

Correspondence

India's Nuclear Test

To the Editors: I have very much appreciated Professor Ashok Kapur's several contributions in *Worldview* dealing with foreign affairs. He is one of the many writers who make *Worldview*, in my opinion, unquestionably the most indispensable journal on my list. Yet I confess to a certain uneasiness in reading his apologia for India's nuclear test earlier this year ("India's Nuclear Test: They've Been Trying to Tell Us Something," Excursus, August).

Professor Kapur may be right about the legal position of India vis-à-vis its agreement with Canada. But that is really not the main issue that has disturbed many people throughout the world. Whatever the fine print may say in the India-Canada agreement, nuclear proliferation is a growing fact of life. To the best of my knowledge, there is no clear line between "peaceful" and "military" nuclear development. Yet Professor Kapur seems so casual in taking at face value the Indian assurance that their program . . . is purely for "peaceful" uses. . . .

We are discussing more than good intentions (although even on that score one wonders why Professor Kapur is so ready to credit the good intentions of the Indians). In international affairs good intentions must be made plausible by good behavior and must be backed up by structured ways to assure good behavior. . . . It is easy to say that Japan, Israel, and a dozen other countries could develop nuclear programs quite apart from what India may or may not do. It may also be true. But does anyone doubt that precedent plays an important role in how people and nations behave? Is it not obvious that India's example will provide further excuse for other nations which may not be so trustworthy as Professor Kapur apparently feels the Indians are? . . .

I respectfully suggest that Professor Kapur has, no doubt unintentionally, deflected our attention from

the urgent problems posed by nuclear proliferation. What he calls the "legalism" of the nonproliferation agreements, which he says are imposed "by a concert of superpowers," may not be adequate, but what is the alternative? No one would seriously suggest that every nation that has the capacity of developing a nuclear program should have an equal say in global nuclear policy. Since we are assured that nuclear technology is fast coming within the reach of anyone with access to a high-school science laboratory, such a proposal would be equivalent to chaos and would mean no policy at all. . . .

It may seem unfair to condemn India in particular, but, after all, it was India and not the dozen other countries that might have done so that unleashed this further threat to human survival. We might wish devoutly for universal nuclear disarmament and we might greatly distrust the superpowers presently calling the plays. But given the unhappy situation that prevails, it would seem that, the least we can do is to clearly condemn any further spread of the weaponry of death. Since I especially respect *Worldview's* determined effort to view world developments in an ethical light, I confess to being disappointed with this particular response to an extremely ominous event.

Rachel Deyoung
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Ashok Kapur Responds:

Ms. Deyoung's letter outlines the conventional wisdom in the American literature on nuclear proliferation, and one of the reasons I write about India is not to act as Government of India's spokesman (which I clearly am not) but rather to question some of the premises in the American literature on the subject. Let me try to respond to Deyoung's concerns as follows:

1. True, nuclear proliferation "is a growing fact of life." True, intentions must be backed up with behavior. But this is precisely the point. If proliferation is a growing

fact of life—and when we talk about proliferation we are talking about civilian nuclear technology, "peaceful" explosives technology, nuclear weapons, and nonweapons nuclear systems such as nuclear-powered submarines—what is the proper solution? No further proliferation, or no proliferation (on a universal and comprehensive basis) at all?

2. Regarding Indian intentions, I am not taking official Indian statements at face value simply because as a political scientist one is trained not to do so. Neither is it a question of intentions being "good." Goodness is a value-oriented thing, and to define good intentions one first needs to show "goodness in terms of what and in terms of whose values." Rather the link I make (as does Deyoung) is between intentions and behavior. This link is made in terms of my statement that India's policy is not geared to nuclear weapons development at present and therefore is "peaceful at present." This, of course, refers to the present and the foreseeable future, say two to five years, and this is just an educated guess and not something based on computer analysis. One need not believe Indian statements to analyze actual Indian commitments—in terms of development and deployment (although R & D in ballistics and space technology is going on). Before Westerners are taken in by general scenarios of chain reactions in "the" horizontal proliferation process, perhaps they should first try to assess the actual decisions and the actual facts of weapons development in the case of India and other potential proliferators. In this connection it is worth noting that the Indian military has not to date been involved in India's nuclear development. I don't want to argue whether Indian intentions are good or bad, but I would urge one thing: Indians manage to say a good deal—albeit in outline form—about their internal thinking, even though there are ambiguities and at times the difference between aspirations and expectations is not clear. It is noteworthy that the framework of Indian nuclear
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Clash of Titans by Edward W. Chester

(Orbis; 316 pp.; \$12.95)

Clash of Titans fills a need for a comprehensive study of U.S.-African relations—economic, cultural, missionary, and political. The author starts with the slave trade and moves through such important eras as the Barbary pirates, the Berlin Conference, the First and Second World War years, and the later emergence of nationalism. The book is strongest in its analysis of the ten periods of U.S. relations with Africa up to the era that began with the end of World War II. The chapter on the emergence of nationalism after 1945 is weak, especially in its coverage of developments after 1960. In all, the author has managed to steer his analysis away from the special-interest evaluations that mar so much current literature on Africa. In 1974 developments in Angola, Mozambique, and Rhodesia signal dramatic changes in Southern Africa. As we move into this critical period, let us hope that the U.S. will more quickly identify its ultimate national interests than it did in some of the past periods so thoroughly analyzed by Professor Chester. Chester, Associate Professor of History at the University of Texas at Arlington, offers a helpful bibliography and five tables giving data on immigration to the United States, African-American trade, and U.S. investment in Africa. It is unfortunate the author was not able to make some of the tables more contemporary.

—Thomas Patrick Melady

Correspondence

(from p. 2)

thinking—the need to have peaceful nuclear explosions — was defined many years back. Perhaps some Westerners should improve their homework.

3. Even if there is no clear line at present between peaceful and military nuclear explosives, such a line

seems to be emerging. Panel discussions of the International Atomic Energy Agency in Vienna (1970, 1971, and 1972) have noted the importance of peaceful nuclear explosions. In bilateral Soviet-American agreements signed during 1973 and 1974 the importance of peaceful nuclear uses for energy has been noted, although much work remains to be done to give proper legal shape to the question. In 1967 Ambassador Roshchin of the USSR noted the need for a separate international agreement on the question of peaceful nuclear explosions for economic development.

4. Finally, if I may say so, those who express outrage about India's peaceful explosion have missed one point. The Government of the USA has not stated flatly that India is moving toward nuclear weapons development. The State Department issued no statement describing the U.S. Government's reaction to the Indian test. On May 20, in response to a journalist's question, the State Department spokesman stated briefly: "The United States has always been against nuclear proliferation for the adverse impact it will have on world stability." Apart from the exaggeration implied in the word "always," the question remained unanswered: Is it the official U.S. judgment that India is moving toward nuclear weapons development? I suspect not. Perhaps scholars ought to probe such nuances.

5. Ms. Deyoung says something about the Indian test as a precedent. Two points are involved here. First, before we talk about the Indian precedent, we should ask about the precedent which the superpowers have set. Really, why is it all right for superpowers to have nuclear weapons and the responsibility to shape the world order, but the same proposition does not seem to be valid for lesser powers? Of course, if the question were merely philosophical, one would not worry too much about it. However, there is a problem with the superpower approach if certain states have rights which even theoretically are not available to the lesser powers, as is the case with the

NPT. One should remember that India's attack against the NPT system is really a challenge to a superpower-oriented style of international nuclear lawmaking and the arguments have political, security, and commercial, or potentially commercial, implications, and India would still like real vertical and horizontal nuclear nonproliferation. Therefore, one should closely assess the effect of superpower behavior—the precedents which it conveys to third parties. Secondly, I think one should reassess the theory which asserts that the sixth nuclear power *will* pave the way for the sixteenth. India appears to be quite careful, even slow according to critics in India, in its nuclear decision-making, and I see no reason to believe that decision-makers in Japan, Pakistan, Israel, South Africa, and Argentina are fools. It is one thing to make speeches but quite another thing to make tangible commitments that entail much bureaucratic infighting. One alternative, therefore, is to have more diplomatic dialogues between states interested in the nuclear business so that issues and interests can be quietly discussed instead of the posturing which international conference diplomacy entails.

Correction

In the opening paragraphs of O. Edmund Clubb's "The Soviet Union in World Trade" (*Worldview*, September) the author quoted the State Department as saying in 1958 that the extension of long-term credits to the USSR would "strengthen a potential enemy." The printer rendered the potential enemy a political enemy, and the error was undetected in the proofreading process.

Omission

The splendid drawing of Secretary of State Kissinger with the forlorn, unworn dashiki that accompanied the article on "Kissinger's Missing Continent"—as all the drawings in the October issue—are the work of a young New Yorker, Janice Stapleton.