister put it: "Our hand of friendship is stretched out to all. One friendship does not come in the way of another." This distinction, which American foreign policy has yet to appreciate, was probably presented in the context of India's relationship with the Soviet Union. It applies as much to America's relationship with Pakistan.

In the area of policy execution, some effective action was achieved. The nuclear fuel dispute was partially resolved and several cultural and other agreements were concluded. Perhaps more important than these negotiations themselves were the intangible qualities that Mrs. Gandhi infused into the process of policy implementation. Her example and inspiration have given a dimension of reality to diplomatic shadowplays. Bureaucrats and diplomats on both sides now have visible evidence of a commitment that was once verbal; this should enhance their own effectiveness.

It is at the popular level of public opinion that Mrs. Gandhi has made her most immediate contribution. Before her arrival the average American perception of India was heavily, and wrongly, slanted toward the notion that India was either irrevocably tied to the Soviet Union or was determinedly anti-American, or both. Millions of Americans saw Mrs. Gandhi on television and thousands saw her in person. They heard her dispel this misperception: "We are not anti-anybody." They also heard her describe India's achievements and dissolve the widely held, and ill-in-



formed, conviction that India is a nation of beggar-indigents and constantly seeks international handouts: "Around 90 per cent of the resources for our development have been indigenous." The credibility of her message has carried far. There already has been a marked improvement in the public perception and the atmosphere in which India is discussed in this country.

These are considerable achievements from a short visit. However, we must remember that this is only the threshold, an encouraging starting point. Whether future developments will be both positive and sustained depends on many variables: the policies of governments, the effectiveness of diplomats, and the support and work of the Indian community in America.

Yet Mrs. Gandhi's visit has made a major impact. Above all, it shows us that, in this age of impersonal mechanisms, personality does matter. And a change in atmosphere, whether it produces a change in policy or not, is a significant development in itself.

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## EXCURSUS 2

### Vladimir Solovyov on THE HAUNTING OF AMERICA

The specter of communism, whose presence in Europe was proclaimed by Karl Marx in *The Communist Manifesto* of 1848, has changed its place of residence. Now it is haunting our Hemisphere. But whether this is really the same ghost or a new one is hard to say. Most likely it is the specter of a specter—that is, a specter in an even more precise sense, since it was born (as another German, Immanuel Kant, might have said) in the sphere of pure reason with a fillip from an unbridled and arbitrary imagination. The old specter, carrying a gravedigger's spade with which to bury capitalism alive, ended its days—at a rather early age for a specter—in the boundless expanses of Russia, whence its fate had carried it. Over its grave an even more skillful gravedigger, one Joseph Stalin, erected a monumental national-chauvinist empire.

As for the contemporary specter of Eurocommunism, it is more likely a namesake than a distant relative of the old specter, having given up haunting to settle down and take its place in parliaments and, in France, even in the government. Europeans have found out that the best way to tame a specter is to domesticate it and give it the same rights enjoyed by other members of a pluralistic society.

The situation is different in America. Here we have decided to reanimate the specter in its most improbably sinister aspect and to declare it responsible for all of the world's problems—from the antinuclear movement in Western Europe to social instability in Central America, where it will cause country after country to fall like so many dominoes and soon threaten the very citadel of world democracy. Fearing the worst, the U.S. Government stays awake all night to do battle with the ghost.

Fears have a most regrettable attribute: They are often realized. And they may indeed be realized if the U.S. Gov-

ernment, in continuing to support antipopular, repressive regimes in Central America, drives local advocates of reform into the arms of Moscow. Not so very long ago the U.S. managed to isolate Fidel Castro and provide a good deal of the impetus for his adoption of the Communist faith. Castro, as much a profane in Marxist-Leninist ideology then as Alexander Haig is now, later became more papist than the pope. Today America is effecting a similar metamorphosis by the Sandinistas of Nicaragua and the rebels of El Salvador. If this kind of thing continues, we shall create not one but many Communist specters to freely haunt the neighborhood—a good example of the domino theory in action.

There is only one possibility for preventing the transformation of the Hemisphere into a classic haunted house, and that is to stop cultivating specters of communism. It is better to have the Salvadoran leftists in a coalition government than in the Salvadoran mountains. It is better to sit down with the Sandinistas and help them turn into Social Democrats (like those now in power in West Germany, France, and Greece) than to continue frightening and isolating them, making them into Soviet puppets. And it is time to find an approach to Fidel Castro that will effectively wean him away from Moscow, abandoning the attempts to overthrow him, which carry the possibility of an even less desirable sort taking over the reins of government.

We have before us the example of France's President Mitterrand, who obtained a large enough majority in last year's elections to create a one-party Socialist government but wisely chose a coalition. He knows it is preferable to have four Communists in the government than a million in the opposition. Mitterrand's recipe can be used to good advantage in Central America. When specters are allowed to take on human form, those who feared them and those who succumbed to the climate of fear are cured of their paranoia.

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## EXCURSUS 3

### Thomas Land on ENVIRONMENT MANAGEMENT IN NIGERIA

Scientists in West Africa have tripled maize production in poor soils without fertilizer input by planting the crops between permanent rows of fast-growing leguminous trees. The first results of the study, which is progressing with cooperation by universities in many countries, are beyond expectations. The trees fix nitrogen in the soil and provide a rich supply of organic material for mulching as well as poles for fuel and plant stakes. The nitrogen fertilizer fixed by the roots and present in the leaves enables the same land to be used year after year without recourse to the traditional system of bush fallowing.

The implications of the scheme, developed at the International Institute of Tropical Agriculture in Ibadan, Nigeria, point well beyond the economics of food production in the hungry belt of the globe. As a spokesman for the United Nations University explained: "In much of the humid tropics increasing populations and rising demands for food and raw materials press heavily on the traditional systems