

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.

Vladimir Solovyov, a Russian-born historian and journalist, regularly covers foreign affairs for Worldview and other American publications.

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

that have evolved mainly to meet subsistence needs and local exchange. The resulting intensification of agriculture, often using imported techniques which are inappropriate to tropical conditions, almost always leads to a vicious cycle of environmental deterioration and a lowering of productive capacity.

"One of the most promising methods of sustaining high productivity while minimizing social and environmental damage is agro-forestry, which combines tree and field crops—and sometimes even livestock as well."

Some leguminous trees grow as much as fifty feet a year, prevent soil erosion, and, in the case of one Latin American species, even provide a sap that can fuel a diesel engine. Their potential value to the ailing planet has been discovered only recently, and perhaps at the last moment. For the real energy crisis affecting billions of people in the developing regions lies in the shortage of firewood, charcoal, crop residues, and animal dung: Up to nine-tenths of Africa's total energy consumption originates from such sources.

According to the World Bank, a fivefold increase in the rate of forest planting is essential to offset the anticipated fuelwood consumption by the turn of the century; and a fifteenfold increase is recommended for Africa.

The leguminous tree *Leucaena*, which is used in the Ibadan studies, could even offset the damage done by slash-and-burn farmers because it can grow back in only two years, as compared to ten years for most other species. Some of its more than a hundred varieties produce a dense, low foliage capable of arresting forest fires. They survive well in poor soils, prevent soil erosion, and produce ten times the timber yield of temperate forests.

Thomas Land writes from Europe on global affairs.

EXCURSUS 4

Samuel DuBois Cook on ETHICS AND WORLD ORDER

(The following is an excerpt from the opening remarks of a CRIA seminar on the North-South Dialogue held at Dillard University in New Orleans.)

Indispensable to any world order is the perennial and profound relevance of ethical concerns to the complex and thorny international process. Ethics is inescapable in dealing with the hopes, experience, and achievements of human existence. Man is always a bearer and seeker of values even as he struggles for power, prestige, and privilege. The will-to-power is rooted in the will-to-meaning. Ultimate political analysis entails ultimate ethical analysis. Rational and creative political decisions and public policies must be informed by ethical imperatives.

Ethics is concerned with such cognate concepts as right and wrong, good and bad, helpful and harmful, just and unjust. It is concerned with creative tension between the "is" and the "ought," the real and the imagined, the promise and the fulfillment. There is something profoundly unique and creative about ethical ideals. They separate man from the beast and the life of civilization from the life of the jungle. To be truly human and civilized is to be profoundly touched, moved, guided, inspired, and transformed by ethical ideals. The heart of ethical con-

sciousness is the search and cry for something better—the divine and sacred search for ever higher aspirations and achievements.

Ethics is the final norm and principle of socio-ethical criticism and construction. Thus, economics, politics, geography, military, geo-politics, technology, science, and even religion can offer provisional, tentative, fragmentary, and subordinate—but not final—norms or standards of evaluation. Such norms or standards do not carry their own credentials and are not, in the end, self-justifying. *Per contra*, they must receive their justification, validation, and verification in terms of a realm of meaning, values, and being beyond themselves—the moral or ethical order and perspective.

Unmistakably, ethical considerations are crucial in such matters as war and peace, wealth and poverty, the pacific settlement of disputes, diplomatic processes and immunity, the negotiation process, conciliation, adjudication, territorial integrity, independence, colonialism, imperialism, human rights, freedom, oppression, international order, justice, stability, and political terrorism. Do nations, for example, have a responsibility to promote human rights beyond their own frontiers? On what basis, terms, presuppositions, and ultimate commitments? Is compassion for human suffering a national as well as individual or personal responsibility?

Let's face the bitter questions and angry truth. What are the obligations of the "have" nations to the "have not" nations? Why? How can nations make amends for the suffering they have caused others and the injustices inflicted upon other human beings by previous generations? Are history and culture at heart redemptive as well as creative? Is national self-interest under the judgment, sanction, and condemnation of the universal ideal—the humanistic imperatives and haunting commitments of the "ancient longings" of a common humanity? What, indeed, is the center of meaning and value in world politics, the "family of nations," the international arena?

A heightened ethical perspective is a dramatic and grim reminder that national self-interest cannot finally be made normative—that is, right and proper. To ascribe finality to the self-interest of nations is to court disaster and threaten our fragile civilization. It means world chaos, disunity, instability, war, and perpetual insecurity. It means to succumb to the syndrome that "might makes right." It means to abandon the world, with all its creative and higher possibilities, to the children of darkness.

National self-interest does not carry its own credentials. It is not self-justifying. It cannot be made normative. National self-interest must be subordinated to a greater good, a wider system of order and security, a deeper community of interests, a larger principle of meaning and fulfillment. The final norm must be the great humanistic vision of all mankind, the intrinsic worth, dignity, and beauty of every person, the universal human community, and world order. The good is not that which protects and promotes national self-interest, but, rather, national self-interest is protected and promoted by the common good of mankind, what Immanuel Kant called the "commonwealth of humanity."

In foreign policy, international affairs, and the search for a genuine world order, great humanistic visions and ethical ideals, for all their complexity of application and interpretation, are, in the end, the only light we have shining in the tragic, starless nights.

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