Correspondence

Stalin & the Cold War

To the Editors: In the December issue of Worldview Walter C. Clemens, Jr., I think, makes a serious mistake when he writes: ‘‘My own conclusion is that he [Stalin] would have preferred a harmonious continuation of the Grand Alliance into the postwar era, and resorted to unilateral measures harmful to the alliance largely in response to what he saw as Western breaches of good faith, especially on reparations.’’

Clemens, like a number of other non-Communist American writers, is quite prepared to give Stalin the benefit of the doubt, and to heap blame particularly on the United States for the breakdown of the wartime alliance between the Soviet Union and the Western powers. In contradiction to this thesis I would like to cite the testimony of no less a person than Earl Browder, the general secretary of the American Communist party from 1930 to 1945.

This testimony is to be found in an extensive interview with Browder by Steven G. Neal, staff writer of the Philadelphia Inquirer, which was published in the Inquirer on August 5, 1973. Neal interviewed Browder at the home of Browder’s son in Princeton, New Jersey.

Said Browder: ‘‘Stalin needed the cold war to take the place of the hot war then coming to a close. He needed it to keep up the sharp international tensions by which he alone could maintain such a regime in Russia. Stalin had to pick a quarrel with the United States, the leading capitalist country. And I was the victim of it.’’ (Stalin expelled Browder from the Communist party because Browder was inextricably linked with the policy of friendship between the United States and the Soviet Union.)

Browder’s expulsion from the Communist party, which occurred about the beginning of June, 1943, was the signal that heralded the beginning of the cold war, with Stalin as the engineer. World War II had ended in Europe only a month before that but was still going on in Asia. At the Potsdam Conference, which began in July, 1945, the Americans and the British discovered for the first time following the war the deep hostility of the Soviet leaders.

Robert Heckert

Walter Clemens Responds:
Analysis of the cold war’s origins requires a sober evaluation of many kinds of evidence. Mr. Heckert cites one important source, which, however, could by no means be considered as the last word. My own judgment, to which Mr. Heckert objects, is based on many other sources as well, Soviet and Western. The debates among orthodox and revisionist historians, and those who try to create a new synthesis (with whom I would like to be included), cannot be fully resolved unless we obtain access to Soviet and other materials not yet in the public domain. The importance to Moscow of the reparations issue, however, was noted by U.S. negotiator Philip E. Mosely even before Potsdam, and has been argued further in the recent book by Daniel Yergin, Shattered Peace (Houghton-Mifflin, 1977).

With Mrs. Gandhi

To the Editors: Why do we have to have served up, almost unchallenged, Mrs. Gandhi’s apologia for the Emergency and her assessment of Janata? I was sad to read Ralph Buultjens’s interview with the former Indian prime minister (‘‘No Room for Vengeance,’’ Worldview, December), and the more so when I noted Worldview’s statement of editorial purpose: ‘‘To place public policies, particularly in international affairs, under close ethical scrutiny.’’ This seemed to be the one scrutiny that was missing from the article.

I write with some feeling as I have just been in India for the publication by Macmillan of my book on the Emergency. After a fairly intensive study of this twenty-month period I had to give the book the title, ‘‘Experiment with Untruth.’’ One cannot in correspondence deal with all the unbegged questions. But may I make just three points.

Firstly, all the evidence now being presented to the Shah Commission makes nonsense of Mrs. Gandhi’s justification for the imposition and retention of Emergency legislation.

(Continued on p. 55)
Scotland and Nationalism: Scottish Society and Politics. 1707-1977
by Christopher Harvie
(george Allen & Unwin: 318 pp.: no price)

England must maintain title to North Sea oil if it is ever to get out of hock or survive in hock. The Scottish nationalists know that well and are determined to use it as leverage in their campaign for independence. Mr. Harvie speaks for a more leftward view and is willing to give the English the oil money if Scotland is then freed to move ahead with its own internal socialist revolution. Most everyone agrees that the current discussion of "devolution" of powers means that the relationship between Scotland and England is undergoing major change. In the debate over the nature of that change Harvie represents an intriguing but distinctly minority argument. The book is more of a tract than the dispassionate historical analysis its title and subtitle might suggest.

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Secondly, everything that happened under the Emergency is definitely not happening now. The mood of fear that I encountered a year ago is absent. The rule of law has been restored and the complete lifting of censorship is self-evident.

Thirdly, the Janata government's performance is better than its image. It may appear slow, but it is heading in the right direction. It is having to deal with a legacy of economic mismanagement. Its prices policy has been reasonably successful in the light of world inflation. Its economic ideas are revolutionary. The impatience and cynicism are more evident in the cocktail circuit than among those doing constructive work.

Finally, may I say that the idea that democracy is good for us, but not for others, is a Western attitude that many Indians find abhorrent. Indeed, the prime minister, Morarji Desai, was saying to me only a few hours before I read your article that he hoped the March election results would have dispelled this idea. He also said, with much vigor, "Nowadays people regard politics as a place without ethics or morality. That is all wrong. Unless you bring morality into politics you cannot bring morality into society because government has the greatest influence in people's lives, whatever people may say about it."

Michael Henderson

Ralph Buultjens Responds:
Mr. Henderson's objections to Worldview's publication of my interview with Mrs. Gandhi suggest a somewhat one-dimensional focus; as a professed advocate of democracy, it is strange that he wants to prevent publication of viewpoints with which he does not agree. I draw to his attention Votier's sentiments, which encapsulate the essence of democracy: "I disapprove of what you say, but I will defend to the death your right to say it."

To indicate that it is possible to make an objective evaluation of events in India during the past decade without attempting to examine Mrs. Gandhi's perspectives is a suggestion unworthy of serious consideration. Mrs. Gandhi is a significant historical figure, who retains a considerable public following, and should be treated as such. In my interview I attempted to probe elements of her personality, beliefs, and views that would give us some insight into what motivates her and how she perceives events.

Mr. Henderson also makes three other observations that suggest a rush to judgment at a pace exceeding that of even the present Government of India. Those who profess to believe in the rule of law should be particularly careful not to confuse with judgments evidence presented before commissions of inquiry; indictments must not be presented as convictions of guilt. It is almost one year since Mrs. Gandhi's defeat at the polls. Thus far, despite intensive and often aggressive investigation, she has not been convicted of any act of malfeasance in office.

In assessing the public mood, wide differences of opinion are possible. My own observations, based on several visits to India, differ sharply with those of Mr. Henderson. I have to report that several members of the Janata government themselves, in public and private statements, express disappointment in the performance of their own party. Its economic ideas, rather than being revolutionary, are as yet vague blueprints primarily reflecting an amalgam of rural-oriented economics with Gandian (Mahatma) sentiments. As yet little has been done to give these any real form or meaning. A mood of fear, which Mr. Henderson claims to have encountered one year ago, is far from absent—supporters of Mrs. Gandhi and many others who disagree with the present government will currently testify to this. One can argue that the objects of fear may have shifted, but given recent events, one surely should not proclaim that India is free from fear.

In controversial times, such as those on which Mr. Henderson and I have focused, most viewpoints are contested. However, in such conflicts objectivity and truth should not be the first casualties!

"The Legacy of Echeverría"

To the Editors: A resident of Guadalajara, Mexico, born and raised in that city of nearly two million in the Mexican highlands, the writer of the letter that follows, is fluent in both Spanish and English. He has visited the United States and Canada and does much in his homeland to encourage better communication and understanding between his countrymen and people of the U.S. and Canada. Six years ago this studious and intelligent young Mexican was in Seattle for a month as my guest, and whenever I am in Guadalajara, his home and the homes of all in his family are always open to me. In forwarding the November Worldview article on Mexico ("What Mexico's President Inherited" by Robert Drysdale) to this Guadalajara friend I had asked for his comments on the report so that they might be sent on
Defense of Taiwan

To the Editors: Sentiments expressed in Richard John Neuhaus's "Excursus" on the U.S. commitment to Taiwan ("American Pragmatism on Panama and China," October, 1977) represent the only honorable course that the U.S. can follow in the event other considerations do not override them. The United States, in its Defense Treaty, has solemnly pledged to defend Taiwan in the event of attack and to preserve its free choice as to its own form of government. This pledge, when given, was solemn and binding and cannot be lightly dismissed.

Like Mr. Neuhaus, I consider pledges to carry a deep-seated meaning. However, a number of factors in the situation in the Far East have given me pause. Unfortunately these factors have not, to my knowledge, been widely discussed in the normalization debate.

The first factor is Japan. Defense of Taiwan cannot be the sole responsibility of the U.S. Japan's wishes must be considered.

Taiwan's defense directly affects Japan. Should the Japanese decide that a free Taiwan is essential to its security, then Japan must contribute to Taiwan's defense—in alliance with the U.S. or on its own. Japan's Self-Defense Force has the naval and air capability to bolster vastly the Taiwanese army and to control the straits. Its industrial strength and weapons' capability plus its large merchant marine give Japan the strength it needs to back up its forces.

Second, from Japan's point of view, Taiwan's defense and South Korea's defense are linked. The golden triangle of trade in Northeast Asia integrates both countries into Japan's economy. Taiwan and Korea are essential to Japan's inner defense lines. And the loss of one weakens the defense of the other. Therefore Japan's interests are paramount.

But this also means that the combined strength of the Japan-Taiwan-South Korea triangle is available to defend Taiwan. Already close links between Korea and Taiwan are in place. Japan's cementing link to this triangle gives the forces of this area the muscle they need to fend off any intervention short of nuclear war.

Because of this alliance there is little need for U.S. support, except through the provision of strategic nuclear support to serve as an umbrella. The U.S. has already pledged this support to Japan through its 1961 treaty. Moreover, U.S. nuclear support to Japan is triggered, not only by a treaty, but because Japan is strategically important to the defense of the U.S. By contrast, Taiwan and South Korea have importance to the U.S. only because of their relation to Japan's defenses. Individually or in combination, the fall of Taiwan and/or South Korea would not directly threaten the U.S.

Given these facts, the defense of Taiwan is an issue that, strictly speaking, is in the province of Japan. This becomes readily apparent when it is realized that the U.S. would hesitate to defend Taiwan were Japan to object. Japan's importance to our defense gives that country a strong veto power over our own actions. Indeed, Taiwan could not be defended in the face of Japanese hostility. Japan's views must be taken into account.

In light of this very real situation one wonders what the mutual defense treaty with Taiwan means. On the one hand Japan's security—not ours—is at stake, and Japan has the means and the need to play a major role. On the other hand Japan has veto power over our own desires.

Therefore Japan is the pivotal power in the region and has the responsibility for Taiwan. The emergence of Japan has changed the underlying conditions upon which the U.S. mutual defense treaty with Taiwan was based.

Thus it is critical to ascertain Japan's intentions relative to Taiwan. So far Japan has played China's game but has kept "trade" relations with Taiwan. What Japan's reaction to a Communist invasion of Taiwan would be are unknown. But it is certain that the communization of Taiwan would be a disaster to Japan. Observers have not been able to ascertain Japan's intentions because of the U.S. treaty that masks the need for more explicit statements. In this sense the situation is analogous to South Korea, where U.S. troop pullouts bring the day closer for Japanese assumption of support for the South Koreans.

The second factor is U.S. troop pullouts. Defense of Asia, whether in Korea, Taiwan, Southeast Asia, or the Philippines, is passing into the hands of Asians, except for nuclear support. This transition means less need for a U.S. frontline role against China and greater need for a strategic role to offset growing Soviet strength via its naval buildup in the Pacific and along the Chinese border. This new role does not require U.S. commitments to send ground forces to Taiwan or anywhere else because this is an Asian job. Nor does it require U.S. pledge to local powers, except strategically.

The third factor is the Soviet buildup, which threatens all of Asia from the Indian Ocean to the Sea of Japan and...
along the Chinese border. To counter this threat effectively the cooperation of China is essential. And to achieve this cooperation a modus vivendi between Japan and China over Taiwan is the crucial issue, not a modus vivendi between the U.S. and China. The U.S. will of necessity have to agree to what Japan agrees or threaten the basic links we now have with Japan.

The last factor is that both China and the U.S. have a need for trade. China’s oil resources, on the mainland and in the Senkaku Islands, its huge market for Japan and China over Taiwan is the na’s own desperate need for technology’ Japan agrees or threaten the basic links industrial and defense goods, and Chi- we now have with Japan. will of necessity havc to agrcc to what cooperation a modus vivendi between us.

To effect this alliance it is essential that Taiwan be seen not as an American problem but as an Asian problem to be worked out among Japan, South Korea, Taiwan, and China. The U.S. should solidify rapidly its strategic position by normalizing its relations with China proper and thereby contribute an overall strategic normalization for all of Asia. The greater good outweighs the lesser evil of abrogation of a treaty made in different strategic circumstances years ago. The worst policy would be to hold on to commitments we honestly do not have the means to keep. By facing up to this now we can avoid heartache later.

For the people of Northeast Asia, including the Taiwanese, it is essential that the new realities, in the form of the Soviet buildup, be recognized and that new relationships be forged. Strategically, Japan is the pivotal power relative to China, and Japan must assume the burden of creating the ground rules for this new relationship with China.

Jeremiah Novak

The Asia Mail
State College, Pa.

Jewish-Christian Relations

To the Editors: As a founder of an interreligious group, the Delaware Association of Christians and Jews, I have come to realize that Jewish-Christian dialogue usually falters upon the issues of a Middle East settlement. Many of the theological questions of interfait pale in comparison to such problems as Israeli acceptance of a Palestinian state. I have learned that the churches are quick to criticize Israel and quick to defend the Palestinian against an Israeli characterized by horrible comparisons to the Nazis.

I make these observations in commenting upon the essay by the Reverend Charles Angell, "Difficult Days Ahead for Jewish-Christian Relations" (Excursus, Worldview, December), which is a reasoned prognosis of what is likely to happen should the Begin government continue its current policy. Indeed, Judeo-Christian relations may suffer because Father Angell wants his way, which insists that the American Jew must understand Christian compassion for the "disinherited Palestinian". Already Father Angell reduces the Holocaust in scope and meaning as he describes the Christian response as "inadequate." Father Angell dismisses those who sincerely comprehend Christian complicity in that nightmare as "guilt-ridden mouthpieces" who are functionaries of the Israeli information service. From my experience in dialogue, Father Angell's attitude is precisely the most painful example of the crisis in Judeo-Christian understanding.

The essential point in the Arab-Israeli conflict is that up until now the Arabs refused to recognize the legitimacy of Israel, the Arab states threatened a war of annihilation while the PLO carried out terror and murder raids on Jewish civilians (never did the PLO strike at bases of the Israel Defense Forces!). The position of American Jewry is justifiably one of cooperation and support vis-à-vis the Israeli Government. Is this so difficult to comprehend and to sympathize with? I am afraid that for many Christians the answer is Yes. For two thousand years the Jews suffered at the hand of the Christian and few voices were heard in defense of the Jew. For thirty years the Jews have demonstrated their ability to defend themselves and even go over to the offensive, if necessary: and this new reality disturbs Christian conscience. I suggest that the real problem is not that of "Palestinian Zionism," as some would like to phrase it. The real dilemma for the Church is Jewish potency and viability.

Begin is not acting in any sort of illegitimate or amoral way. The original League of Nations Mandate granted the entire territory of Palestine to the Jews. The 1948 and 1967 wars were Arab-initiated (not to mention 1973). History is replete with the sad circumstances of peoples being evicted because of inter- national conflicts. No one is demanding the legitimate rights of the Latvians or the Slovaks. Population exchanges were historically acceptable. All Begin is saying (indeed, Begin does not have to say it) is that the 1947 Partition dividing Palestine into an Arab state and a Jewish state resulted in the rape of the Palestinian Arabs by their Arab brothers. Yet, according to Father Angell, it is incumbent upon Israel to rectify this tragedy. In a way Father Angell hands Israel and Jewry a buck-handed compliment. Perhaps he is implying that it is fitting that Israel go out of its way to correct the wrongs that were committed. Perhaps he sees in Israel the same quality of perfection he sees in Jesus of Nazareth, also a "bibli- cal irredentist," according to some Christians. Whatever he perceives, I am afraid, it is dissonant with Jewish perceptions and needs.

Throughout my years as a participant in Jewish-Christian dialogue I have tried to make it clear that the one transcendent Jewish concern is the establishment of a secure and independent Israeli so that the welfare of the Jewish people need never again be contingent upon the tolerance of others, no matter how benevolent they may appear. Any resolution to the Palestinian issue must first demonstrate the incontrovertibility of the foregoing assumption.

Norman Saul Goldman
Delaware Association
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A Correction

The November issue stated that the Interreligious Foundation for Community Organization (IFCO) had been instrumental in putting together a national Association for Voluntary Sterilization which held a meeting of church and civil rights groups in Washington, D.C. IFCO informs us that it is "totally separate from" and has "a purpose and philosophy quite different from" the sterilization group in question, although the group did have a representative at the Washington meeting called by IFCO. Also, IFCO wants it known that the conference did address pressures brought upon women, especially poor and Third World women, to have sterilizations. We are glad to print this additional and clarifying information.