

# GREAT DECISIONS '81

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## I THE U.S. AND THE USSR: DILEMMAS OF POWER AND PEACE

The rules of the superpower game seem to have broken down after the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. The United States and the Soviet Union tried—and failed—to fashion a relationship in which mutual interest in peace would temper rivalry. After Afghanistan, what policy options does the U.S. have to lessen the risk of war by miscalculation, to safeguard U.S. interests, and to thwart attempts by the Soviet Union to gain political benefit from its growing military power?

Neither side can compel the other to alter its system or withdraw from the world arena. Nor can either hope to destroy the other's retaliatory instruments in a surprise attack. Given the present political and military realities, our only alternative is to work out a *modus vivendi*—one that limits prospects of a military confrontation and enhances joint interests in survival, economic well-being, environmental protection, and other matters of common concern. Indeed, the minimum objectives of the superpowers in dealing with each other remain, as they have since the mid-1950s, to diminish the chances of war, to curtail the costs of arms competition, and to limit the damage produced in any military confrontation that might occur.

The superpower engagement is not a zero-sum relationship, where one side's loss is necessarily the other's gain. If Russia is impoverished by arms spending or drought or declining oil output, Soviet suffering is not thereby a plus for the West. On the other hand the relationship is not necessarily positive-sum, where one's gain is automatically a benefit to the other as well. For example, expansion by either superpower in the Third World is probably a loss for the other. A wise strategy will seek to enhance joint interests while controlling or diminishing those in conflict.

This outlook probably undergirded the efforts by

both Soviet and American leaders in the 1950s (Spirit of Geneva), the 1960s (Spirit of Moscow), and again in the 1970s to relax tensions and build a network of meaningful connections between the U.S. and the Soviet Union. What went wrong? Why did the *détente* of the 1970s, like its precedents, prove short-lived? Many factors were at work, within each country and globally. Though Soviet and U.S. leaders sought to negotiate meaningful arms controls, military technology has had its own momentum, making it difficult to cap the volcano. Even with the best of intentions it was not easy for U.S. and Soviet negotiators to reach equitable accords limiting newer weapons such as cruise missiles and the Backfire bomber. Forces hostile to *détente* exist in both countries, eager to seize any pretext to scuttle programs for improving U.S.-Soviet relations. Such forces sabotaged the expansion of U.S. trade with Russia, making it contingent upon drastic changes in Soviet domestic policies, and later obstructed approval of SALT II. Without significantly expanded trade or any major curtailment of the arms race, Moscow had less incentive for restraint in the Third World. As the Kremlin or its allies in Hanoi and Havana intervened more boldly across the globe, moderates as well as hawks in the United States asked whether it was still feasible or desirable to improve U.S.-USSR relations.

*Détente* is a fragile flower; it did not bear much fruit for Moscow or the West. Like Christianity, it has barely been tried, its potential barely tested. Moscow, for its part, has today much the same reasons to pursue *détente* as in the early '60s and '70s. The Kremlin's concerns are weighty indeed: to avoid a major war; to constrain arms competition with technologically advanced rivals; to quiet Russia's western front so that the Kremlin has more flexibility to cope with China; to

create an atmosphere of peace and prosperity in which the Soviet peoples and those of Eastern Europe will be less restive; to claim victories for the Peace Program of the Communist Party and its leaders (who, from the 1950s till today, would prefer to enter history as champions of peace); to diminish the burden of defense; and to maximize the economic benefits of increased trade and technology transfer.

### *Some Scenarios*

Despite pessimistic augurings, the time may be ripe for another effort at improving U.S.-Soviet relations. Indeed, if the rhythms of Soviet history persist, we are approaching the time for another major shift in the thrust of Soviet foreign policy, from confrontation to conciliation. Ever since 1917, Soviet policy has tended to shift gears every four to six years, moving from policies of revolution and frontal pressures upon the West to policies aimed at promoting Soviet goals through negotiation. To recall just the most recent manifestation of this trend, the Communist party gave top priority to East-West détente from 1971 until 1975-76, after which a tough line emerged that has led from Angola to Afghanistan. We cannot be sure that Soviet policy will adhere to past patterns, but the words and deeds of the new administration in Washington will help determine whether Moscow persists in a hard orientation.

If President Reagan chooses, he can build on the same principles that made Eisenhower and Nixon effective in dealing with Moscow. Already the Kremlin has forgotten his election oratory and argues that the American public has rejected Carter because of his anti-Soviet and other foreign policies. Moscow will test the possibilities of an accord with the new administration, just as it did with the arch anti-Communist Richard Nixon in 1969. While Reagan has a mandate to reestablish U.S. power in the world, American opinion would certainly welcome an era of negotiation rather than belligerency. Reagan might even conclude (as Kennedy did in 1961) that the balance of power has not deteriorated as badly as many people say.

In a variable-sum world U.S. policy must flow from a judicious mixture of firmness and flexibility, of restraints and incentives. A wise policy must always be on guard lest the adversary exploit a temporary advantage in ways that might do us serious harm. At a minimum we must be sure that we maintain a deterrent sufficient to persuade any rational adversary that an attack on the U.S. or our allies would generate unacceptable damage to the assailant. But we must also have the means to dissuade the Soviets or others from expanding in the Third World or Europe in ways that jeopardize world peace or U.S. interests. These goals probably require that we maintain rough parity with Russia in strategic and theatre weapons in Europe and that we maintain powerful conventional forces. This task is not overwhelming or infeasible, as some observers suggest, for Moscow will be absorbed for some time with digestive problems in Afghanistan and regurgitation problems in Eastern Europe—all of which will probably reinforce pressures to shift again toward a conciliatory leitmotif.

### *Some Strategies*

While arms have their role in containment, it is also vital—and perhaps more difficult—to cultivate a sense of solidarity between the U.S. and our allies and friends along the Soviet periphery. To revitalize our working relationships around the world we must consult, not dictate; we must show imaginative leadership, provide optimal levels of military and economic aid, and avoid moral exhortations that prove almost impossible to exact in an imperfect world.

The most powerful inducement to Soviet restraint may be a carefully articulated strategy of interdependence. This strategy would make it worth Moscow's while to forgo short-term gains to develop a long-term relationship of mutual advantage with the Western countries and, ideally, a positive role in North-South collaboration as well. This strategy would be rooted in the awareness that the survival of civilization depends upon avoidance of nuclear war—by the superpowers and others. It recognizes that all nations have pressing domestic needs that present the most immediate threats to their security. Malnourishment, poor housing, air and water pollution, erosion of top soil, social and racial conflict—these are among the clear and present dangers to the security and well-being of the U.S. and USSR.

Granted that we are interdependent—strategically and in other ways—how do we make the most of it? The strategy of "GRIT"—Graduated Reciprocation in Tension-Reduction—proved to be useful both in the early '60s and early '70s, and could prove so again. It requires that one side, probably the stronger party (on balance, the U.S.), announce a long-term plan to improve relations, and that it spell out what steps it plans to take. The first steps can be symbolic initiatives to reduce tensions (e.g., lowering some trade barriers). If these are reciprocated, further-reaching steps will be taken. With reciprocity these moves build a momentum that could take us from symbolic to truly significant actions. But time and persistence are demanded; both sides must be careful not to permit their tension-reducing strategy to be disrupted by hawks at home or in their alliances or by troubles in the Third World.

First steps might include raising the quota for Soviet grain purchases in the U.S. and relaxing barriers to scientific and cultural exchange. Strategic arms talks must be revitalized, either through approval of SALT II or initiation of negotiations with promise of a positive outcome for both sides. Sooner rather than later the SALT dialogue must be expanded to include France, Britain, and China. An equitable and meaningful ceiling for superpower armaments can be planned only in the broader context of European and Chinese nuclear systems. Indeed, the Reagan administration might well follow the precedent of another Republican administration and summon to Washington the major nuclear powers, just as Secretary of State Hughes convened a Washington Naval Conference in 1921-22. As ratios were then found for capital ships, so ceilings might now be agreed to for strategic nuclear warheads. Once ceilings are established, they can be gradually lowered.

Before even symbolic steps proceed very far, however, ways must be found to reduce the Soviet involve-

ment in Afghanistan. This is Russia's albatross, as ours was Vietnam. A pledge of meaningful détente, arms control, and trade could be part of a package to induce Soviet acceptance of a "Finnish" or "Austrian" status for Afghanistan.

The most effective deterrent to superpower competition in the Third World might be to establish areas of cooperation between Moscow, the West, and Third World countries. Iran, surprisingly, provided an example of such cooperation under the shah. Western capital and steel were used to build gas pipelines that took Iranian gas to the USSR and other pipelines that took Soviet gas to Western Europe. This was a complementary relationship in which one side put up capital and steel, one party put up gas and territory, the third party put up technicians, gas, and territory. Were we to

look carefully at the map in non-zero-sum terms, perhaps we could find other arenas in which all three worlds might find positive outcomes in collaboration.

Rebuilding détente will be arduous and complex, with potential pitfalls and disappointments at every turn. But prevention of nuclear war is the sine qua non for all our other ambitions—personal, familial, national, global. It is the absolute precondition for tackling the energy, demographic, cultural, and other pursuits to which mankind aspires.

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## 2 LEGAL AND MORAL ISSUES IN THE MIDDLE EAST ARENA

The Middle East is an arena of ongoing and imminent armed conflict, intervention, and counterintervention, an area where profound political, ideological, religious, economic, and strategic mainsprings of conflict are supplemented by conflicting claims of the right of self-determination. There are enough material and normative problems in the region today to furnish examples for a comprehensive textbook on the great issues of law, morality, and international relations. I propose to outline some of the most important issues that such a textbook would address.

Clearly, the first issue to be confronted is that of the legality and morality of recourse to armed force in the Middle East. Closely related is the issue of intervention in the internal and/or external affairs of another sovereign state. Both issues require that consideration be given to the peaceful and/or nonmilitary means of pursuing vital interests and rights. The next issue—the most conspicuous one—is the clash of rival self-determination claims by peoples struggling for control of the same areas. And no normative analysis of Middle East issues would be complete without reference to the emerging problem of the double or triple standards by which international actors are being judged.

### *Armed Force and Intervention*

The U.N. Charter and general international law lay down a basic presumption against the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any state (Article 2[4]). This is more than a legal prescription; it is the expression of the hopes and efforts of the international community since World War I to restrict drastically legal recourse to armed coercion. Closely related to this prescription is the principle of nonintervention, which raises presumptions against extraordinary interference in the internal and/or external affairs of another state.

The only legally permissible forms of armed coercion are enforcement actions ordered by the U.N. Security Council under Chapter VII of the Charter, and individ-

ual and collective self-defense under Article 51. Given the near impossibility of obtaining the necessary great power consensus for an enforcement action to suppress a threat to the peace, some form of self-defense remains the only permissible legal option for use of armed force in the Middle East. An exception to the nonintervention principle may be made where there has been an invitation to intervene by an incumbent regime. Even this is not a clear mandate for intervention unless it occurs in reaction to an intervention by another state against the regime, i.e., counterintervention. Such invitations may be extended under terms of treaty arrangements or on an ad hoc basis.

Beyond these basic legal limits of armed coercion and intervention there are only two other options. One is military intervention to protect one's nationals and other aliens in a foreign country from clear and present dangers, such as the Stanleyville affairs of 1964. The other, very controversial and rarely invoked, is humanitarian intervention to protect a people from genocidal or extremely oppressive policies of their own government (see "Humanitarian Military Intervention," *Worldview*, October, 1980).

These prescriptions of international law are generally accepted by contemporary moralists, notably those writing in the just war tradition. To their rather restrictive limits, just war moralists would add the traditional requirements that the use of armed force be ordered by competent authority, that the probability of success be such that costs are proportionate to gains, that peaceful alternatives first be exhausted, and that a right intention inform the action.

If these prescriptions are applied to the Mideast, one readily concludes that: (1) the Soviet military invasion and comprehensive massive intervention in Afghanistan are a blatant violation of Article 2(4), the principle of nonintervention, and the conditions of just war; (2) the attack by Iraq on Iran in September, 1980, was a clear violation of Article 2(4). Iraq's territorial claims and objections to Iranian intervention through Iraqi religious groups may or may not be legitimate, but

there was no effort at peaceful resolution of differences and no circumstances engendering a right of self-defense against Iran. Iraq is the aggressor in an unjust war. This fact should not be obscured by the odious behavior of the Iranian regime.

In these two clear-cut situations other nations would be legally justified in coming to the defense of Afghanistan or Iran. In the case of the Afghan war there is no prospect of direct military counterintervention, aggression in Afghanistan not being a sufficient *casus belli* for World War III. However, Pakistan is certainly contributing importantly to the resistance to Soviet occupation. Pakistan provides sanctuary for resistance forces as well as for refugees, permitting them to organize, outfit themselves, and advance to or retreat from Afghanistan. Should the Soviets decide to put a stop to this by invading the Pakistani sanctuary, they would be extending their illegal aggression to another state, and others would have warrant to join in the defense of Pakistan. The problem, obviously, is that neither the U.S., China, nor any other intervening power would be likely to meet the just war prescriptions.

Other possible military interventions in the Middle East are more problematic from legal and moral perspectives. Had the April mission to rescue the hostages in Iran been pressed through to a conclusion, successful or unsuccessful, it would have raised questions for which there are few precedents. Had military intervention to defend the U.S. embassy in Teheran been possible at the outset, perhaps such a move would have been assimilated in the right of self-defense and protection of nationals abroad. The embassy, while not literally a part of U.S. territory, is the legal projection of U.S. sovereignty in a foreign country. Immunity of diplomatic personnel and premises is the fundamental bedrock of civilized international intercourse, and defense of that immunity with armed force is surely justified in such an extreme case. However, whether the subsequent use of force to rescue the diplomats and other nationals can be considered "self-defense" is a difficult question. The Israeli Entebbe rescue raid would seem to be a relevant and just precedent. I myself conclude that the April rescue attempt would have been legally justified even had it pressed on to a denouement involving hostilities and also that any future military action taken to rescue the hostages or obtain their negotiated release would be permissible under international law. In both just war and policy terms the critical issue is prudential: Would the measure in fact secure the safe return of the hostages at acceptable costs?

Another much discussed contingency is a U.S. military intervention in Saudi Arabia or in one of the smaller Gulf states. The most probable scenario starts with a revolution or coup in, for example, Saudi Arabia. In all likelihood such a revolution would combine bona fide indigenous elements with outside agents and would be supported by external indirect aggression in the form of extension of sanctuary bases, training, weapons and matériel, and, very possibly, direct policy controls. Such indirect aggression/intervention could come from the Soviet Union, Iraq, Iran, Libya, or even Syria. Once installed, if only precariously, the foreign-supported rebels would invite their sponsors to come to their "fra-

ternal assistance" to combat counterrevolutionary and "imperialist" forces. Justification for such requests are easily concocted in an area where it is not considered curious that the U.S. is charged with intervening simultaneously on the side of both Iraq and Iran.

The policy and moral issue would then be whether the United States, the Western European states, and Japan could afford to see Saudi Arabia taken over by a Soviet-sponsored regime—or possibly by one sponsored by Iran or one of the radical Arab states. Further, the issue would become excruciating if Soviet troops were invited into Saudi Arabia to assure the permanence of the radical takeover. Rationales for military counterintervention could be twofold. First, the U.S. or other intervening power could argue that the Saudi regime had been deposed as a result of indirect aggression, that it had a right of self-defense to resist this aggression and to invite counterintervention as a collective self-defense. Second, the Western power could argue that the radical takeover, particularly if linked with a Soviet power move, posed an unacceptable threat to the oil supplies essential to the Western states and Japan. We would then have to confront an issue pending since 1973: May a state use military force to protect its economic interests when they are vital to its survival?

There is no legal precedent or developed doctrine to consult on this question. From a just war standpoint a moral analysis would confront, *inter alia*, the formidable task of weighing the probability of success of a counterintervention, the costs of a local limited war, and the risks of escalation to a strategic nuclear confrontation against the long-term prospects of a world in which the Soviet Union and/or radical Middle East states would control critical sources of oil.

Such dilemmas invite review of the nonmilitary alternatives—the political, psychological, legal, and economic instruments of foreign policy. Unfortunately, these alternatives seem to grow less promising as events unfold. The Iranian hostage outrage and the Soviet aggression in Afghanistan show the ineffectiveness of traditional diplomacy, world opinion, U.N. resolutions and inquiries, third party mediation, and the International Court of Justice. Economic sanctions by the United States have hurt Iran and perhaps inconvenienced the Soviet Union, but the unwillingness of Western European and other states to back up their diplomatic protests with really comprehensive sanctions demonstrates the comparative ineffectiveness of the economic instrument used halfheartedly.

### *Self-Determination*

Of the issues contributing to conflict in the Middle East that of self-determination is particularly intractable. It dominates the Arab-Israeli conflict and the efforts to implement the Camp David process through the endless manifestations of the Palestinian question. When two peoples claim the same territory as indispensable to their respective realizations of the right of self-determination, there is no self-evident basis for resolution of the conflict. In the case of the West Bank and Israel itself there seems to be little prospect of reaching a point at which some resolution would have even an

outside chance of success. As long as the PLO denies *any* right of Jewish self-determination and vows the destruction of Israel, as it did again in May, 1980, it is not fair to confront Israel with the need to find a solution for Palestinian claims for self-determination.

This leads to the last normative problem to be considered in this survey: the question of double or multiple standards that discourage adherents to the supposed common standards from abiding by them. Thus, self-determination is held to be the highest value where the Palestinians are concerned—higher, for example, than values that condemn terrorism. But self-determination is not conceded as a right of the Kurds and of many other subject peoples. Intervention by the U.S. or other Western power is condemned, but inter-Arab intervention is rife and often deadly. Recourse to armed force is a crime against peace if committed or even contem-

plated by the U.S. or Israel, but no voice is raised to condemn Iraq's bald aggression against Iran. Suddenly the discussion becomes clinical, with sage speculation about the balance of power in the Gulf and no word about the legality or morality of armed aggression.

In these circumstances, respect for international law restricting recourse to armed force and intervention is eroded. The morally responsible state is then thrown back on its own legal and moral standards and on policies of enlightened self-interest. The task of the international lawyer, moralist, and responsible citizen is to try to maximize the "enlightened" dimension of the "self-interest."

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# 3

## CHINA AFTER NORMALIZATION: HOW GOOD A FRIEND?

Sino-American relations appear to be further along than could reasonably have been anticipated only a few years ago. Why is that? Is it, as the FPA report puts it, because "China is a friend—albeit a friend of convenience"? Or are there other reasons?

We will only deceive ourselves, potentially undermine our own interests, and possibly jeopardize the Sino-American relation itself by presuming that we have just found ourselves a "new friend." So often in our international relations we exaggerate the emotional content of the relation, we invest it with a particularly moral significance, we put it in a personal context. Particularly with the Chinese. Our long, complicated, ambivalent relations have just taken another of their episodic turns.

But the Chinese did not encourage our opening because they became convinced of truth, justice, and the American Way. They did not suddenly discover Jefferson, Lincoln, Wilson, and Roosevelt. They did so because they discovered the growth of Soviet military power and Soviet expansion. More critically, they found themselves—or thought they found themselves—virtually encircled by that expanded Soviet power. To the north they saw over forty Soviet divisions stretched for over 6,000 miles straight across their border. To the east they saw a growing Russian fleet based, unlike our own, on native territory—*independent* therefore of international naval arrangements. To the south they saw Indochina, dominated by Vietnam, and South Asia, dominated by India. Vietnam is a Soviet ally, an intermittent (and potentially permanent) provider to the Soviets of a huge American-built airstrip at Da Nang and an exquisite American-made harbor at Cam Ranh Bay. The Indians fought a war with China in 1962 (and again in 1965), signed a Treaty of Peace, Friendship, and Cooperation with the Soviet Union in October, 1971 (three of whose articles pledge each party to come to the aid of the other in case of attack), and recently reelected Mrs. Gandhi (who negotiated that treaty), surely a better friend of the Soviets than of the

Chinese. Only the 1,100 mile border with Burma and the pin-point border with Afghanistan are relieved. The rest of China's 10,000-mile border looks Soviet-influenced or Soviet-dominated.

So the Chinese sought the time-tested solution. Side with your enemy's enemy. The question is not whether "the United States is being used as China's American card." Of course it is. That is the obvious beginning, and that is where the analysis of our relation must necessarily originate.

The foundations of our relations with China and with the Soviet Union are substantially similar. We are antagonists who find our interests coinciding from time to time. Right now our interests with China are converging, at least in Asia. And certainly the "China card" offers us options that were unavailable to either of us before. That is the essence of our relation. So the critical question is not whether we are friends, but, rather, where our "relations harmonize and where they may conflict." The constantly changing answer to that rather permanent question will, in turn, answer the question of where our "relations stand now—and where they are going."

### *Two Recent Crises*

Our harmony of interests has led China and the U.S. to some unusual alliances. We supported the FNLA against the Soviet-backed MPLA in Angola; we jointly disapproved of Soviet and Cuban "adventurism" in Ethiopia; both of us have encouraged a stronger Europe. But it is in Asia that our mutual concerns have been sharpest. Two recent crises have heightened our mutual apprehension and led to a more passionate embrace.

The first was the Vietnamese invasion of Cambodia. For us the Cambodian situation presented a conundrum. We faced two unsavory options: support the international legitimacy of the Pol Pot butchers or support the international legitimacy of the invading Vietnamese. Association of Southeast Asian Nations

(ASEAN) countries, equally ambivalent, came down on the side of their national interest rather than their sentiments. Holding their collective noses, they continued their unpalatable support of Pol Pot. We more or less followed suit. Our "friends" the Chinese were not as ambivalent. They had been supporting Pol Pot all along. For them the Vietnamese invasion merely cemented the Soviet influence in Indochina. The earlier Vietnamese attempt at balancing their Soviet patrons against their Chinese patrons, thereby sustaining their war effort, could no longer succeed.

The Vietnamese have tried to reassure ASEAN that their Kampuchean policy was limited. They argued, not untruthfully, that Pol Pot's constant incursions into Vietnam required some sort of retaliation. However, the ASEAN countries remain skeptical, especially given the skirmishes between the Thai and Vietnamese armies along the Kampuchean border. Vietnamese Prime Minister Pham Van Dong was not entirely successful at convincing his ASEAN neighbors of his country's rectitude during his tour of the region in October, 1978, even though he foreswore training, supporting, or participating in Communist insurgencies within the ASEAN countries and endorsed instead a Vietnamese version of Malaysia's proposed region of peace, freedom, and neutrality.

China's Vice-Premier Deng Xiaoping, however, was not prepared to foreswear such support. During a similar tour a month later, he was asked to do so but replied that it would not be a possible or credible promise. Instead he resorted to the Chinese distinction between state and party. State-to-state relations between China and the ASEAN countries would be formal, proper, constructive, and essentially conservative. Party-to-party relations were another matter. The leading party in China was the Communist party, he said, and it had its own relations with its fraternity in the region.

For us the lesson should be clear. China remains committed to its nature. It is a Communist society led by a Communist party. Insofar as it foreswears revolution, insofar as it makes common sense cause with its ideological enemies, it does so for tactical, even strategic, but not ideological reasons. From the Chinese perspective we are not friends but enemies. For the moment, to be sure, there is a bigger enemy. And just as surely China has national and geopolitical as well as ideological interests. But China is not Japan. And we would only deceive ourselves—surely not the Chinese—by believing that our relation contains the permanent, ethical dimension we associate with friendship rather than the transient, utilitarian dimension associated with partnership. If we are friends at all, it is (at least so far) more in the Machiavellian sense. When the interest of the prince changes, so too do his alliances.

The second major Asian crisis was the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. We have not yet seen the final fallout from that invasion. Particularly in Asia, where American forces have been by far the more common sight—and have been the more usual object of opposition—the shock of an outright Soviet invasion will have long-term repercussions. For reasons that are not clear, we have done little if anything to fashion those repercussions in a manner congenial to us.

Far more baffling, though, has been our failure to change—at least to attempt to change—the course of events in Afghanistan itself. For just over a year the Soviets have been mired in what they thought would be a swift, surgical strike. Whatever the historical nature of most Marxist analysis, the Soviets failed to read the history of Afghanistan. It remains one of the Carter administration's best-kept secrets why we have not channeled antitank or antiaircraft equipment into Afghanistan and trained the tribesmen in their use. Here again we have a common but unexploited interest with the Chinese, who have both direct (over a hundred-mile border) and indirect (through the Karakoram range) access into Afghanistan. We could channel matériel through the Wakhan Corridor or straight into the Hindu Kush.

### *Finding a Balance*

If we have interests in common, we also have some differences, and our commonalities have limits. It is in our interest to see a strong China, and not only as a counterweight to the Soviet Union. It may well be, to answer the question, that it is in our interest to provide China with *certain* offensive weapons so it will have a *limited* offensive capacity, but surely it is not in our interest to provide China with a capacity to threaten Taiwan or Japan.

Japan remains our primary interest in Asia. It is our most important ally and our most important trading partner. To be sure, the Japanese recognized the PRC soon after our recognition humiliated them, and have since "tilted" toward China and away from the Soviet Union by concluding a Friendship Treaty with the Chinese. Still, nothing we could gain from the Chinese would be worth Japan's security.

The future of Taiwan remains the greatest obstacle to the future of our Chinese relations. The Shanghai formula was inherently unstable, and the subsequent "understandings" over Taiwan have failed to stabilize the situation, in part because not all of them seem to have been made explicit or public. The best hope for a solution lies in natural processes. The Revolutionary Generation in the People's Republic cannot last through the decade. Deng has already resigned his state position as vice-premier, and, since issuance of the FPA report, Hua resigned as premier. The same natural processes are working on Taiwan, where the Legislative Yuan and the National Assembly, the one that purports to represent all China, were elected in 1948. Its members are dying. Last year only 53 of 386 seats in the Legislative Yuan and 56 of 1,246 in the National Assembly could be elected because those are the seats allotted to the "province" of Taiwan.

We also have an interest in good relations with the Soviets. As with China, we have both commonalities and conflicts. Our task is to take advantage of our commonalities, contain our conflicts, and create a network of relations between us that reduces the threat of ultimate confrontation, engenders serious costs for Soviet adventurism, establishes some equilibrium, and does not provoke Soviet irrationality by threatening Soviet vital interests. When we are asked by the Chinese to

lead an anti-Soviet front, our response must surely be tempered by several considerations: With whom? For what purpose? With what commitment from the parties? Clearly, the Soviet Union represents our most serious international challenge. In an earlier—Bismarckian or Metternichian—age our answer to such a Chinese initiative would have been obvious. The threat of a nuclear confrontation makes it less so.

Moreover, the nature of the Soviet threat to the Chinese is not so clear. Only the Soviet Union might be insane enough to think of striking against China itself, but the Soviets have shown no such insanity so far. Just to reach the Chinese heartland, to strike a lethal blow, the Soviets would have to penetrate across more than 500 miles of plateau and desert, support an enormous army, and supply it across 3,000 miles of often impassable Soviet territory. At best such a strike could cut China's ties with the rest of the world. But China is virtually self-sufficient. Indeed, it has itself at times chosen a policy of strict autarchy, eschewing by its own volition any international entanglements—economic, political, or military. Isolation would be no deathly blow to China, and any attempt to isolate China by force would surely draw us into the dispute. If that is the nature of the "anti-Soviet front," there is no problem. If it is a cooperation among the Soviet Union's

adversaries to oppose the expansion of its influence, again no problem.

But an aggressive anti-Soviet front, directly threatening Soviet vital interests, say by military means, would be another matter. The Chinese may not worry much about nuclear retaliation. Perhaps, as some report, they believe a nuclear war is inevitable and are prepared to bear the human cost. Perhaps they even welcome that confrontation. Perhaps with a billion people the Chinese leadership is prepared for some human sacrifice. I doubt it. But in any case we should not adopt such a calculus. For us nuclear war is not inevitable. It is not merely another tactic in a competition. It is not a "continuation of foreign relations by other means." It can only be the last episode in a failed policy.

It is in our interest right now to pursue a certain kind of détente with the Soviets and also to pursue our relations with China. We cannot allow ourselves to join one side and abandon the other, to be either a shirt or a skin. We cannot be asked to join the Jets and oppose the Sharks. We are not a couple of kids swearing blood friendship on the Mississippi.

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## 4 SOUTH AFRICA AND THE UNITED STATES

"Can race war be avoided in South Africa?" In one sense a state of war already exists. The magnitude of the conflict is generally concealed from Americans by the inadequate, if not unbalanced, reporting by the news media. The war has produced many casualties, most of them black. Perhaps the death of Steve Biko is the most notorious, but his was only one in a long series of deaths of black men, women, and children. Some were due directly to confrontation with overly aggressive police, some to mistreatment in jails and prisons, some to executions in the nation with the highest rate of capital punishment cases per capita.

The war has generated prisoners of war. Nelson Mandela, a leader of the African National Congress (ANC) imprisoned now for sixteen years, is the most famous case; but again, he is one of thousands. The policy of the South African Government for many years has been the elimination of genuine black leadership by incarceration or the kind of house arrest called "banning." The struggle has also produced refugees. Thozamile Botha, a labor leader, Percy Qoboza and Donald Woods, both journalists, are people who made the news after they escaped from persecution because of their agitation for justice.

Intelligence-gathering is a part of every war, and the South African Government is known to be quite efficient in infiltrating black organizations when they appear. In a country in which black income is low, money will go a long way in subverting a man or woman into espionage against other black people.

In the absence of a "hot war," sabotage and passive

resistance become an important means of carrying on combat, and South Africa has begun to see an increasing degree of both. In 1980 the most spectacular incident of sabotage was the bombing of a well-guarded plant producing oil from coal—one of South Africa's most carefully guarded secret processes, deemed essential for a nation that lacks natural petroleum resources. Passive resistance on a large scale continues in many parts of the country as students refuse to attend classes and workers in important industries go out on strike.

As happens in most wars, many nations of the international community have taken sides. In the United Nations, as well as in the decisions of individual nations, South Africa has been condemned repeatedly on two scores: its continued occupation of Namibia (South West Africa) and its denial of human, political, and economic rights to the majority of its population. South Africa has, in fact, only one admitted friend—Israel—although many nations conduct business, both diplomatic and commercial, with it. In the U.N., Britain, France, and the U.S. have been until recently buffers against international sanctions through the exercise of their veto power in the Security Council, although these nations profess their abhorrence of apartheid.

South African law makes little provision for conscientious objectors to the military service required of its white male population. Consequently, there has been a small but significant stream of young men leaving the country, in the conviction that their participation in either the occupation of Namibia or the enforcement of apartheid would be morally wrong.

When so many elements of war are already present in South Africa, the question with which this article began must be taken to mean, "When will the black people of South Africa get guns and start using them?"

### *The Prospects for Peace*

The South African Government and its friends maintain that change is taking place, change which will both accommodate the desires of the native majority and soothe international sensibilities. To some extent this allegation is true, but it should not be forgotten that it is only under pressure that the government moves. In Rhodesia it was the pressure of two guerrilla movements that finally prevailed against a prime minister who had promised that not within a thousand years would majority rule come to pass. In South Africa the persistent pressures of labor actions, student strikes and boycotts, and international opinion have brought about a small amount of change. Nevertheless, it is evident that the strategy of the government is based on three points.

1. Division of the black majority to facilitate control. The basic plan of apartheid—territorial division according to tribe or tribal ancestry—has not been abrogated; it has been augmented by an additional strategy aimed at creating a class consciousness and class interests among the black people. Efforts are under way to create a black "middle class" that would have economic interests strong enough to win their allegiance to the existing system and opposition to revolutionary change.

2. Gradual changes, particularly in petty apartheid, to deflect immediate threats of violence. Hence labor unions for black workers are now permitted to exist, if properly registered; long-term leases on residences are offered to a small percentage of the black population; job advancement is tolerated or even encouraged.

3. Tightening, not relaxing, government control of its people—as if to negate the "progress" represented by the foregoing steps. It is said that the present prime minister avoids submitting his reform policies to the party caucus or the parliament so as to have a freer hand in promoting changes. There is, however, an ominous side to this: The power gained by the P.M. may be used by his successor in less benevolent ways.

Perhaps all of this is beside the point. Many of the black people of South Africa are not content with gradualism; apartheid simply must go. As Alfred Nzo, secretary general of the ANC, put it: "All talk of 'constructive engagement,' 'moderation,' 'nonviolence,' and 'negotiations' has the single purpose of disarming our people and diverting us from our real objectives." Resentment is no longer beneath the surface; it is boiling over. People are more and more willing to risk their jobs, their education, even their lives.

### *The U.S. Stake*

Certainly the problem of South Africa is complex. The United States and the free world need RSA mineral resources. They could manage for a while with stockpiles and substitutes if production was stopped by, for example, civil war or international conflict. But in the

long run, it is argued, the West really needs the minerals found in adequate quantity only in South Africa.

African nations trade with RSA at the same time some of them offer sanctuary to political refugees from that country and support liberation movements in RSA and/or Namibia. A contradiction? Yes, but they are RSA's economic hostages. Last year the government of Zambia might have fallen had President Kaunda not decided to buy food from South Africa, the only immediate source that Zambia could afford.

At the same time, South Africa is also faced with dilemmas: At one moment it seems to tolerate the hostile action of guerrillas based across the border in Angola and Zambia; at other times it has conducted raids into these countries, striking not only the guerrillas but refugees and other civilians. South Africa continues to alienate black Africa while simultaneously expressing hopes for economic hegemony in a "constellation of states" in the region.

The sea route around the Cape of Good Hope is generally regarded as strategically essential for America's allies in Europe, especially in the delivery of tankers too large to use the Suez Canal. While often overemphasized by South Africa and its friends, this strategic importance cannot be denied, at least in a "worst case" scenario: A "hostile" regime could interdict such traffic by denying port facilities or, worse, by military attack.

Related to this is South Africa's ace: It is the last bulwark of noncommunist government in Southern Africa. Despite the general failure of either the USSR or China to achieve lasting military advantages in Africa, or even to develop significant trade (arms sales apart), the anti-Communist stance of South Africa is always part of the discussion about the future political orientation of Southern Africa. And there is the fear of disrupting the largest (almost the only) industrialized nation in Africa, to the disadvantage of both whites and blacks and the significant international investors.

The South Africa case presents the world with two moral problems that are becoming increasingly difficult to avoid: the demand of the people of Namibia for self-determination, and the agitation of nonwhites in South Africa itself for political and human rights. On both issues the forces of organized religion as well as general humanitarian opinion have been unleashed.

The U.S. response during the Carter administration was to talk tough, act mildly. It was a step-by-step approach, acknowledging implicitly the need for South African cooperation in bringing Rhodesia to majority rule and Namibia to self-determination under U.N. auspices. The internal situation in RSA remains untouched, except by brave words.

Many scholars, as well as leaders of militant organizations, see the essential step by the RSA Government to be the convoking of a representative assembly that would address the restoration of peace and justice in South Africa. The South African problem can in reality be solved only by the people who live in that country. But there are moves the U.S. and other nations can take which might pressure the government into suitable action. With the advent of a Republican administration, severe pressure seems outside the range of possibilities. There are, however, milder measures that the

Reagan administration might be persuaded to take:

- \*a revision of the visa policy for South Africans coming to the U.S., especially those representing government or business;

- \*in cooperation with the U.N., a denial of overflight and landing rights in the U.S. and Europe to South African airlines;

- \*expansion at all levels of educational opportunities for young black men and women in the U.S.;

- \*maintenance of a firm attitude by the U.S. against military and intelligence cooperation so as to weaken RSA's hope for acceptance as a military partner;

- \*reduction—though not abolishment—of U.S. diplomatic representation in South Africa;

- \*assistance and a welcome for political refugees and

- conscientious objectors from South Africa;

- \*cooperation and support for other Southern African states as they attempt to achieve economic independence from South Africa.

None of these steps is radical, and all might be achieved without a major struggle in a conservative Congress. Taken together, they would signal the world that the United States is serious in its recognition of the right of the majority of South Africa's people to participate in their government.

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## 5

### LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN

An official-looking, twenty-nine-page document dated November 6, 1980, began circulating in Washington just as the capital was emerging from the catatonia of the presidential campaign. Called a "dissent paper on El Salvador and Central America," it purports to be the product of an El Salvador/Central American task force of the State Department, incorporating the views of "both current and former analysts and officials at NSC, DOS, DOD and CIA."

The argument is sophisticated and relatively complex—clearly the product of foreign policy analysts concerned with the U.S. national interest. It succeeds in making a compelling case for a wholly different U.S. policy—namely, one that recognizes the Democratic Revolutionary Front, abandons the confrontational track in Central America, quietly and nondirectly supports genuine mediation, and encourages less biased and wider media coverage.

What is most instructive about the paper is that, unlike so much else that is said about El Salvador or the other countries of the region, it is realistic in setting forth the larger context in which each of the conflict situations must be viewed. To be sure, much of the discussion of Central America and the Caribbean has been viewed against a regional backdrop. For example, the El Salvador crisis is often portrayed as deriving from Nicaragua's revolution and as leading, domino fashion, to similar changes in Honduras, Guatemala, and—who knows?—even Mexico. But this context derives from an essentially strategic, geopolitical vision, seen through the lenses of national security. The once placid *mare nostrum*, disturbed over the past two decades only by the Cuba thing, has suddenly been transformed into a raging sea of troubles. In fact, policy-makers and many citizens have been so caught up in the presumed threat posed by a Soviet ally in the Caribbean (and more recently by a few other independent, though strategically weak, actors in the region) that it is nigh impossible for other views to get a hearing.

It seems clear that we should not allow ourselves to relegate these small countries and their suffering millions to the role of mere pawns on the East-West chess-

board. But it is hard to break old habits. We're locked in a life-or-death struggle with the Communist powers (tomorrow perhaps the OPEC powers), and a world so fraught with danger cannot easily accommodate the independent action of nonpowers; countries are either with us or against us.

If U.S. policy over the next four years can be shaped so as to avoid what the State Department dissent paper considers the almost inevitable result of the present policy toward El Salvador—namely, a disastrous and ultimately self-defeating escalation of military confrontation throughout the region—some different perspectives are urgently needed. It is worth taking a closer look at the three countries in the region most likely to present some hard choices for the new administration early on.

#### *El Salvador*

Perhaps the hardest point to get across in a situation so constantly portrayed in tripartite terms—an embattled reformist center fighting both an entrenched oligarchy and a "Pol Pot Left"—is that the popular opposition is genuinely popular and genuinely Salvadorean. Repression of the landless *campesino* has been a constant and conscious policy since at least 1932, when thousands of peasants were slaughtered and their organization curtailed. Without a radical restructuring of a grossly inequitable land-holding system, the burgeoning *campesino* population had the choice of starving, spilling across the border to less densely populated Honduras, or organizing (finally allowed in the heady Alliance for Progress '60s) to press their demands legally.

The 1969 war with Honduras, triggered by a partial land reform in that country, seized not the large holdings but the farms near the border, forcing the repatriation of many poor Salvadoreans. The fraud of the 1972 elections in El Salvador and the yet more ridiculously rigged elections of 1977 convinced even the most naive that the oligarchy and their military satraps were not going to allow any real reform.

Another phenomenon occurred over this same peri-

od. The 1968 Medellín conference of Latin American bishops and the effects in El Salvador of that conference's "option for the poor" were dramatic and profound. The Church's pastoral agents, priests, sisters, and lay catechists provided a framework, a language, and a motivation—in short, the symbol system of a revitalized Christianity within the structure of the traditional church—that fitted the unarticulated dreams of the poor and oppressed.

Out of these linked phenomena came the popular organizations, peasant movements, co-ops, and teacher and student organizations that in time (ever worsening times, to be sure) gradually linked up with one another, sprouted armed self-defense components, and emerged finally as the country's unified revolutionary movement. It is of no primary importance that there are Marxists among them; how could there not be? What is important is that they are Salvadorean nationalists, not Cuban or Soviet pawns, and what should be of particular concern to us is that their anti-Americanism has become pronounced only in the past year as the U.S. has been seen as the essential prop of the ruling junta.

In its frantic pursuit of a mythical, nonradical center, the State Department has been forced to deprecate the at least tacit and moral support given by most sectors of the Salvadorean Church to the opposition. One of the favored approaches is that the good-hearted but naive churchmen don't know what a tiger they've got by the tail; they should see what happened to the Church in Lithuania.

Yet because of several unique factors—the people's trust of the Church, the blanketing of the country by the parochial network, the well-established system of confidential communication in the Church, and the contact maintained with every other sector of the society—no other group can match the "intelligence-gathering" potential of the Salvadorean Church. And that most certainly includes the foreign operatives of the American embassy and the CIA.

### *Nicaragua*

The choices facing us in Nicaragua are very different ones. There, a long-entrenched, U.S.-supported dictatorship was successfully routed by a popular uprising led by the Sandinistas. If the new government had to contend only with healing the wounds of a bitter fratricidal conflict and building a socially responsive society, the country would be in good shape. But it has at least three major problems, all of which connect with the U.S. When the victors took over in July, 1979, the economy was in a shambles. When Somoza fled, there was only about \$3 million in the national treasury. Massive external aid, therefore, was and is absolutely essential.

Also, counterrevolutionary activity is a simple fact of life. To his dying day Somoza never relinquished the goal of retaking his fiefdom. His monied minions in Guatemala and Miami share the same desire, and some three thousand National Guard troops are said to be organized still and waiting in Honduras. Discontent at home among the remaining élites can easily upset a precarious social balance.

Finally, there is the Reagan administration. Under what can only be called a policy of enlightenment by trial and error, the Carter administration ultimately adopted an attitude of cautious support, barely fighting back a right-wing campaign in the Congress to scuttle aid to the fledgling government. If the campaign rhetoric of Mr. Reagan and some postelection statements by his advisors are to be taken seriously, the U.S. is on a collision course with Nicaragua. Again, there surely are some Marxist elements in Nicaragua. But this is a new society deeply committed to a mixed economy and even more committed to real social reform. In a year and a half it has produced extraordinary results in terms of public services, but even such advances are looked at askance among conservatives here because they seem to resemble similar advances in revolutionary Cuba.

The differences are more instructive than the similarities, but they are poorly understood in the U.S. While everyone may be aware of the crucial role played by the churches in the opposition to Somoza and generally aware of the extraordinary number of priests in the new government (the third most clerical in the world after Vatican City and Iran, it has been said), the profound religious commitment to the revolution by believers at every level is much harder to grasp. Without putting too lyrical a note on it, so much of what the post-Medellin church has been announcing as the Good News has in fact begun to be implemented in that country.

### *Cuba*

The awkward dance of the U.S.-Cuba official relationship—two steps forward, one back; one forward, two back—has been going on at least since the mid-'70s. One would like to believe that the new administration, despite if not precisely because of the sabre-rattling during the campaign, would consider a realistic accommodation with Cuba one of its early priorities. Concern about public opinion was one factor that inhibited the Carter administration from moving toward a Caribbean détente; having "lost" the Panama Canal and Nicaragua, not to mention Iran, the administration wanted no more accusations of weakness.

Marvin Kalb's deeply flawed "White Paper: The Castro Connection," viewed by millions last fall, illustrates the problem. Kalb's Central America kaleidoscope posited "a slow takeover of Central America by Marxist revolutionaries with a Castro connection. The Carter administration [he said] seems genuinely perplexed by the problem; some critics say paralyzed, reinforcing the impression that the U.S. is impotent in the struggle...."

Never mind that he found only a slim, unsurprising, and at times chimerical Castro connection (muted even in the Cuba segment). The reality is that NBC said it is there, and that the U.S. doesn't know what to do about it. And never mind that Cuba, as the State Department dissent paper points out and U.S. analysts know full well, has behaved with great circumspection in the recent turbulent issues of the Caribbean and Central America. Or that major accommodations have been made to U.S. concerns by such steps as the hijacking

accord; the release of prisoners, including all U.S. citizens; the dialogue with the Cuban community; and even public praise for U.S. help to Nicaragua.

The exodus of thousands of Cubans last summer provided enough embarrassment to go around, but it is effectively over and need not be used further by either side to win futile debating points. Whatever the administration's political motivation and whatever the continuing domestic difficulties in absorbing so many people, let us agree that the U.S. was generous in receiving them. Let us also agree that the desire of thousands to come to the U.S. says little about Cuban society that doesn't also obtain in every other poor country in the hemisphere.

Let us agree that Cuba has an austere society with a sluggish economy for a variety of reasons, at least some

of which are well publicized by its own leaders. If there is repression, it is far less evident than during the early years, when the Revolution was constantly threatened by invasion and sabotage.

We have much to gain—including the possibility of influencing Cuban behavior in the region—from a relationship of open, regular contact and a network of economic and other ties. Providing more arms to Cuba's neighbors and maintaining an aggressive posture can only advance the forces of political suppression and economic stagnation.

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## 6 FOOD FOR THE WORLD: REALITIES, HOPES, AND CAUTIONS

"Food for the World" is a notably thoughtful essay on the hopes and problems involved in the goal of conquering world hunger. Since the essay was written, and since the issuing of the Linowitz report on which it comments, much has changed. The essay notes that the Carter administration was uncertain, even lukewarm, about the recommendations emerging from the Linowitz and other studies. Even greater skepticism toward these recommendations can be expected from the Reagan administration, as signaled in the dissent registered by the now even more influential Senator Dole.

People long concerned about world hunger may be tempted to despair of any progress being made under the new American regime. Some may think our best hope is to contain the reaction and limit losses. I believe this temptation should be resisted. While conservative Republicanism is hardly noted for its enthusiasm over development aid in any form, it should not be assumed too readily that the new decision-makers are callous toward the plight of the poor and hungry. It is clear beyond doubt that they have a spacious and robust skepticism toward the answers that have been proffered in the past. At the same time, they are now under considerable pressure, pressure that will steadily mount, to come up with better answers.

There is one positive factor that must not be discounted. In a time when Carter and others seemed uncertain about America's purpose in the world, seemed preoccupied with declining resources and the limitations of American power, Reagan campaigned on a vision that the American Way "works" and could work even better for Americans and for the world if given a new chance. Of course critics think this a delusory return to an earlier and exhausted notion of the American Century, and perhaps they are right. Nonetheless, if Reagan is to maintain his credibility with the American people, he must demonstrate the linkage between the economic restorations of the American Way and the well-being of the world, or at least with those sectors of the world that cooperate with U.S. purposes. This assumes that the American people will not

tolerate an official U.S. policy built on the premise of America first and the rest of the world be damned. It is noteworthy that, in yet another swing of interventionist/isolationist sentiment in American life, it is now conservative Republicanism that evinces the higher confidence in some kind of American global mission. To be sure, that mission is articulated overwhelmingly in terms of meeting the Soviet challenge rather than in terms of global development. But if those parties most concerned and informed about world hunger are relentless in pressing the development question, the administration will not be able to avoid this obvious set of problems when making its case that American power and prosperity are good for the world, including the poorest of the poor.

### *Reexamining the Goals*

Now is the time to look anew at examples such as Taiwan and Japan where, under severely unfavorable conditions, successful approaches have been devised to food production and distribution. This is the thesis pressed so energetically by Dr. Sudhir Sen (*Worldview*, June, 1979, and elsewhere) and others who have been cautious dissenters from much of the conventional wisdom about development.

It seems simplistic to say, as the essay does at one point, that a major reason for the abandonment of agriculture and the flight to the cities is that the land is overcrowded. In truth, in Africa, Latin America, and elsewhere LDCs have almost immeasurable lands that could be farmed (and, in some cases, once were). There is no comparison between the population-per-acre in these countries and the situation in Japan and Taiwan, not to mention some European countries. The reasons for the flight from agriculture would seem to lie elsewhere. Since sound moral reasoning and wise policy are based largely upon commonsensical appreciations of human behavior, we might begin with the elementary observation that people act, where they can, in accord with their perceptions of their own interests. As Sen

and others have underscored, agricultural production is inescapably linked to self-interest. This is highlighted in the well-known facts regarding production of private plots, compared with collectivized efforts.

Therefore the goal must be, in Sen's phrase, "Land to the tiller." Where people have a real stake in their work and reasonable hope of profiting from it, production will rise. Effective ownership and control of the land must be combined with access to markets. The most basic factor in access is roads, by which the producer can easily reach the buyer, in a relatively free market exchange. This means the high-technology agricultural methods of countries such as the U.S. are in no way a model for almost all LDCs. Rather, Japan's "gardening" model suggests itself as a way that invites people to be productive on the land because it is in their interest to do so.

To be sure, this course favors the "basic needs" approach that some LDC leaderships find offensive. But if the goal is the conquest of hunger, rather than some vague and probably illusory "equality between nations," there would seem to be no other way. A steel mill is not the "right" of every country nor a sign of development; indeed, it may be the symbol and cause of regression through the severe disallocation of scarce resources, both human and fiscal.

And to be sure, this means that the U.S. must and will make choices. In part this is self-evident. While it is the role of those of us committed to global development to press for the most expansive commitment on the part of the U.S., the capacity of America—although enormous and hardly employed to the full to date—is limited. And then too, for ideological and political reasons some countries are not open to receiving aid from the U.S., fearing a "dependency" that others would call a healthy expression of global interdependence.

### *Calculating Self-Interest*

The continuing moral debate among us is whether these choices should be made on the basis of need and the opportunity to respond to need or on the basis of America's calculated self-interest. The most obvious instance of need is in the case of catastrophe, and it may be hoped that in such cases the U.S. will continue its record of usually generous responsiveness. Of course even here U.S. responses differ, depending upon the sometimes accidental focusing of media attention or upon political and military circumstances that close off the area of catastrophe from U.S. assistance, as was the case during the genocide and subsequent starvation in Kampuchea.

While calculated self-interest sounds like a brutally selfish way of determining aid, it should be noted that there are different ways of calculating self-interest. The advocates of "lifeboat ethics" and "triage" are still among us, and their voices may be counted upon to grow louder during times of panic. Their calculation requires a deliberate dismissal of the claims of the poorest of the poor and a concentration of effort upon those situations that promise the greatest return on the dollar, so to speak. As some of these advocates are candid enough to admit, their approach requires a "reversal" of

Judeo-Christian ethical thought. Because almost all Christian and Jewish moral thinkers agree with that judgment, and because at this moment in American life there is a resurgent effort to relate public policy to religious ethics, it seems unlikely that lifeboat ethics will prevail in the foreseeable future.

There is another and more conventional way of calculating self-interest, however. From Thucydides through Hans Morgenthau it has been argued that relations between governments and nations are best and most securely built upon the calculation of the several interests involved. Many who are most concerned about world hunger would posit against that classical doctrine some kind of ideal or imperative of justice that must be permitted to override national interests. Others simply skew their calculations by giving higher value to the interests of some nations than to others. It would seem a fact of life that Americans (or any other people, for that matter) will not adopt policies that are perceived to be *against* their own interest. Yet, as many observers have noted, Americans are historically inclined toward acts of altruism that do not appear to serve their own immediate or long-term interests. A synthesis of these considerations would tend to the conclusion that the most secure policy approach, an approach that has the merit of relative stability, will combine self-interest with a boldly challenged capacity for altruism.

### *Facing Conflicting Values*

We have in this policy area as in so many others a conflict of values. Our moral judgments will be inevitably shaped by our most basic analyses of the "rights" and "wrongs" in our moment of world history. For example, there are far-ranging policy implications in the way we answer the question: Is American power, in general and on balance, a force for good in the world? If the answer is Yes, there will be a multitude of convergences between American self-interest and what is best for the world, including the very poor. If the answer is No, our advocacy of what is "good for the world" will continue to run into strong resistance from the American people. The point here is that how we answer that question is not related to whether we are "moral" or "immoral," whether we care about world hunger or not, but to different readings of world history.

It is clear beyond doubt that the new U.S. administration answers the question in the affirmative. It promises to be more assertive about American power and influence, offering to LDCs the opportunity to get on board the economic and political approach that "works," and of which the U.S. is the prime exemplar. Those governments that do not want, for whatever reason, to tie into the American "system" will be permitted to go their own way, but without economic assistance from the U.S., except perhaps in the case of humanitarian response to catastrophe. In short, the response of the administration will likely be similar in global scale to its approach to domestic poverty—the establishment of "enterprise zones" in the inner city and other inducements for the poor to join in American productivity, all assuming that increased productivity will mean that distribution will more or less take care

of itself. Again, it must be emphasized that the rightness or wrongness of this approach is not an ethical question but a question of how the world works, a question of political and economic judgment.

The moral task in the years ahead will be to keep the reality of world hunger on the American public agenda. Those who share the worldview that appears to characterize the new U.S. administration might counter that this is a time for "benign neglect" of global development, that the problems will take care of themselves as the U.S. revitalizes its own economy and asserts its greater influence through the world. They may be right in their diagnosis and proposed cure, but without sustained attention to the reality of world hunger, nobody will notice whether their solutions are working or not.

In this connection, it seems likely that new currency and credibility will be given the biblical concept of "stewardship." That is, responsibility will be premised not upon the guilty intuition that we owe reparations to the poor but upon a sense of being singularly "blessed" and therefore singularly responsible for those who are less blessed. Of course to the poor this will seem like a manifestation of noblesse oblige, of condescension.

While unnecessary humiliation of others should be avoided, the stark fact is that the appearance of condescension, even of charity, cannot be avoided. The most elementary difference between the rich and the poor is that the rich have more of what the poor want. Put so baldly the proposition is embarrassing, but so it is.

We may agree or disagree with the new administration's understanding of world hunger and what should be done about it. As in domestic policy there is a rejection of the "solutions" of the New Deal, so in foreign policy there will be little patience with the repeated clamoring for the implementation of old answers to world hunger. The political task now is to demonstrate a capacity for innovation and experimentation within the limits of the new established wisdom. The moral task is to sustain the belief that, economic and political differences aside, America will be judged ultimately by its capacity to care about and to assist those who live along the fault lines of the present global order.

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# 7

## AMERICAN PRODUCTIVITY: ETHICAL ISSUES AND MORAL CHALLENGES

The American labor force is still the world's most productive, but it is fast losing ground. Our industrial competitors, especially West Germany and Japan, are gaining on us. Decisions about industrial, trade, and regulatory policies are urgently required in order to reverse this trend. Ronald Reagan has proposed to "take the punitive taxes and regulations and remove them from the back of industry so we could become more productive." Decisions about productivity will affect every phase of economic life, public and private. The role of government, the posture of labor, domestic income policies, international trade and labor agreements—all must be reviewed and redirected if America is to regain and retain a firm competitive industrial position.

American productivity and competitiveness are most often discussed in purely economic and political terms. But the economic and political decisions at issue have moral and ethical consequences as well. Like it or not, determinations of economic policy involve moral and ethical judgments about human life and society. There is no value-free method of (1) defining productivity, (2) delimiting government's regulatory role in business, (3) restructuring American labor's relationship to management and government, (4) hammering out international agreements on Fair Trade and Fair Labor policies, and (5) coming to terms with the needs and concerns of LDCs. Any revised productivity policy will touch these five areas.

### 1. *The Measure of Productivity: Quality of Life or Quantity of Products?*

Productivity-gain is traditionally measured by in-

creased output achieved without a corresponding increase in the labor force. If the resulting surplus is allocated equitably among workers, owners, and consumers, then society realizes increased real wages, higher profits, and lower prices. Everybody gains, or can. A stagnating productivity, on the other hand, means a flat rate of output. The result is a zero-sum game in which one group's gain (e.g., higher wages) is another's loss (e.g., lower profits and higher prices).

Concerning this traditional model of productivity, consider these three issues. First, this model is a human creation; it is not chiseled in stone. It assumes a quantitative measure of productivity, viz, amount of output relative to cost of input; and the resultant impact on society is a zero-sum game when productivity lags and a win-win game when it does not. Second, the model assumes that productivity growth is an unquestioned good and that a no-growth economy must lead to a vicious circle of winners and losers. Third, the model approaches productivity from the standpoint of the owner's interest rather than, say, labor's. Productivity-gains are ideally achieved by technology-intensive means of reducing the labor force.

Would it be fruitful to evolve alternative models of productivity to challenge the assumptions of the given model? First, consider a qualitative rather than a quantitative measure. Is the output of 150 ugly and disposable widgets necessarily preferable to 100 widgets that are aesthetically pleasing and built to last? As Barbara Tuchman has pointed out, productivity need not be the enemy of quality—each could be defined in terms of the other. Second, can we challenge the assumption of the given model that "more is better"? Can we work

toward a stable, noninflationary ideal of productivity, where there are no losers in the zero-sum game because no group is out to exploit the others—an economy where wages reflect genuine output, prices reflect real costs and profits, actual financial return? Third, need productivity be defined so that labor bears the cost, as the traditional model assumes? There is evidence that labor is not the culprit but the victim of the present productivity crisis. For example, from 1960 to 1975 there was an increase of 2.5 per cent in labor productivity, whereas during the same period the real buying power of wages rose only .5 per cent (*Monthly Labor Review*, January, 1977). What would a model of productivity look like that made Quality of Working Life rather than quantity of products its centerpiece?

## 2. *Government: Friend or Foe of Productivity?*

A decision about government's role in resolving America's productivity crisis involves moral and ethical judgments about (a) industry's obligation to contribute to the quality of life, (b) government's ability to plot an ideal course for human society, and (c) fair and just distribution of the benefits we hold in common.

a. An obvious and easy target for America's productivity woes is the massive intervention by government in the free market process by way of regulation. Laws against cartels and "corrupt practices" seem to put American industry at a disadvantage, as do laws enforcing stricter health, environmental, and safety standards on exports than industrial competitors need to follow.

At issue, again, is the definition of productivity. Is it to be defined in narrow economic terms to include only those gains that show up as return on investment? Or do we pursue an ideal of productivity that enforces more honest bidding, cleaner air, safer products—all of which enhance the quality of life if not the GNP?

b. To what extent should government be involved in evolving an industrial policy to encourage productivity? Do we pin our hopes on the market system or on social planners? The issue turns on a philosophical and ethical judgment about human nature and reason. The Rationalists among us will encourage government intervention to foster, for example, the highly productive "knowledge industries", and phase out low-productivity labor-intensive sectors of the economy best handled by Third World economies. Free enterprise advocates would rather leave the sorting out to the market mechanism. To them, the market is an ongoing experiment that will point us in the right direction.

c. Finally, if a decision is made in favor of public policy planning for productivity, then questions of distributive justice become acute. A decision in favor of the "knowledge industries," for example, is not one in favor of minorities, blue collar workers, or the poor.

## 3. *Labor and Income: Who Gets What and Why?*

In a meritarian economy like America's, income and livelihood are chiefly a function of labor. Welfare or unearned income (at the lower end of the economy, not the higher end) is stopgap and stigmatized. Decisions about productivity become decisions about who works

and who doesn't. Human livelihood and human worth are immediately involved, and the issue of distributive justice must be faced head on, whatever decisions are made. In America labor is the chief allocator of economic resources and provides the chief answer to the question of distributive justice, "Who gets what and why?" When the silicon chip becomes the major supplier of cheap labor, what becomes of the displaced human suppliers? This is not an issue if productivity decisions are made in a purely economic framework. But a moral perspective demands that the human cost be factored in.

Justice demands that like parties be treated alike, and that different ones be treated differently according to their *relevant* differences. Debates about productivity and justice will revolve around *which* differences are relevant. Consider:

a. *To each according to social status* (justifying the exploitation of illegal aliens to increase productivity)

b. *To each according to contribution* (justifying, for example, the displacing of workers by automation)

c. *To each according to need* (justifying the alleviation of poverty, illiteracy, and disease, regardless of productivity)

d. *To each the same* (stating that there are no relevant differences: equal share of the pie for all)

A related question is whether labor should take a cooperative or adversarial stance toward management and government. This is the major challenge posed to America by the Japanese productivity model. Again, an ethical judgment about human nature is at stake. The cooperative model rests on belief in the sociability of humankind. It believes that we hold our human identity in common and flourish best in a cooperative environment. The adversarial model sees competition rather than affiliation at the heart of the human beast. It believes that we flourish best in a climate of checks and balances, where competitive instincts are given their head and the Hobbesian war pitting group against group is allowed to run its course.

## 4. *Productivity as a Global Issue*

We tend to view America's productivity problem from a domestic standpoint. It's America *against* its productivity competitors in the industrialized world. And increasingly it's America *against* the Third World becoming ever more competitive, especially in the labor-intensive clothing and textile industries.

Is America to focus on its own narrowly defined self-interest and withdraw, for example, into a parochial protectionism? Or is productivity first and foremost a problem put to the community of nations of which America is a member? The philosophical-ethical decisions regarding cooperation versus confrontation are now raised to the global level.

To achieve a fair and just movement toward global productivity will require another long hard look at the *relevant* differences among human beings and the consequences of these for the distribution of wealth as we hammer out international agreements of Fair Labor practices and Fair Trade rules. Review the maxims of distributive justice. In the light of these, how do you judge, for example, the wage escalator clause of Ameri-

can steelworkers' contracts in a climate of declining productivity? What about the productivity advantages enjoyed by some Third World industries at the cost of excessive working hours, child labor, and unhealthy working conditions? And how just is the American autoworker's (income: \$18/hr.) demand that the average manufacturing wage earner (\$5-\$6/hr.) subsidize him by paying \$300-\$600 more per car if Japanese imports are curtailed?

##### 5. *Agriculture: World Champions?*

Agriculture is one sector in which America has rung up (not without substantial government intervention) solid, even outstanding, productivity successes. Over the past decade the farm trade surplus has increased from \$1 billion to \$18 billion, and farm productivity has increased tenfold in the past half-century. Clearly, *economically* speaking, America's agricultural productivity is not a problem. But that very same success raises profound questions of morality and justice. Precisely here, where there are no major productivity problems to distract and excuse us, we are forced to confront the realities of world famine in the face of agricultural abundance. Justice presents a fourfold challenge to complacency about our agricultural productivity.

First, justice mandates the right of individuals to the means of physical survival. Therefore food, no less than air or water, is a basic human right. Yet we persist in treating food as a speculative market commodity; we're even tempted to use it as a political weapon.

Second, justice is an affirmation of individual human dignity. The starving poor are not helpless burdens to be shoved off the global lifeboat. Their poverty is not a measure of their human worth. They can feed themselves, but not when trapped in an economic structure that views what they grow as a profitable commodity for

export rather than as a staple for local consumption.

Third, justice demands participation and empowerment by all members of the human community, First and Third worlds alike. Famine cannot be cured by a one-way technological fix (Green Revolution, better fertilizer), but by a cooperative social and economic revolution (land reform and collective self-reliance).

Fourth, humans who are equal in their humanity make up a world community more fundamental than nations or groups joined by bonds of politics, privilege, or economic status. In this view, working to overcome famine is not merely a charitable option but an obligation in justice.

##### *The Challenge*

A strong agricultural productivity in a famine-plagued world confronts us in a most unambiguous way with the basic moral option and ethical judgment running through all these productivity issues. Are we faced with a global problem to be resolved in terms of our common humanity (egalitarian justice) or a national program of how to regain superiority over against First and Third World competition (meritocratic justice)? And this same tension and ethical challenge confront us as we face up to the domestic consequences of our policies to increase productivity. The decisions we make about the role of government, about incomes policy, and the very definition of productivity itself will create new classes of winners and losers. We need to ensure that the winners' gains are not purchased at the price of human dignity.

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## AMERICA AS A GREAT DECISION IN 1981

The litany of crises in U.S. foreign policy is so long that it runs the risk of paralyzing our national will. Has the curve of Soviet power reached the point of operational superiority, so that we are "Finlandized" whether we know it or not? Is there a North Atlantic alliance in any meaningful sense of the term? Can we maintain access to the West's oil lifeline in the Persian Gulf? How can the global arms competition, which holds the entire world in jeopardy, be reversed? Is Latin America condemned to either slow Cubanization or right-wing repression? How shall we cope with worldwide terrorism? What is our responsibility to the boat-people, and to the millions of other refugees? And what about the resource scarcity suggested by the recent State Department *Global 2000* report: Have we any national standards by which to make those kinds of perilous allocation decisions?

As I say, the prospects are almost paralyzing. Yet a clue to resisting paralysis and to re-forming an American national will capable not only of meeting the harsh

challenges of interdependence but of meeting them in ways that build a minimum of world political community is found in the issue of *standards for judgment*: Do we as a nation have a set of agreed values by which we measure our actions and their worth? Is there in America today a public morality that is applicable to our foreign policy?

##### *Morality and Foreign Policy: Why?*

The first question for anyone seeking to relate ethics to foreign policy is *Why?* The bloody record of human history (bloody in no small part because of the righteous bloodmindedness of those who sought to impose their "superior" morality by armed force) would seem to suggest that we are better off in a Hobbesian world of balanced self-interests, in which canons of moral behavior are left to the private sphere. Yet if there is a lesson to be drawn from the currents that swirled through the 1980 presidential campaign, it is that America is still a

country in which political ethics deals with more than just Abscam bribes. More fundamentally, political ethics involves the larger choices of identity and purpose that lie below the surface of today's headlines.

Few contemporary writers have surveyed this problem of ethics and foreign policy with as much elegance and balanced insight as the late Charles Frankel (see "Morality and U.S. Foreign Policy," *Worldview*, June, 1975). His summary of the case against Wilsonian moralism made by such leaders of the "realist" school as George Kennan, Hans Morgenthau, and Reinhold Niebuhr is a bracing tonic for those who spend too many hours in the fever swamps of church social action offices. Four points in the realist critique, and Frankel's rebuttal, are worth recalling.

First, the realists raised a necessary caution against the mischievous combination of general principles and great conceit that can prove so damaging in the conduct of foreign policy. Second, the realists reminded us that the ethics of interpersonal relationships and the political ethics of international relations are distinct enterprises and that to confuse them can only lead to political and moral trouble. In their strictures against utopianism the realists rightly argued that fallen Man is capable only of works that are short of the ideal—and that, consequently, "self-interest" is not so much a matter of selfishness as it is a mechanism for providing a balance or order in public life. Finally, the realists insisted that power is important and that, particularly in a situation where the adversary does not share our universe of moral discourse, powerlessness can be as dangerous as power gone awry.

Having made the realists' case, though, Frankel crafted a response that accepted their warnings yet built a public morality that avoided moralism. Like Chesterton ("When a man ceases to believe in God, he does not believe in nothing, he believes anything"), Frankel knew that, hidden or trumpeted, principles were an inevitable part of the moral calculus of both individuals and nations; the avoidable temptation is to make principles into absolutes. Like Hobbes, Frankel saw the many warts of the human conditions. But Frankel could also affirm that "although man has his vices, it is also man who makes the judgment that he has vices." Thus, it is not the case that public life and international affairs are necessarily *amoral*; what we need are *appropriate* standards for ethical judgment in international relations, standards that are, *sui generis*, distinct from the standards of interpersonal relationships. Frankel understood that this is a country based on ideas, and that while our foreign policy should devoutly avoid messianic delusions, it must still be based on animating ideas that define anew for each generation our task in the world.

In "Morality and U.S. Foreign Policy," Frankel emphasized "moral realism," a kind of casuistry that relates principles to complicated human situations, which suggests that our first task in sorting out the Great Decisions of 1981 is to see clearly just what our present predicament is. In my view the dilemma, appropriately enough, has two horns: the centrality, amidst a host of other quandaries, of the problem of war; and the current inability of the U.S., in its disarray, to address that problem without exacerbating it.

## War and Its Threat

The global agenda for action indicated by that litany of crises is so comprehensive that one hardly knows where to begin addressing it. But a careful examination of these situations—from the horrific prospect of a renewed nuclear arms race to the microcosmic struggle of a Kampuchean family to survive—shows that, while there are many problems, there is one Problem that is the key to the rest: war. Because war and the threat of war so occupy the ground on which international relations are conducted, the resolution of any other problem on the global agenda is highly doubtful unless progress is made on alternatives to mass violence in the prosecution of international conflict.

Our difficulty in addressing the problem of war in a meaningful way ("meaningful" in both its moral and political senses—it is right, and it is achievable!) is our lack of agreement on how to move the world away from the threat of mass, organized violence and to do so in ways that do not further jeopardize America's perilous security.

Yet America *could* be the principal lever for addressing this central moral and political problem of war. For it is here that we have learned those lessons of racial, ethnic, and religious pluralism, mediated through legal and political structures capable of protecting basic human rights and satisfying basic economic needs, that are required for progress toward a world political community. Still, only a naif would go on to argue that America is that instrument of change just now—and *that* is the second horn of our dilemma. We cannot address successfully the multiple crises of the present danger without a direct assault on the problem of war; and the would-be lever capable of that leadership is a badly fractionated, deeply divided political community that does not know its mind about the world or the role it thinks it ought to play in it.

To regather agreement on America's proper role in world politics is most profoundly a question about values—as Charles Frankel and others knew. It is a question of deciding who we are and what we are for. In Frankel's own words, "The heart of the decision-making process...is not the finding of the best means to serve a national interest already perfectly known and understood. It is the determining of the interest itself: the reassessment of the nation's resources, needs, commitments, traditions, and political and cultural horizons—in short, its calendar of values.

## The Recurring Questions

Those who wish to go down Frankel's road and explore American society's calendar of values, asking how they can apply to world affairs, find that there are recurring nodes of the argument that crop up again and again.

First is the question of community: To whom are we responsible? Most would agree that the boundaries of our responsible community include family and friends; local community; church, synagogue, or other voluntary organization; and the national/political community whose security and guarantees prove the framework for all the rest. But can—should—the circle of responsibil-

ity be drawn wider than that? Can we assume, in more than a rhetorical way, responsibility for that nascent world political community? And if so, what is the relationship between that responsibility and our national responsibility? If not mutually exclusive, can they be complementary? Does each in fact demand the other?

Then there is the question of our attitude toward military power. When, if ever, is it justified to use mass violence in the pursuit of our political will? The Judeo-Christian tradition has offered three models of moral calculus in answer to that question: the pacifist tradition, the so-called "just war" current, and the tradition of the holy war/crusade—once thought dead at the walls of Acre but now apparently resurrected in theologies of liberation through revolutionary violence.

None of these moral models is entirely satisfying. Pacifists identify the problem correctly but rarely think through the political means for resolving it in a nonpacifist world. Just war theorists work with a model whose two central operational tenets—the principles of discrimination and proportionality—are severely eroded by modern weaponry; and yet they correctly place a high value on law and political community as the effective alternative to violence in world affairs. Crusaders often think they have achieved a special level of ethical insight, only to be shocked that so few others share their view.

Questions of the definitions of peace and justice recur throughout the attempt to build an ethic for U.S. foreign policy. Is peace to be understood as personal serenity? As a world of perfect harmony? Or as a world full of conflict and contention, yet within which there is a governed community capable of resolving conflict through law and political process? Definitions of peace, like definitions of justice (equity? egalitarianism?) are related to the most fundamental node of the ethics-and-foreign-policy argument, the question of human nature: Of what are men and women capable?

We seem to have come far afield here, from worries over tomorrow's crisis in the Persian Gulf (or Northern Ireland, or Poland, or El Salvador) to questions about human nature and its capacities. Yet the two levels of decision-making are directly related. For going through the Frankel exercise of rebuilding American society's calendar of values is the prerequisite to effective action in the world.

## *America as a Great Decision*

Thus the fundamental Great Decision in 1981 is the decision about America. Can this country, in which both isolationist and universalist currents run deep, pass through its post-Vietnam guilt to a new and gathered sense of common purpose and direction? Like it or not, leadership in the world is ours: for the defense of democracy, elemental human decency, and those political rights and civil liberties that form the core of our political-ethical patrimony; for the advance of human well-being in a sometimes dangerously interdependent world; and most particularly for progress on an effective approach to the central problem of war and peace.

The latter, I have argued, is the key to progress on the host of present dangers that confront us. Paradoxically, it is also the key to rebuilding an American political community actively engaged for good in the world. That engagement requires a task worthy, in its difficulty and its moral necessity, of our regathering. That task is a concerted national effort to lead in the development of credible, effective, legal and political instruments for resolving international conflict without violence. Only in answering the "nodal" moral questions sketched above will we become again a purposeful political community, in which the genuine meaning of *consensus*—a situation in which enough people have made up their minds that something can happen—is realized.

In 1946 Albert Camus wrote that the contemporary moral and political task was "to be neither a victim nor an executioner"—to see in the political process, if not the means of human perfectability, at least the means by which human beings could work out their competing conceptions of perfection without destroying each other in the process. "People like myself," he wrote, "want not a world in which murder no longer exists (we are not so crazy as that!), but rather one in which murder is not legitimate."

Building *that* world through American leadership, and regathering America toward that task, is the job of both the ethicist and the strategist. Neither will succeed without the other.

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