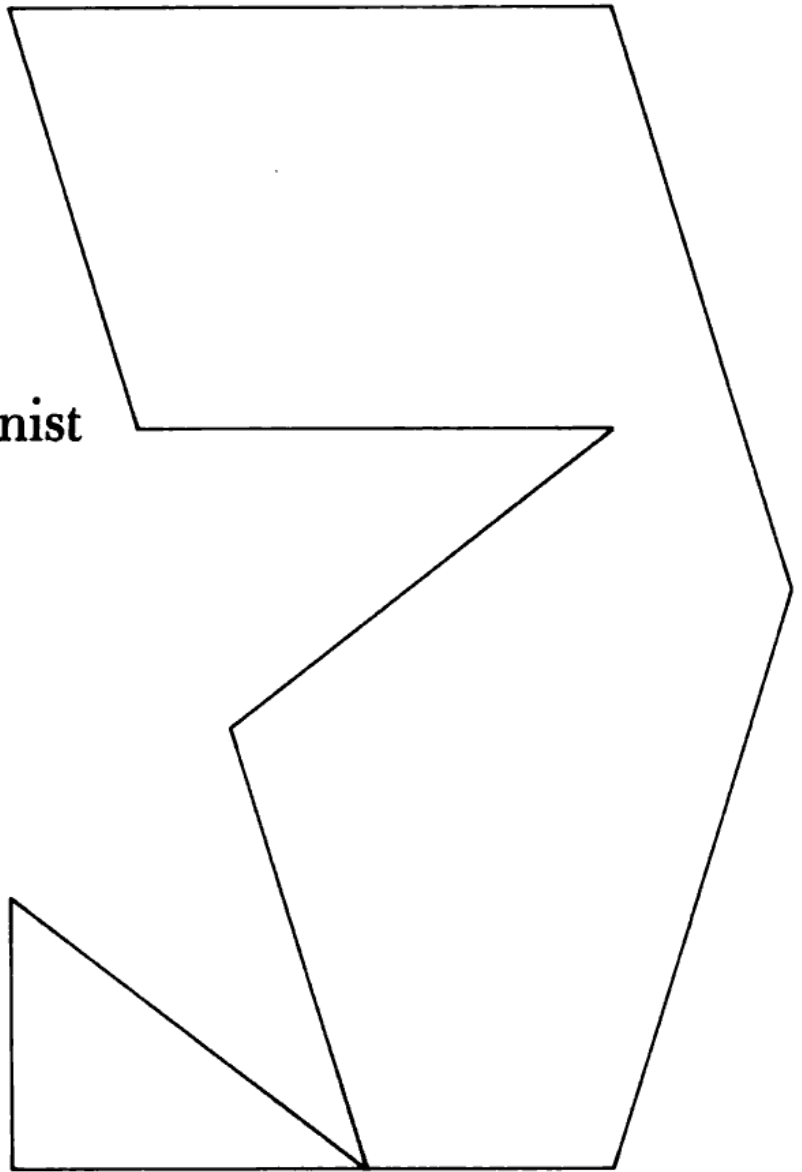


**The
Anti-Communist
Impulse**



The Anti-Communist Impulse

Michael Parenti

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The most gentle and helpful critic of all was my wife, Susan, to whom I pay a special tribute.

This book is dedicated to
the Reverend William Sloane Coffin, Jr.,
because of his open mind and open heart

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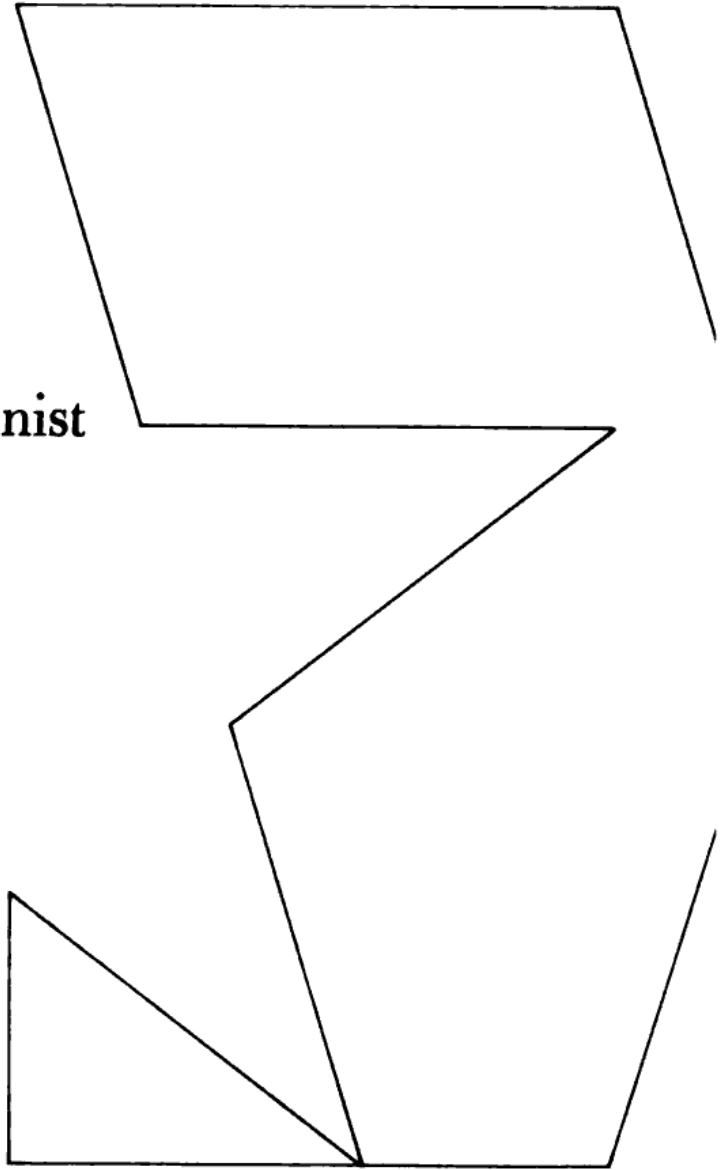
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Introduction

Critical thought strives to define the irrational character of the established rationality. HERBERT MARCUSE

To see or to perish is the very condition laid upon everything that makes up the universe . . . And this, in superior measure, is man's condition.

TEILHARD DE CHARDIN

Thousands of volumes have been written about the ideology, history, and evils of communism, but not very much about anti-communism. Yet anti-communism is the most powerful political force in the world. Endowed with an imposing ideology, and a set of vivid images and sacred dogmas, it commands the psychic and material resources of the most potent industrial-military arsenal in the history of mankind. Its forces are deployed on every continent, its influence is felt in every major region, and it is capable of

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acts which—when ascribed to the communists—are considered violent and venal. Our fear that communism might someday take over most of the world blinds us to the fact that anti-communism already has. If America has an ideology, or a national purpose, it is anti-communism. Hundreds of billions of dollars have been expended, and hundreds of thousands of lives have been sacrificed on its behalf. It is time we gave closer scrutiny to the anti-communist impulse, its mainstays and effects, its polemics and policies.

Some ideologies have no “manifesto” or “bible” containing an explicit statement of belief. Some are so deeply rooted in the polity, so widely and imperceptibly diffused in a nation’s political culture as to be rarely exposed to rational confrontation. The most powerful ideologies are not those which prevail against all challengers, but those which are never challenged because in their ubiquity they appear more like “the nature of things.” We are repeatedly advised to guard against the dogmas of the right and of the left, but not a word of warning is extended about the dogmas of the middle since these are seldom perceived as dogmas.

Men rarely interact directly with their material milieu: between a man and the “objective” world there looms the symbolic environment, a configuration of images, values, conditioned perceptions, expectations and unspoken assumptions filtering and even predetermining experience, and thereby becoming the “reality” we experience. All men live in a symbolic environment, “moderates” as well as “immoderates,” “solid” conservatives, “responsible” liberals and “flaming” radicals.* Are we then faced with the

* Over forty years ago, Walter Lippmann put it well: “For the most part we do not first see, and then define, we define first and then see. In the great blooming, buzzing confusion of the outer world we pick out what our culture has already defined for us and we tend to perceive that which we have picked out in the form

unhappy conclusion that the search for political truth involves little more than choosing from among a variety of equally illusionary symbolic configurations? Since reality produces a congestion of stimuli, comprehensible only if reduced to manageable images which necessarily introduce an element of distortion, and since these images are derived from the ongoing cultural-ideological environment, then what could possibly be "real" and what "false"? As David Hume suggested, the problem of what constitutes "reality" in our images can never be resolved since our images can only be compared with other images and never with reality.

But Kenneth Boulding has noted that even if the problem remains epistemologically unresolved, common sense and the necessities of everyday life oblige us to make judgments and to act as if our images were true. When doing this, we find that, at least for some purposes, rational mechanisms have their use and there exist processes for the detection of error, so that even if "naked reality" constantly eludes us, we hopefully can arrive at a closer approximation of the truth.¹

If someone cries, "The communists are taking over in Egypt!", instead of bemoaning the elusiveness of reality and concluding that one can't ever really know what is happening in Egypt or, for that matter, anywhere else, we can ask the speaker to specify whom he has in mind when he refers to the "communists," and what observable characteristics need one possess in order to qualify for that category. We can require some operational description of the political conditions represented by the expression "taking over." If the speaker is unwilling to respond on this level and prefers only to reiterate his contention, we might still prevail upon him to explain why a "communist take-over in Egypt" (whatever that means, and assuming it is occurring) is cause for alarm. The conjectures

stereotyped for us by our culture." In *Public Opinion* (New York: Free Press, 1960), p. 81.

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he offers can then be subjected to the same search for specificity, clarity and evidence.

In speaking of "evidence" we acknowledge that the elimination of error is accomplished mainly by feedback. From our present images of the world we derive certain expectations (images of the future) which if not fulfilled result—or should result—in a readjustment of our images. In 1956 to 1957 after the Suez crisis, some political leaders, including Secretary of State John Foster Dulles, actually did believe that Egypt and most of the Arab world were succumbing to Soviet domination, a view that did not enjoy the feedback of subsequent events. Either their image of the future was incorrectly drawn from their image of the present or the image of the present was false all along; that much we can say.

But the problem is more complicated, for in international politics, as elsewhere, our perceptions and images are not merely reflections of the exterior world, they help create it and are a substantive part of it. As Stanley Hoffmann noted, "Reality is in considerable part the product of a conflict of wills, of a context of active perceptions competing for the privilege of defining reality."² To the extent that any specific set of "active perceptions," such as those manufactured by the anti-communist mentality, are persuasive, they become a self-confirming, self-perpetuating force, to be treated not only as more or less distorted images but as creators and actual components of political reality.

This book is a critical examination of the kind of political reality which the anti-communist impulse has constructed; it is an inquiry into the imagery, theory, and practice of an American orthodoxy. In the chapters to follow I attempt to give an overview of the origins, the development, the cultural predispositions, and the domestic and overseas manifestations of American anti-communism. The larger portion of these pages is devoted to

American anti-communism's international policies, the repercussions of which weigh most heavily on matters of war, peace, and human survival. My hope is that this book will help others entertain new images and new realities, of the kind that might bring us to a saner and less tragic political world.

To some readers my efforts might appear "one-sided." But if it is true that "we need to hear all sides and not just one," then all the more reason why the evidence, ideas, and criticisms usually ignored or misread by the anti-communist ideologue deserve the extended coverage accorded them in this book. Moreover, unlike some Washington policymakers, I give serious critical attention to the arguments and interpretations of those who differ with me. That is my major purpose in writing this book.

It is not demanded of the reader that he accept my biases but that he reflect upon his own. How seldom we bother to explore in some critical fashion the fundamental preconceptions that shape our view of political life. How frequently, as if by instinct, we respond to certain cues and incantations. Our opinions shelter and support us; it is an excruciating effort to submit them to reappraisal. Yet if we are to maintain some pretense at being rational creatures we must risk the discomfiture that comes with questioning the unquestionable, and try to transcend our tendencies toward mental self-confinement.

Until a few years ago I was an anti-communist liberal who believed in the necessity of "maintaining our commitments against the forces of communism." Troublesome questions arose in my mind but these were usually vanquished by my deeply conditioned reactions to fearful images of "the cold-war struggle," and "communist aggression." Vietnam was for me, as for many other Americans, a crucible for my anti-communist beliefs. I began reading about the Vietnam war still convinced that "aggression" had to be stopped. The more I studied the prob-

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lem, the more I found myself questioning not only our involvement in that conflict but also the whole train of attitudes and events that brought us to it. Eventually I found I could no longer consider myself an adherent of the anti-communism preached and practiced by American liberals and conservatives. To be sure, it is still my conviction that communist rulers have shown themselves as adept as anyone in the arts of suppressing political dissent and exercising autocratic power; one need only think of the purge trials of the 1930s, Hungary of 1956 and Czechoslovakia of 1968. And let us agree at the onset that we despise and deplore labor camps, press censorship, oligarchic rule, and the exercise of any power that violates human dignity whether it be found in Spain, Portugal, Paraguay, Guatemala, Nicaragua, South Korea, Pakistan, Jordan, Saudi Arabia (to name a few of the countries to whom we have given aid), or in South Africa, Rhodesia, the Soviet Union, China, Bulgaria, in Mississippi or Chicago. But if we really are against those uses of power which violate the human spirit, then it is not enough to say we are against communism, but that we are against injustice, exploitative privilege, and despotism wherever it may be found.

It is our very commitment to human freedom and dignity that should cause us to view American anti-communism with alarm. Most disturbing to me are the many things the anti-communist does in the name of "freedom." At home we have suffered patriotic hooliganism, collective self-delusion, the propagation of political orthodoxy, the imprisonment of dissenters and the emergence of a gargantuan military establishment that devours the national treasure in the face of worsening domestic ills. Abroad, anti-communism has brought us armaments races, nuclear terror, the strengthening of oppressive autocracies, counter-revolutionary reactionism, the death and maiming of

American boys, and the slaughter of far-off unoffending peoples.

Convinced that communism is the greatest menace ever to beset mankind, and reenforced in that belief by demonic stereotypes, moral double standards, and enormous military power, American anti-communists find license to commit any number of heinous actions in order to counter the "menace"; thereby they perpetrate greater human miseries and dangers than the ones they allegedly seek to eradicate and they become the very evil they profess to combat. To maintain this tragic self-delusion, anti-communists embrace a vision of the world that reduces all events to the same self-fulfilling interpretations and, by the nature of its premises, denies the existence of disconfirming evidence. The success of anti-communism is to be measured by the tortured reality it has done so much to create.

In this book I shall amplify on these statements and attempt to demonstrate their validity. It is somewhat difficult for me to admit that this study has led me to conclusions refuting much of the cold-war political science I had been teaching for over a dozen years. But a truth delayed is better than a truth betrayed; the reappraisal has been a sometimes painful but frequently liberating experience—of which this book is the visible product. The reader is invited to share in the experience.

NOTES

1. See Kenneth Boulding, "Learning and Reality-Testing Process in the International System," *International Affairs* 21, no. 1 (1967): 2 ff.
2. Stanley Hoffmann, "Perceptions, Reality and the Franco-American Conflict," *Journal of International Affairs* 21, no. 1 (1967): 57.

1.

The Conflicting Communisms

All around him Innocent heard so-called Christians bewailing the fact that Mohamet had defeated Christ, and to this Pope it seemed that the Church itself was in danger of dissolution. It was little consolation to him that the Moslem world was also suffering from a desperate stage of disunity.

HENRY TREECE, *The Crusades*

Not all fears are phobias; some are reactions to real dangers and therefore functional to survival. To what extent is America's fear of communism a reaction to reality, and to what extent is it a phobic response? Our task is to put our anti-communist presumptions to the test of evidence and analysis.

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THE COMMUNIST WORLD TIDE

Without doing too much injustice to its various expressions I might state the central proposition of American anti-communism as follows: There exists a conspiratorial movement known as international communism which is dedicated to the relentless extension of its earthly domain. Edmund Burke's description of events in the late eighteenth century would readily serve the present anti-communist mentality if one simply substituted the word "communism" for "Jacobinism."

It is not the cause of nation against nation; but as you will observe the cause of mankind against those who have projected the subversion of the order of things, under which our part of the world has so long flourished . . . If I conceive rightly of the spirit of the present combination, it is not at war with France, but with Jacobinism. . . . We are at war with a principle, and with an example, of which there is no shutting out by fortresses or excluding by territorial limits. No lines of demarcation can bound the Jacobin empire.¹

One standard representation of the present-day anti-communist view is furnished by a Director of the Center for Strategic Studies at Georgetown University, Arleigh Burke. Compare his words with those of the earlier Burke.

The contemporary struggle . . . is not a conventional struggle based solely, or even principally, on military force. It is a total effort at annihilation of our way of life . . . the true enemy is not the Russian or Chinese people. . . . Beyond territorial conquest, the Sino-Soviet Communist leaders aim at conquering men's minds and souls and bending them to a new faith. . . .

Our habit of thinking in terms of national boundaries has resulted in disastrous losses. We have been unwilling to intervene in the domestic affairs of foreign countries upon which the Communists seek to impose their power.

Wherever Communists fight non-Communists, conflict ceases to be domestic. . . . It matters little that the Communist armies were not composed of Russian and Chinese, but of indigenous peoples. For these natives were Communists, hence members of an international movement.²

Among our top policymakers, we find former Secretary of State Dean Rusk observing that through “‘wars of liberation’ supported by Moscow as well as Peiping [Peking],” the communists seek control of all Asia, Africa, and Latin America, “thus encircling and strangling the Atlantic world.”³ The image of a worldwide communist conspiracy was affirmed by Hubert Humphrey who said in a speech in Detroit in the autumn of 1965 that “the international Communist movement organized and masterminded” the peace demonstrations. In a letter to this writer, Humphrey elaborated further:

The *Hate America* campaign was ordered by the Communist leadership of North Vietnam and the Viet Cong. It was actively sponsored and supported by Communist China. The international Communist apparatus was at work to inspire, coordinate and direct protests and demonstrations in many countries. Here, as elsewhere, the majority of the demonstrators were not Communists. The Communists have never had a majority in any movement. In fact, they don't want one. They do not believe in majority rule.⁴

Rusk concurred in this view, observing in April 1967 that “the worldwide Communist apparatus is working very hard” in the demonstrations.

FROM MONOLITHIC TO POLYCENTRIC

An examination of present-day evidence suggests that what is called “communism” in different parts of the world is a series of movements and governments that place their own interests ahead of any self-sacrificing dedica-

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tion to global revolutions allegedly directed by Moscow or Peking. This alternate view gives serious consideration to the pluralistic actualities developing in and between communist nations. It suggests that leaders of communist states entertain desires similar to those of leaders of non-communist states, including the pursuit of a secure domestic rule, noninterference from outside powers and an unwillingness to see one's own national interests sacrificed to the ambitions of some other nation.

The tendency to give top priority to national self-interest has been most clearly demonstrated by the Soviet Union. Since its earliest days the Soviet Union has demonstrated its readiness to protect its own interests at the expense of overseas communist movements. As the USSR entered into normal trade and diplomatic relations with foreign nations, the contradiction between Moscow as the headquarters of a movement seeking to overthrow governments, and Moscow as the capital of a Russian state seeking advantageous relations with these same governments became more and more apparent.⁵

The contradiction was never a troublesome one for Stalin, for history records his repeated readiness to jettison the hopes and ambitions of local communist parties while entering into accords with bourgeois and reactionary leaders in order to maximize some immediate or long-range Soviet interest. His alliance with Hitler—to the shock and dismay of foreign communist ideologues—his aloofness toward Mao, indeed, his reluctance to offer recognition to the Chinese Communist Party while seeking stabilized relations with Chiang after the war,⁶ and his willingness to urge restraint upon French, Italian, Yugoslav, and Greek Communists in order to placate the West and secure his own position in Poland might be cited as cases in point. In 1927, Stalin instructed the fraternal parties: "A revolutionary is one who is ready to protect, to defend the USSR without reservation, without qualification, openly and

honestly . . . for the USSR is the first proletarian, revolutionary state in the world, a state which is building socialism." ⁷ The Comintern membership vow read: "Each party desirous of affiliating to the Communist International should be obliged to render every possible assistance to the Soviet Republics in their struggle against all counter-revolutionary forces." ⁸

The post-Stalin leadership showed a similar propensity to put Soviet interests ahead of international revolutionary sacrifice. The great bulk of Soviet foreign aid has gone not to communist revolutionaries but to the established governments of various Asian and African states. Khrushchev strenuously courted national leaders, plied them with gifts and long-term credit, and usually ignored the communist oppositions in their respective lands. His successors publicly praised and feted de Gaulle in 1967 while the French Communists prepared to wage an election campaign against the General. The Soviet Union, to quote the *New York Times* of October 31, 1966, "finds its national interest more commanding than old fraternal obligations to the world proletariat." *

Communist international cohesion depended largely

* Witness the carefully cultivated relations the Soviets have had with Latin American nations. When Rusk sounded an alarm against "the pro-Moscow leftists" who allegedly are seeking to disrupt and control the government of Uruguay through a popular front, Soviet diplomats took sharp issue with the allegations. "They contend that the Soviet Union is interested in a strong and prosperous Uruguay with which it can have friendly relations and a fair amount of trade. A number of Uruguayan observers concur with the Soviet assertions. They contend that it would not be productive for the Communist countries to become implicated in domestic disorders. . . ." The same dispatch noted: "Some Latin American diplomats and political leaders are not happy with the United States' warnings. They see in them a resumption of the Cold War climate in the hemisphere and a renewed tendency in Washington to blame the Communists for problems whose roots lie in inequitable social and economic conditions." *New York Times*, 16 January 1965.

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on the weakness of the non-Russian parties. But once other communist leaders fought their way to power at the head of indigenous national movements, then the Moscow-imposed unity began to crumble. At the very time Truman and Acheson were describing the world in apocalyptic bipolar images, Moscow's domination was being successfully challenged by Tito. Years later, the de-Stalinization campaign conducted by Khrushchev and his almost deferential courting of the Yugoslavs implied a clear if belated justification of Tito's earlier defiance of Stalin.⁹ The lesson was not lost upon the other Eastern European nations. Yugoslavia had dramatically demonstrated that socialism and subservience to the USSR were not necessarily coterminous conditions.

Lacking sufficient mass support among their own peoples, the other Eastern European communist leaders looked to Soviet power to bolster their rule. But such support came at a price, including disadvantageous trade treaties with the USSR and the aping of Stalinist political and economic arrangements to the neglect of many domestic needs and nationalist sensibilities. This reliance on the Kremlin further limited the Eastern European leaders' own political legitimacy and popularity at home, which, in turn, made them all the more dependent on Moscow. A reversal of the cycle was in order.

The moment came in the autumn of 1956 when the Polish Communist leadership, faced with what amounted to a popular revolt, turned to its own people in defiance of the Kremlin and rallied around the communist-nationalist Gomulka, the man whom Stalin had once tried to kill.¹⁰ The Polish leadership promulgated a far-reaching series of reforms, exposed the shocking economic situation which Stalinist rule had brought them to, and announced their intention to deal, henceforth, with the USSR on a close but equal footing. Without abandoning the principle of collectivization, the Gomulka party did little actual

collectivizing, so that most of the land in Poland is still owned privately by peasants. The Polish regime also implicitly accepted "the profound Catholic allegiance of the masses and the intelligentsia's ties with Western culture." ¹¹

The revolution in Hungary followed immediately after the Polish-Soviet confrontation. From the Kremlin's view, it had all the markings of a Western roll-back of communist rule in Europe, and it drove the Russians to taking the murderously repressive action they dared not attempt in Poland. Yet Janos Kadar proceeded in the following years to win popular support among the Hungarian people by instituting some of the same reforms for which the revolution had been fought. Western political democracy has not been achieved in Hungary, but the police terror is gone; there is greater individual freedom in the creative arts; material conditions have improved; and the Kadar leadership is professedly anti-Stalinist.

At about the time of the Polish and Hungarian upheavals, Palmiro Togliatti, head of the faction-ridden Italian Communist Party, asserted the need to discover a "national path to socialism." In 1961, the Italian Communists issued a resolution rejecting the "centralized direction" of the various communist parties, and called for "a context of full independence of individual parties." A short time later they were extending warm invitations to the Catholic Church to join in the mutual task of reversing "the course of contemporary international events."

The Kremlin found itself dealing with a changed world and reacted accordingly. As early as 1956 the Soviet Twentieth Party Congress announced the doctrine of "many paths to socialism," and by 1961, Khrushchev could be heard saying: "It would be incorrect to evolve a certain model and adhere to it in mutual relations with other socialist countries. It would be an error to condemn as renegades all those who do not fit that model." By 1966,

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Leonid Brezhnev went even further: "The Soviet Communist Party is opposed to any trends toward hegemony in the communist movement."

It remained for Rumania to provide one of the most dramatic thrusts toward polycentrism. Refusing to choose sides in the Sino-Soviet split, and rebuffing Moscow's pressures for closer economic integration while simultaneously inviting investments from Western capitalists, the Rumanian Party leader, Nicolae Ceausescu, in a declaration in May 1966, called for "the defense of national unity and the independence and sovereignty of the homeland."¹² He denounced the "erroneous thesis" which resulted from "the Comintern's practice of issuing directives that disregarded the concrete conditions in our country and gave tactical orientations and instructions that did not correspond to the economic, social, political and national conditions in Rumania."¹³ Ceausescu added that "Rumania is developing relations of collaboration with all countries regardless of social system." He called for the liquidation of all foreign bases and the withdrawal of troops from the territories of other states. The existence of military blocs, he said, was "one of the barriers in the path of collaboration" and "an anachronism incompatible with . . . independence and national sovereignty . . . and normal relations among states."¹⁴

That Ceausescu sounded like de Gaulle was no accident. The mutual threat posed by the NATO and Warsaw Pact blocs tended to keep smaller nations dependent on either the United States or the USSR. As France used the new pluralism in Eastern Europe (e.g., Rumania) as an argument against NATO and American hegemony, Rumania pointed to the new Western pluralism (e.g., France) as an argument against the Warsaw bloc and Soviet hegemony. French and Rumanian policies became de-escalation mirror images of each other, each strengthening the other's bid for autonomy in international affairs. The

mutual admiration which Rumanian leaders and de Gaulle expressed for each other should have come as no surprise.

The opening to the West initiated by Poland and Rumania was followed by other communist countries. Bulgarian leaders soon paid their first official visit to a Western capital (Paris) and several of the Eastern European nations considered new trade relations with and diplomatic recognition of West Germany. Meanwhile, East Germany, long considered the most abject of Moscow's satellites, began moving toward economic and political autonomy, in what Welles Hangen describes as "the muted revolution."¹⁵

The trend toward liberalization received a shocking setback, however, in Czechoslovakia in 1968. When the Czech press began to assume a pronounced anti-Russian tone and the Czech government began to revamp and liberalize its leadership and its operational methods, Moscow viewed such developments as the first signs of a "capitalist" roll-back and, more specifically, a symptom of German revanchism.* In August 1968, the Soviets occupied Czechoslovakia, an action which evoked the strongest renunciations from communist leaders throughout the world, including the Chinese, who branded the invasion a "shameless act" reminiscent of Hitler's conquest. The Rumanians and Yugoslavs mobilized their troops and made known their readiness to fight any intrusion into their territories.

The Soviet intervention in Czechoslovakia was motivated by much the same kind of siege psychology and self-righteous presumption that had sent the United States into Vietnam. Sounding like Washington foreign-policy apologists, *Pravda* editorialists argued that there was a

* Francis Randall, the Soviet specialist, after a trip to the USSR in 1969, informed me that the Russians he spoke to all seemed to consider the invasion of Czechoslovakia as a most regrettable but necessary move to ward off the Germans "whom they fear to this very day."

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need to defend the frontiers of the communist world against an implacable enemy; that tiny Czechoslovakia was imperiled by imperialists, German revanchists and internal "subversive" elements; that "loyal" Czechs had requested intervention; and that many Czechs had expressed "gratitude" for the Soviet action.* It remained for Senator George McGovern to point out that American foreign policy "has helped to establish the claim of large nations to intervene in small nations . . . You cannot justify intervention in Vietnam on the grounds that our security is threatened by a government 10,000 miles away without inviting the Russians to intervene because they feel threatened by a government on their own border."¹⁶

Meanwhile the Russians, having suffered the opprobrium of most of the communist and non-communist world, soon found themselves in the unenviable position of occupying a country they could not rule. A total military success threatened to become something of a political failure as the Russians could not find a puppet government able to command even an appearance of popular support. In the shadow of Soviet guns, Czech leaders declared that there would be no return to the "police-state era" and that democratic reforms would continue although criticisms of other Warsaw Pact nations would be forbidden. At the time of this writing it was reported that much "soul-searching on the part of the Kremlin leadership" had convinced them that "a more conciliatory atti-

* The analogy to US interventionism can be carried further. One Moscow citizen was quoted by a US newsman as exclaiming, "It's about time! We are a big power and we should behave like one . . . Now the world will show us some respect." Another Muscovite observed: "In human terms, I feel sorry for what is happening to the people there. But Czechoslovakia is our military outpost and we must defend it. That is the fate of small nations." But some Muscovites registered skepticism and disapproval, and a group was arrested when attempting to demonstrate against the actions of their government. See *New York Times*, 22-24 August 1968.

tude was in order.”¹⁷ Yet there was no indication that Soviet troops would be withdrawn in the immediate future, and no guarantee that the Czech press would manage to preserve its freedom.

FROM POLYCENTRISM TO MULTI-LATERAL ANTAGONISM

When the independence of a small country, A, is menaced by a larger one, B, it will seek to align itself with another large nation, C, which for reasons of its own shares an antagonism toward B. Such had been the age-old methods of balance-of-power politics. That the nations all happen to be communist states does not seem to alter the pattern. Thus, Albania (A) had been resentful of Yugoslavian dominance from a time predating communist rule, and when Albanian Communists achieved power in close dependence on Yugoslavia (B), they found nothing much had altered the traditional imbalance between the two countries. Enver Hoxha and his followers saw the Tito-Stalin schism as the opportunity to set themselves free from Belgrade by liquidating their pro-Yugoslav Party rivals—with Soviet support.¹⁸ Thus Hoxha’s fidelity to the USSR (C) can be seen more as a means of warding off Tito’s influence than as an expression of dedication to Moscow. A, in fear of B, held close to C.

However, once Khrushchev began denouncing Stalin and cultivating amicable relations with Tito, Hoxha saw the re-emerging specter of Yugoslavian control. With B and C now on friendly terms, A is once more vulnerable to B. A then does what small nations usually do if the possibility presents itself; it seeks out another large nation, D, which might share an antagonism toward both B and C—in this case, China. That the Albanians moved toward China out of a newly-found ideological dedication to Maoism seems less likely than that they sought economic opportunities along with political and psychological support in

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the face of a Moscow-Belgrade rapprochement. As the *New York Times* reported on October 31, 1966:

To say that Albania had merely exchanged masters would be an oversimplification. However much Albania may appear to be serving Peking's interests and however much she may be economically dependent and ideologically close, for the first time in her history she has a protector whose distance is safe and who could therefore neither menace nor restrain her in choosing political and economic alternatives. Should national interest require, the Albanians are free to make such a choice.*

A significant point for us to remember is that this classic re-enactment of balance-of-power politics took place entirely within the confines of the "communist world."

The spectacle of communists denouncing other communists may be witnessed in almost any part of the world. More than once, Fidel Castro voiced his differences with both Moscow and Peking. In September 1966, after ridding Cuba of Chinese aid missions and denouncing Peking for interference in Cuba's internal affairs, he lashed out against pro-Soviet Cuban Communists for opposing the independent course of the Cuban revolution. Labeling them "calculating," "servile," and "domesticating" men, and recalling that they once considered his guerrilla war against Batista as the action of "crazy adventurers," Castro went on to denounce the communist old guard for "being offended when we say we are making our own revolution as if it were a sin or sacrilege."¹⁹ In similar terms he has been openly antagonistic toward many of the communist parties of Latin America.

At about this time, the Japanese Communist Party voiced opposition to interference in its internal affairs by

* After both the Yugoslavs and Albanians vigorously denounced the Russian invasion of Czechoslovakia, they began to make friendly overtures toward each other. A and B, both threatened by C, sought a rapprochement.

other communist parties and gave indications that it no longer considered itself aligned with Peking. Soon after, North Korea's rulers declared their own autonomy in a declaration entitled "Let Us Defend Independency," which stated in part that "Communists should always do their own thinking and act independently, maintaining their own identity. They should not dance to the tune of others." The statement criticized "flunkeys" of foreign powers who, returning to North Korea from wartime exile in the USSR or China "unconditionally worshipped anything belonging to the big powers and were preoccupied with imitating others in everything."²⁰

The age-old territorial and national-minorities disputes which have plagued countries throughout history also afflict the communist states, as exemplified by the deteriorating relations between Rumania and Hungary in regard to the Transylvania issue. Similarly, the Macedonian dispute has strained Yugoslavian-Bulgarian relations for more than a half century, with the Bulgarians contending that the territory under Tito's rule is really a part of historic Bulgaria. Bulgaria went so far as to send embassy officials (who were followed by Yugoslav secret police) to Yugoslav Macedonia to "study the conditions for the establishment of a separate Macedonia Socialist republic under Bulgarian guidance."²¹ Meanwhile, Ceausescu and Tito were reported to have clashed over the question of Rumanian and Yugoslav ethnic minorities in their respective countries.²²

Dwarfing all other disputes was the antagonism between the Soviet Union and China. The Soviet Union's long-standing assumption that it alone was the leading communist nation, its refusal to share atomic arms with China, its test-ban treaty with Washington which in effect called for a permanent closing of membership in the "atomic club," its unwillingness to give serious consideration to Chinese territorial claims, its neutrality in the Sino-Indian

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border dispute (followed by Soviet military shipments to India), its tendency to give more generous aid to small non-communist nations than to China, and its unwillingness to support the Chinese campaign to win Taiwan (even going so far as to suggest that Peking might consider a two-Chinas solution)—all this was sufficient to convince the Chinese that the Russians were more interested in thwarting than in assisting them. The Soviet tendency was to see the Chinese as “ungrateful” for the Russian aid rendered them, unduly competitive, and filled with an excessive national pride that seemed inexplicably to find its expression in hostility toward the USSR. Enough has been written on this subject without our having to recount the ideological, historical, territorial and nationalistic differences that nurtured the conflict. The Russians eventually seemed to view the Chinese with far greater hostility than they did the Americans. “There is,” George Feiffer writes after much first-hand observation in the USSR, “no sorrow in Moscow that the Sino-Soviet axis has collapsed, and no feeling of loss over the damage to international proletarianism. On the contrary, Russians never cared for international proletarianism—not, anyway, with the Chinese. . . . Russians do not like China. They feel that the Chinese are more natural enemies than natural friends. They would welcome a complete break, especially if it were accompanied by further rapprochement with the West.”²³

To say that the animosity between the two nations represented a competition for leadership within the communist camp is to assume (a) that one can speak of a “communist camp” and (b) that this camp is begging for such leadership. But an impressive fact about the schism was how unsuccessful *both* the Chinese and the Russians were in rallying a following to their respective sides. The Chinese seemed unable to count on anyone—not even the North Korean and Japanese parties. The Soviet attempt

in the autumn of 1966 to call a conference of the world's communist parties to deal with China ended in a fiasco.

The British Communists have been advocating complete freedom of religion, artistic expression and scientific research, and supporting the thesis that a nation needs diverse democratic parties "including those that do not accept or oppose the advance of socialism." In much the same spirit the Swedish Communist leader, Hagberg, announced that his party was looking forward to the day when it would be fused with the ruling Social Democrats because the latter were a "sound working class party."²⁴ Earlier, Togliatti had declared that the Italian Communist Party was not interested in the propagation of dogma, nor in the victory of communism as such but in the creation of a new kind of national and international society built with the assistance of "men of goodwill wherever they might be found." Through much of Western Europe it was becoming increasingly difficult to distinguish the communists from the other parliamentary socialist parties.

PLURALISM FROM WITHIN

Having recognized the cacophonies among the various communisms, we might observe that *within* any one communist nation or party there are conflicting social forces. The prevailing notion is that communist states exercise uniform "totalitarian" control over life in their respective countries. Some writers argue that by virtue of its "omnipotence," the communist state indefinitely can prevent any development toward a freer society. The non-communist reactionary regimes, then, are still preferable to "communist totalitarianism" because they at least might evolve into something better than they are today, whereas no country has ever emerged from communism having once "succumbed" to it.²⁵

In response to this view, it can first be suggested that

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there has been little time, as cultures go, to observe change. Most communist governments have been in power for less than a few decades. The Soviet revolution was a scant fifty years ago.²⁶ Second, the existing communist societies have indeed been undergoing deep-seated and dramatic transitions, including increasing economic and material well-being, higher levels of education, greater areas of popular political involvement and expanding freedom in the arts. If we discard our preconceived image of the communist state as an immense monolith, an immutable, all-powerful totalitarian machine, we can observe that communist leaders, like political leaders everywhere, seem to devote a great deal of energy to the essential task of maintaining popularity and power by mediating competing factional forces and accommodating widespread social demands. Like leaders elsewhere, they sometimes find themselves confronted with popular fermentations and eruptions that send them rushing forward to catch up with those they are supposedly leading. "All-powerful" party rulers are suddenly deposed; new voices, new demands and new programs emerge; yesterday's political sins become today's political virtues, and vice versa. Conflict seems to be an inescapable part of any modern social system, including a communist one.

Democratic expressions (as defined by conventional Western standards) are becoming more pronounced in communist countries. In Yugoslavia, the premier of the Slovenia Republic was defeated on a parliamentary vote, refused to reconsider, and was ousted by the legislature, which proceeded to elect a new government. Yugoslavs, according to one *New York Times* observer, are enjoying an increasingly "greater degree of freedom to dissent, to practice religion, to travel outside the country and to enjoy a press of considerable diversity."²⁷ In the Soviet Union, two Russian political scientists, writing in a scholarly journal, urged that their country's legislative bodies

begin exercising the full power conferred on them by law.²⁸

The developments within the "communist world" are often startling and uneven. At any one time one can witness significant transformations toward more open and pluralistic social arrangements along with sporadic regressions reminiscent of the Stalinist era. But if anything can be said about the "communist world" it is that it does not exist as a monolithic unchanging entity.

Communism was onced feared and hated because it allegedly represented a unified global conspiracy dedicated to our obliteration. Having realized that the "communist world" is riddled with conflict, many anti-communists now assert that "competing" communists are just as dangerous as formerly "conspiring" ones. Many devils are at least as bad as one since all of them are motivated by essentially the same evil intent. In our imaginations "communism" becomes a kind of contaminating reified "force" which infuses itself into diverse and incongruous political forms. The communist may be a Rumanian leader openly denouncing Soviet policy, a Cuban attacking Peking, a Russian or a Chinese castigating one another; whether he be a well-fed bureaucrat in Warsaw or a half-starved seventeen-year-old fighting the foreign invader in the Vietnam jungle, a Dominican student taking up arms for constitutional rule or a French intellectual making an agonizing reappraisal, a Huk guerrilla fighting for land reform, a Bolivian tin miner, a factory worker in Turin, a journalist in Chile, or a schoolteacher in Minneapolis—but such communists, once so labeled, represent the same evil in varied guises. As with any stereotype, the word "communist" imposes a false categorical uniformity upon a whole host of human beings who often share little common identity with each other, and who in the infinite variety of their social, historical, national and personal experiences are frequently in conflict with or indifferent to each other.

It is a curious "satanic force" which so strenuously works

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against itself the way communist organizations, and nations frequently do. Heated old-fashioned territorial disputes, complaints about unfair trade and treaty agreements, market competitions, differences in historical experience and in cultural taste and development, memories of past national rivalries, age-old ethnic and racial animosities, suspicions of being disadvantaged and misused—in short, all the substantive and psychic conflicts that have plagued nations throughout history arise among the communist countries and parties.

NOTES

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26. Charles E. Osgood develops this response in "A Plea for Perspective and Patience in the Conduct of Foreign Policy" (Monograph, c. 1965), p. 49.
27. David Binder, "Tito and the 1½-Party System," *New York Times*, 29 May 1966.
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The Demon Communist

Those who crusade, not *for* God in themselves, but *against* the devil in others, never succeed in making the world better, but leave it either as it was, or sometimes even perceptibly worse than it was, before the crusade began. By thinking primarily of evil we tend, however excellent our intentions, to create occasions for evil to manifest itself.

ALDOUS HUXLEY

Diabolism on the one side and divinity on the other still survive as basic factors in the process of political control.

CHARLES E. MERRIAM

It is characteristic of the virtuous that they are prone to see demons, and of the godly that they frequently have a greater interest in the devil than in the deity. The virtuous are not merely tantalized by evil, they are in need of its presence. ~~Were there no venal force afoot there would be no opportunity to save the world or oneself, and no occasion for the orgastic violence that so often typifies righteous rage.~~ The virtuous need the demonic because a role identity cannot find meaning except in association

with complementary roles. For this reason the magistrate in Jean Genet's *The Balcony* begs the criminal not to mend his ways so that he himself may continue to exist as a magistrate;¹ so the physician needs the sick, the teacher needs the student, the anti-Semite needs the Jew, the soldier needs the enemy and the anti-communist needs the communist. The seemingly antithetical are often symbiotic. For most of us virtue would lose its meaning were sin abolished; thus, at times, the good is discovered by a process of defining and then negating the evil as in "Thou shalt not . . ." And to be against some kind of sin has frequently been sufficient grounds for a claim to some kind of virtue.

To a greater extent than they dare admit, the virtuous are intrigued by and vicariously addicted to evil; they find it stimulating and titillating. In the name of vigilance, sin becomes their preoccupation. It is no accident that those who make most vehement claim to the virtues of true Americanism, *viz.*, the John Birchites, dwell most obsessively on the sins of communism, even to the extent of appropriating to themselves what are taken to be communist methods (conspiracy, unquestioning obedience to the leader, infiltration, use of front organizations, etc.). If communism were to disappear from the face of the earth, the Birchite would have to create new manifestations of it in his imagination—as indeed he frequently does—or else face a life emptied of much meaningful imperative.

If the impetus of one's life feeds on phobia derivatives, then the phobia, instead of being easily discarded, will be maintained at all costs. Arguments and evidence which demonstrate the groundless or exaggerated quality of such fear are not welcomed as sources of relief, but are resented as denials of one's deep psychic outlets, intrusions demanding a drastic reallocation of one's life impetus. Our fears and hatreds can become precious things, and rather than seeking liberation from them we often hold to the

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arguments which justify and intensify them. There evolves, to use Gordon Allport's phrase, a kind of "functional autonomy"; the very investment of vast amounts of psychic energy makes it extremely difficult for one to surrender the phobia. The fear creates its own momentum and eventually becomes its own motivation.

Most Americans seem to share this addictive fear of communism, and no sooner does one representation of the menace (the Russians) submerge than phobic feelings are cathected on to another (the Chinese). The fear has become too conditioned into us, too invested with meaning, too awesomely important to be deprived of its expression at a moment.

THE IDEOLOGICAL THREAD

A fear of this dimension tends to reify the feared object; communism becomes a political force divorced of the historical, national, ethnic, cultural, organizational, material, indeed, human, substances which give it form and identity.

What is this transcending and transubstantiating quality that transforms people into communists, and communists into demons, even as these demons battle each other across and within national boundaries, while often showing themselves eager for peaceful cooperative relations with ordinary mortals? The anti-communist's standard response is to classify as "outward appearances" those characteristics that do not fit the image of a nefarious adversary, reminding us that appearances are always deceiving and always outweighed by the "inner" characteristics which all communists have in common. For all their differences and conflicts, the communists allegedly share the same inner vision, the same ideology. Do they not consider *themselves* identified as communists, and is not this

identity a function of their mutual dedication to Marxist-Leninist tenets?

The evidence of the preceding chapter might make us question whether commonly professed doctrinal axioms signify conspiratorial unison, and whether doctrine itself does not as often become a source of conflict as of cohesion. Professions of common ideology do not guarantee a common reading of the Marxist-Leninist text. The nature of political ideology is that it can frequently be ignored; and it is debatable and susceptible to varying interpretations when not ignored. It can be revised to best serve the interests of some communist leaders while conflicting with the predilections of others.* Most often, doctrine is used by communist leaders to justify policies and legitimize actions, and its meaning is periodically reinterpreted accordingly.

Even if we were to grant the dubious proposition that ideology guides all communist actions and goals, we would still have to determine how and in what ways ideology is implemented; that is, we would still have to evaluate specific policies. We would then ascertain the unremarkable fact that, despite their common "Marxist-Leninist" label, different communist leaders, acting in response to

* Thus Mao has contended that he discovered an Asian form of Marxism, a revolutionary model which is far more pertinent to the contemporary Afro-Asian world than the classic European revolutionary system. The Soviets have never acknowledged the legitimacy of this Maoist ideology. However, the doctrine of "many paths to socialism" allowed by the Twentieth Party Congress in Moscow "gave ground to the Maoist as well as the Titoist modifications of Marxism-Leninism." Sino-Soviet ideological solidarity was thus temporarily maintained "only at the price of concessions which tend to hasten the disintegration of Marxist-Leninist doctrine." See Donald Zagoria, "Implications of the Sino-Soviet Conflict," *The Princeton Alumni Weekly*, Spring 1962, pp. 20-24; also John K. Fairbank, *The United States and China* (New York: Viking Press, 1958), p. 304.

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diverging sets of priorities, arrive at conflicting policies, and are disinclined to sacrifice their immediate interests to the eschatological goal envisioned in certain passages of the sacred text.

The history of Christianity demonstrates that ideology seldom guarantees frictionless cohesion or concerted action among a vast plurality of interests, loyalties, and animosities. Even during that one grandiose international military effort of the Middle Ages, the Crusades, "there was almost as much strife between the Christians who went on them as there was fighting between Christians and infidels."² The religious wars of the post-Reformation era clearly demonstrated the propensity of men to slaughter each other in the name of the Prince of Peace and the One True God of Love. The heretic is always more hated than the infidel. Something similar may be said of the various communists. Stalin excommunicated Tito, reclassifying him an apostate of the Word; the USSR and Albania pronounced damnation on each other for being enemies of the working class; the Rumanians sanctified their form of national communism by treating it as an expression of the self-directed spirit of the nation's proletariat and therefore a sacred representation of Marxist internationalism; Moscow and Peking accused each other of heretical violations of revolutionary tenets, etc. All this does not mean that doctrine is mere window dressing; legitimacy of rule is the most serious concern for any leadership group and since doctrine supports legitimacy, it is treated seriously. What it does mean is that ideology can breed conflict as readily as it can promise unity.

There are other tempting comparisons between Christianity and communism. Christianity, too, was an ideology that cut across national boundaries, and like communism, it suffered its worse schisms and decline under the competing demands of the nation-state. Devotion to the nation became a far more commanding emotion than loyalty

to Rome. Today it is the Rumanian Communist Ceausescu who heaps scorn on those party theoreticians who "have been trying to lend credence to the idea that nations are an outdated social category." The earlier national schisms (Titoism and Maoism) have opened opportunities for further pluralities and the promise of a conflictless world seems no more at hand today than in the days before Bolshevism.

WORDS VS. WORDS: THE DIABOLIC BLUEPRINT

Americans fear that the communist texts contain a "blueprint for world conquest." * Now there is no gain-saying that communist writings of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries would provide an ample number of predictions about the eventual global victory of communism. However these same Marxist writers are often quite explicit on the point that revolutions cannot be exported but must come from the political consciousness and sacrifices of the various peoples of the world. This was as true of Marx as of Lenin and is as true of Lin Piao.†

What many cold-war theoreticians fail to do is distinguish between *prediction*, on the one hand, and *intent* and *action*, on the other; thus, classic Marxist-Leninist *predictions* are treated as statements of *intent* directing all present-day communist *actions*.³ Yet it is one thing to show that a person believes history is moving inevitably on a particular course and quite another to demonstrate that this presumption directs his present energies and that

* Secretary Rusk declares: "The underlying crisis of our time arises from this fundamental conflict: between those who would impose their blueprint on mankind and those who believe in self-determination . . ." *New York Times*, 24 May 1966.

† Lin Piao's 1965 statement has been treated by American policy-makers as the prime blueprint for aggression; it will be discussed in Chapter Ten.

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other goals such as national prestige, international peace, domestic prosperity, and personal security have lesser meaning to him. With much insight, Robert Daniels observes:

. . . The American outlook . . . cannot grasp the possibility of communist ideas becoming mere doctrinal comforters which do not guide action to any significant degree. Americans themselves, like practically everyone else, may be guilty on this score: stock phrases like "freedom" and "democracy" sustain the sense of American self-righteousness but may be conveniently overlooked when practical business or foreign policy decisions have to be made . . . *To keep one's own ideology intact, it is easier to believe in the consistency of the other side's as well.* [Italics added.]⁴

The propensity to use some quotation from a communist source as prima facie evidence that communists are conspiring to destroy us is no better exemplified than in the treatment accorded Khrushchev's "we will bury you" statement. In 1959 during a visit to the United States, the Soviet leader was requested at a press conference to speak to this point:

Mr. Lawrence: A number of questions reflect a great interest in another remark once attributed to you, Mr. Khrushchev, to a diplomat at a reception, that you would bury us.

If you didn't say it, say so, and if you did say it, could you explain what you meant?

Premier Khrushchev: . . . I believe I did use that expression once, and if I did, I will try to explain why and what it means. To put it more precisely, the expression I used was distorted, and on purpose, because what was meant was not the physical burial of any people but the question of the historical force of development. . . .

At one time the most widespread system of society in the world was feudalism. Then capitalism took its place. Why was that? Because capitalism was a more progressive kind of system than was feudalism . . . We believe that

Karl Marx, Engels and Lenin gave scientific proof of the fact that the system, the social system of socialism would take the place of capitalism.

We believe in that . . . and that is why I said that looking at the matter from the historical point of view, socialism, communism, would take the place of capitalism and capitalism thereby would be, so to speak, buried . . .

I personally am convinced that communism will be victorious, as a system of society which provides better possibilities for the development of a country's productive forces; which enables every person to develop his capacities best; and insures full freedom of a person in that society. Many of you will not agree with that, but that means that I cannot agree with you either.

What is to be done? Let us each of us live under the system which we prefer, you under capitalism, and we will continue to build under communism.

All that is not progressive will die away someday, because if capitalism, the capitalist society, is a better form of society and gives better opportunities to develop a country's productive forces, then certainly it will win. . . . [This is followed by statements concerning the productive accomplishments of the Soviet Union which Khrushchev offered as proof of the viability and success of the socialist system.]⁵

Here we have a *prediction* about the course of history and not a statement of aggressive *intent*.^{*} But why should we

* Nevertheless, in 1964, five years after Khrushchev's clarification, and well after the East-West *détente*, American anti-communists were still finding it convenient to ascribe violent apocalyptic intention to his words: thus one scholar writes: "Khrushchev has declared his intention to bury the capitalist system, and there cannot be peaceful coexistence between the corpse and those who bury it." At about that same time, a State Department Soviet Affairs specialist was moved to declare: "The Soviets . . . having supporters throughout the world, have launched a total attack against us. . . . There is no weapon they won't use. There is no limit to what they want to do to us except, as Khrushchev said, to bury us."

The first statement is by Tang Tsou in *Orbis* (Spring 1964); *Orbis*

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believe Khrushchev's denials of belligerent intent? Are not communist words designed to put us off our guard by lulling us into a false sense of security? And have not communists elsewhere confessed to their aggrandizing plot in what Dean Rusk describes as "the aggressor's openly proclaimed intentions"? But which is it to be? Do communist words mean nothing or do they mean everything? Are communist utterances filled with duplicity and subterfuge or do they openly confess nefarious intent? Many cold-war theorists would have it both ways, placing no faith in Khrushchev's words when he speaks at length to give the full import of his original comment, but giving credence to those utterances which can be taken out of context and freely embellished with nightmarish implications as with the "we will bury you" slogan. Thus, the people who warn us against relying on the words of communists frequently build their own anti-communist brief on out-of-date or out-of-context words from Lenin, Khrushchev, or Lin Piao. And by methods not readily discernible, some anti-communists appear to know exactly when a communist is speaking with lethal mendacity and when with childlike candor.

WORDS AND ACTIONS: ELASTIC APPLICATIONS

In assessing the relationship between the communists' *words* and their *actions*, American "cold-warriors" utilize the mechanisms of selective perception described above. When the communists' utterances are moderate, we discount these as mere words and point to their seemingly

is a quarterly journal published by the Foreign Policy Research Institute of the University of Pennsylvania. The second statement is by Mose Harvey, senior member of the Policy Planning Council of the Department of State, and is taken from a disk recording, "Focus on the Soviet Challenge" (Westinghouse Broadcasting Co., c. 1964).

hostile actions. Hence, when the communists plea for co-existence and peaceful negotiation of disputes, the anti-communist tends to discount this as verbiage, and points to their ostensibly antagonistic behavior (e.g., Soviet missiles, Warsaw Pact, Hungary, Berlin blockade). When communist actions are restrained and conciliatory (e.g., the Austrian peace treaty, cuts in military budgets, nuclear test-ban treaty, concessions on underground tests, the cultivation of friendly political and economic relations with non-communist nations, etc.) we are advised not to lose sight of their hostile words. Thus at times we are reminded that "actions speak louder than words" while on other occasions we are asked to believe that "words speak louder than actions."

A forced consistency in the anti-communist argument is achieved by postulating, a priori, the existence of an unrelenting communist hostility and then dismissing all peaceful and conciliatory communist expressions and actions as merely "tactical." * But to discount peaceful actions and expressions as "tactical" is to imply that they are not a measure of real behavior. Yet what political leaders do as "tactics" is, after all, what they do; it is how they behave, and is much of what they are. A group's unwillingness to negotiate, compromise, and cooperate is usually taken as evidence of its extremism and antagonism. Surely the presence of a willingness to make concessions and reconcile differences with other groups should be indicative of the converse.

Any action and *its opposite* is treated by the anti-com-

* To cite two among countless examples of this thinking: In 1954 Senator Hickenlooper described the Soviet Union's announcement that it has suspended nuclear testing as "just a propaganda move." That same year Secretary of State Dulles emphatically warned that the Western alliance would be "neither intimidated nor lulled into a false sense of security" by Moscow's post-Stalin overtures. *New York Times*, 15 December 1954.

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munist as evidence of the same inexorable demonic intent.* If the communists act belligerently, this demonstrates their wickedness; and if they act moderately, even threatening to become downright friendly, this, in turn, proves their duplicity, mendacity, and, again, their wickedness. Thus for many years a Soviet challenge in Berlin was immediately taken as evidence of aggression, but the withdrawal of the challenge was not received as an indication of a desire for peaceful reconciliation but as a shifty ploy designed to throw us off balance. For many years, the shrill anti-Americanism of Soviet propaganda supposedly signified aggressive war-like intent, but in the post-Stalin era when Moscow began calling for friendly relations with the United States, contending that there were no differences between the two great powers which could not be negotiated, then American observers, such as the Sovietologist Frederick Barghoorn, saw this move as a Soviet attempt to "pose" as the champions of peace thereby "neatly turning the propaganda tables." Soviet pleas for negotiation, trade and disarmament were little more than "gambits," "shrewd moves," "maneuvers."⁶ In 1960, when Castro bitterly accused the United States of

* Thus even something as pathetic and debilitated as the June 1966 convention of the American Communist Party becomes endowed with ominous overtones—as when the FBI issued the following warning: "The Eighteenth National Convention climaxed over six months of intensive party planning. It represented the largest assemblage of Communists in this country since the last convention." There is no arguing with the statement.

For half a century since World War I, as Murray Edelman notes, the FBI has repeatedly publicized two basic theses: (1) that the communist conspiracy in the United States has never been more lethal; (2) that the FBI has never been more vigorous and effective in coping with it.

The FBI statement was quoted in *The Nation*, 22 August 1966. Edelman's remarks can be found in his excellent book, *The Symbolic Uses of Politics* (Urbana, Ill.: University of Illinois Press, 1964), pp. 69-70.

planning a Cuban invasion, we saw this as a representation of his slandering hostility (even though his accusation proved quite accurate soon after, in the Bay of Pigs invasion.) Three years later, when Castro made repeated overtures for peaceful and normal relations with the United States, we spurned all such offers either as "gestures" designed to induce us to lower our guard or as attempts by Castro "to get himself off the hook." But if we justify our own hostility toward Cuba on the grounds that Cuba is hostile toward us, then what becomes the justification when Cuba seeks a rapprochement?

The justification comes in that elastic evaluative process which enables the anti-communist demonologist to perceive all events and conditions as examples of the devil's doings. Other illustrations of this a-priorism may be given. When the Soviet economy faltered, this was taken as evidence of the innate undesirability and failure of a communist state to build the good life. When the economy surged forward this was treated as evidence of fearful communist power. If the Soviets closed their borders to Western visitors (out of suspicion and fear of espionage and subversion) this was proof of their antagonism; and for almost twenty years the "Iron Curtain" served as the convenient symbol of the Red Menace. When the Russians opened their borders to Western visitors in the post-Stalin era and sought wider exchanges, this was taken as signifying dangerous strength and confidence;* the Soviets were seeking a new propaganda advantage.

For a while it was even assumed among some American writers that the many inconsistencies in Soviet policy were part of the Kremlin's deliberate design. Confronted with

* It should be noted that some anti-communists such as Hubert Humphrey still refer to "the Iron Curtain nations," immune to the fact that restrictions on American travel to communist nations, in most instances, come not from the communist governments but from the United States Department of State.

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a conflicting array of stimuli, the reacting adversary (i.e., the United States) would suffer immense confusions. By the application of Pavlovian stimulus-response theory to foreign policy, the Soviets supposedly were intending to unhinge us. That Soviet policy inconsistencies resulted from the same confusions, trials and errors, internal factionalism and agonizing transitions that beset all policy-makers was an idea not seriously entertained during the first twenty years of the cold war.

In sum, demonological thought has the capacity to reduce all things, X and the opposite of X, to the same conclusion: economic failures or economic successes, closed borders or open borders, a reluctance to negotiate or a willingness to negotiate, blustering rhetoric or friendly rhetoric, hard consistencies or confused inconsistencies—whatever the communists may do and say, or not do and not say, becomes evidence to support our fearful imagery.

INHUMAN, SUBHUMAN, SUPERHUMAN

A major supposition of the demon theory is that communists are not encumbered by ordinary human emotions. The devil, after all, is neither lout nor weakling, but infinitely resourceful, persuasive, and purposeful. He is the devil, as Bishop Emrich once noted, because he moves with all these virtues in the wrong direction: "The Devil, says traditional Christian thought with profound insight, is a fallen angel." ⁷ Throughout history, whether his guise be that of Jacobin, Jew or Bolshevik, the devil has been endowed with exceptional guile, daring and stamina.* We have been reminded that the communists are "not like other people," that they place little value on human

* The American Nazi George Lincoln Rockwell once said that the Jew was not inferior but actually superior. It was his superior intelligence, knowledgeable and shrewdness which made the devil-Jew so lethal.

life (including their own), that they operate by diabolic rules and rites of their own, that they have mastered sinister "appeals" and "forces" against which we must be alerted and armed.

The virtuous, despite their arrogance, frequently feel inferior to the wiles of the wicked. In all their puritan anxiety and secret self-doubt, they cannot free themselves from the suspicion that, in a wicked world, evil genius possesses the best methods for achieving success. We Americans nurse an inveterate dread that we are handicapped in any confrontation with the communists by the inhibitions imposed upon us by our innate goodness. Believing we lack the fanatical diabolic secret powers of the demon, yet envious of such powers, we begin to overcompensate for the imagined disadvantage. Thus, when confronted with evidence that communist appeals are much more effective in winning allegiance and support in certain Vietnamese villages than our own best efforts at psychological warfare, we have been known to redress the balance by bombing the contested villages out of existence.*

The communist's demonic resourcefulness seems to defy the ordinary laws of political action. If we are to believe Hubert Humphrey, the communists do not need or even want the normal advantages of majority support and the strength of numbers. Confronted with the fact that our Santo Domingo intervention had attempted to prevent a communist take-over in a country where communists were not noticeably present, Eric Sevareid fashioned this superhuman image:

. . . Their lack of numbers is their strength. It was because they were few that President Bosch had not bothered to deal severely with them. It was because they were few that they could do much of their work undetected . . . [and] could act with rapidity when the explosion came. It was because they were few that foreign opinion makers

* See Chapter Fourteen, "Moral Imperialism."

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could make the Americans seem ridiculous and give us a propaganda defeat.

It follows, as Theodore Draper ironically observed, that the more communists there are, the more likely they are to be dealt with severely, to be detected in their work, to act less rapidly, and to make it difficult for the Americans to appear ridiculous.⁸ By that logic, it should be our goal to increase the number of communists in order to deprive them of their devilish tactical strength.

The communists are both "titan and beast," superhuman but also subhuman. To justify our own momentous and murderous power we need not just any old enemy but, as W. H. Ferry reminds us, "one who is sinister, conspiring, terroristic, atheistic, power-hungry, monolithic, anti-human and inhuman." To quote Senator Fulbright:

Man's capacity for decent behavior seems to vary directly with his perception of others as individual humans with human motive, and feelings, whereas his capacity for barbarous behavior seems to increase with his perception of an adversary in abstract terms. This is the only explanation I can think of for the fact that the very same good and decent citizens who would never fail to feed a hungry child or comfort a sick friend or drop a coin in the church collection basket can celebrate the number of Viet Cong killed in a particular week or battle, talk of "making a desert" of North Vietnam or of "bombing it back into the Stone Age" despite the fact that most, almost all, of the victims would be innocent peasants and workers, and can contemplate with equanimity, or even advocate, the use of nuclear weapons against the "hordes of Chinese coolies." I feel sure that this apparent insensitivity to the incineration of thousands of millions of our fellow human beings is not the result of feelings of savage inhumanity toward foreigners; it is the result of not thinking of them as humans at all but rather as the embodiment of doctrines that we consider evil.⁹

How difficult it would be to maintain our immense psychic and material investment in the global crusade against communism if the object of it all were just another group of mortals not all that different from ourselves, impelled more or less by the same life needs, desires, and feelings.

It is the practice of cold-war scholars to emphasize that communist nations are cast from the same totalitarian mold as Nazi Germany; thus the various communisms are reduced to one ominous monolithic image, and even more significantly, Soviet Russia and Nazi Germany are treated as archetypal equivalents.* References to certain similarities such as the one-party system, the secret police, a controlled press, and a "totalistic" ideology become sufficient reason to impute all the sins, evils, and terrors of the Nazi system to the various communist systems, albeit with a few minor qualifications.

In this fashion the demonologist makes his task easier, for who would challenge his crusade if in fact communism is but another variation of Nazism? Who would challenge Lyndon Johnson and Dean Rusk when they equate wars of liberation in Southeast Asia with Nazi aggression in Europe, arguing that any "retreat" in Vietnam would be another Munich, another prelude to world war? Yet we might question the validity of their particular historical extrapolations, and consider the possibility that the differences between Nazi Germany and Soviet Russia or Communist China from the standpoint of international well-being far outweigh the similarities. It is, after all, not a matter of indifference to us that Brezhnev and his technocrats, rather than Hitler and his lunatics, preside over the Kremlin's nuclear missiles, not a small matter that Soviet goals seem directed toward achieving stabilized relations abroad and prosperity at home, rather unlike

* For specimens of this reductionist thinking see the writings of Carl Friedrich, Sidney Hook, Bertram Wolfe, Merle Fainsod, Zbigniew Brzezinski, and others too numerous to mention.

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the glorified Nazi goals of war, conquest and master-race barbarism. More than appearances separate the Soviet faith in science, education and collective social betterment from the Nazi faith in *Volk* mysticism, psychotic sadism and genocide. Khrushchev's assertion that socialism is "ballet and borscht" is not to be compared with the Nazi obsession with blood and bullets. While the Third Reich strove for autarky as a necessary economic condition for the war to come, the USSR has continually sought wider and closer cultural, economic and political relations with other nations. Can one seriously equate the caution of Soviet foreign policy—putting aside whatever else may be said about it—with the apocalyptic violence that impelled and captivated Hitler?

More specifically, can one imagine the Nazis making an outright gift of 200,000 tons of wheat to famine-ridden India as did Moscow in December 1966? To those who would argue that this very willingness to bear gifts is what makes the communists even more dangerous than the Nazis, a rebuttal has been offered on the previous pages: our understanding and evaluation of a nation should be derived in large part from how it behaves. Therefore, if the Soviets aid India, there seems a strong reason to conclude that they are not bending every effort to subverting and taking over the New Delhi government, rather they are behaving sympathetically and helpfully toward a non-communist nation. Likewise, the Soviet effort at mediating the Kashmir war in the autumn of 1965, leading to the cease-fire agreement signed at Tashkent, seems to demonstrate Moscow's desire to maintain peaceful and stabilized relations along her southern frontier. If the Soviets thrive on chaos, ruin, and the weakness of others, as cold-war theorists insist, then they give every indication of working against their own purposes by bringing Pakistan and India to the conference table. Only by disregarding actions of this sort can the demonologist identify Soviet Russia with

Nazi Germany, equating grain shipments, technical aid missions and peace mediations with Hitlerian war.

When dwelling upon the subhuman qualities of the communist, special attention is usually given to the abuses and crimes perpetrated within the communist nations. There is no denying that Stalin sent thousands upon thousands to labor camps, and that hundreds among the Party leadership, the military, the arts and sciences were executed on the suspicion of political deviancy. Nor can it be denied that ideological heterodoxy and freedom to challenge the legitimacy of Party rule in open political competition are still alien to the Soviet system. What we might question is the image of a totally terrorized, enslaved nation; the evidence we have indicates that the Stalinist terror was felt principally among the ruling echelons, and the higher one went in the decision-making structure, the more real and immediate the dangers. Among the masses, however, Stalin enjoyed a devotional support not to be expected from an antagonized terrorized populace. His death brought no joyful dancing in the streets; rather, according to the anti-Stalinist poet, Yevgeny Yevtushenko: "A sort of general paralysis came over the country. Trained to believe that they were all in Stalin's care, people were lost and bewildered without him. All Russia wept."¹⁰ This same populace, as even the American press noted, greeted Khrushchev's exposure of Stalin's crimes with skepticism and incredulity.

For many years anti-communist writers claimed that, at any one time, anywhere from fifteen to twenty-five million Soviet citizens were suffering the horrors of slave labor camps, with millions perishing over the years only to be replaced by millions more.¹¹ By such statistics, the sum total of people incarcerated in the labor camps over a twenty-five-year period would have consisted of an astonishing proportion of the Soviet population; the support and supervision of labor camps would have been Russia's

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single largest enterprise.* That the USSR could have maintained this kind of prison population during normal times, let alone during an era of rapid industrialization, total war, and re-industrialization, and that Stalin could have maintained such popular devotion among the masses while so decimating their ranks, is, to say the least, highly questionable.

When the Soviet Union was not being defended as paradise on earth by a handful of American Communists, it was being depicted by the anti-communists as a land of unmitigated terror and misery. The years of misrepresentation still make a balanced view of Soviet society difficult to attain. Without pretending that the civil arrangements and material conditions of the USSR equal those found in certain more prosperous and liberal locales within the Western democracies, we might note the salutary developments of the post-Stalin era, *viz.*, a marked improvement in working conditions, a small but visible mitigation of the more glaring inequities in salaries and income, new and substantial capital investments in housing, recreational facilities and consumer goods, the abolition of all school and university fees, and the continuation of relatively generous pension benefits and vigorous medical and health programs which were already a feature of Stalin's era.¹²

Reforms in Soviet law include the elimination of certain categories of crime, for instance, abortion, absenteeism and the wartime restriction on quitting one's job without permission;† the right to counsel prior to trial has been extended along with new procedural safeguards in

* When the camps were abolished after Stalin's death, there was no sign of twenty million half-starved victims pouring back into Soviet life. Labor camp inmates numbered in the thousands.

† The restriction against changing employment without permission became a dead letter law not long after the war. Yet throughout the postwar years, the American press repeatedly referred to "the right to change your job" as one of those American blessings denied to Soviet citizens.

evaluating evidence and confessions.¹³ In the area of political crimes even more notable reforms have been instituted: the secret police have been downgraded and deprived of the power to investigate crimes under their own special rules without Procuracy supervision; the laws permitting persons to be tried secretly, in absentia or without counsel have been repealed; Vyshinsky's doctrine that the accused must prove his innocence in cases of counterrevolutionary crimes has been replaced by a new Soviet code which places the burden of proof on the prosecutor; innocent associations with others who are planning an illegal act no longer constitute a crime; the law on "counterrevolutionary crimes" is now somewhat less nebulous; the crime of "terrorist acts" has been restricted to murder or serious injury of an official with intent to overthrow or weaken Soviet authority; 1957 saw the completion of a thorough re-examination of all cases of individuals previously convicted as counterrevolutionaries and the release from labor camps and full rehabilitation of the overwhelming majority of such persons.¹⁴ "The Soviet citizen," Professor Harold J. Berman of the Harvard Law School concludes, "is now protected against police terror, false charges and faked trials to a far greater extent than ever before in Soviet history."¹⁵

Transitions in leadership are now possible without bloody purges and executions, as witnessed by the peaceable disposition of Khrushchev. Contacts with Western travelers and Western ideas are increasing. Generally a new ease, affluence, and self-confidence are visible in Soviet society, and along with this, critical voices can be heard within governmental, artistic and intellectual circles. Nevertheless, there is no gainsaying that bureaucratic authoritarianism still pervades many crucial aspects of official and intellectual life. There persists a Party vigilance against those "alien ideologies" that "defame" the Soviet system, as exemplified in the official condemnation of

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Yevtushenko, and the trial of Daniel and Siniavsky, and the 1968 trial of four young writers.*

Having observed those autocratic features in a communist society which might well deserve the appellation of "evil," we need not then presume that the men who govern the system are incapable of acting as—and therefore, incapable of being treated as—ordinary mortals. The trouble with the demonological position is that it is based on a false conception of evil; it does not allow that the same leader who perpetrated the bloody purges of the 1930s also instituted one of the most advanced health and medical care programs in the industrial world, and that the same men who forcefully suppressed a popular revolution in Hungary and occupied Czechoslovakia also instituted humanizing reforms in the political-judicial process and substantial improvements in consumer conditions at home.

Is it really possible that Joseph Stalin, a cruel despot who ordered hundreds of thousands of people suspected of political opposition sent to labor camps . . . without even the pretense of a fair trial, at the same time established a system of law and justice designed to operate fairly and objectively in nonpolitical cases? It is not only possible: it is a fact. But why should it appear strange? ¹⁶

It appears strange only to those who insist that the adversary, in his every important movement and motive, is ca-

* Largely unnoticed in the anti-communist press is the fact that the recantations extracted from Yevtushenko and others brought unequivocal protest from Italian and French Party leaders and European communist intellectuals who condemned the "Stalinist methods" as totally inexcusable. Similarly vigorous condemnations of the Daniel-Siniavsky trial were made by Western communist party leaders and intellectuals.

See Alexander Werth, "The 23rd Congress: No More Angry Shouts?" *The Nation*, 23 May 1966, pp. 621-622; and Ralph Blum, "Freeze and Thaw: The Artist in Soviet Russia," *The New Yorker*, 11 September 1965, pp. 168-217.

pable of only wrong deeds. Yet history is replete with examples of ruling groups simultaneously executing the most morally incompatible actions.*

But if and when the anti-communist admits there may be positive features in the Soviet system, he then usually reintroduces the "tactical" argument. For instance, Bertram Wolfe dismisses the welfare feature of the Soviet system as an expediency adopted by the totalitarian state in order to maximize its power: a literate, healthy population is, after all, a necessary condition for increased industrialization. Hence, what is considered "welfare" is actually an instrument of "power."¹⁷ One, however, might just as easily argue it the other way around. Given the Soviet dream of building the supposedly one true happy, productive, cooperative, and peaceful socialist society, it might be that what is considered "power" is actually an instrument of "welfare." For years, Wolfe and others argued that Soviet leaders pursued power to the constant and deliberate detriment of welfare; now confronted with the fact that the USSR spends proportionately more on health, education and welfare than do highly industrialized Western nations, they dismiss this as an expediency of power.¹⁸ First, the Soviets supposedly used power to neglect welfare; now it seems they use welfare to maintain power.

The communist system is evil either because it shows no concern for the welfare of its citizenry, or because it does show a concern but only for an imputed evil purpose. There are, then, no set of observable conditions which can put the anti-communist presumption to an empirical test. Indeed, we are not dealing with an empirical proposition. The fact remains that the Soviet government has chosen

* Berman observes: "Did not Cromwell, the great restorer of English liberties, treat the Irish with barbaric cruelty? Did not Americans who fought for the inalienable rights of 'all men' at the same time buy and sell slaves?" "The Devil and Soviet Russia," *The American Scholar*, 27, Spring 1958.

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to give a reasonably high priority to social welfare, and this datum cannot be dismissed if we allow that one way of judging behavior is to observe actual behavior, and one way of judging a system's priorities and policies is to look at its actual priorities and policies.

THE NON SEQUITUR

Even if it is finally agreed that there are liberalizing tendencies in the Soviet Union and other communist nations, the anti-communist might argue that the mitigation of the more glaring evils in Russia's domestic life does not guarantee virtue in its international life; it is, after all, Moscow's international behavior that can affect our own well-being and survival, and there is no one-to-one relation between international and domestic actions.

But that is exactly the point. If we cannot presume virtue in Soviet foreign policy by merely pointing to reforms in Russian domestic life, likewise we cannot presume evil in Soviet foreign policy by dwelling upon the internal autocratic features of the Soviet system. Often the anti-communist alludes to real or imagined domestic ills within the communist nations as a means of justifying his own antagonism toward those nations, pointing to the internal crimes of Stalinism as *prima facie* evidence of Soviet aggression abroad (and at the same time assuming that anyone who sees Soviet policy as a defensive reaction to our own cold-war crusade is therefore obliged to be an apologist for all features of Soviet society).

Great Britain offered perhaps the best approximation of a political democracy in the twentieth century and throughout much of the nineteenth, but this says little about the ruthless exploitations and oppressions of her imperial rule in Ireland, India, and Africa. Domestic rule in Franco's Spain features some of the worst economic, social and political abuses to be found in a Western nation, yet

Spain's relations with other sovereign states have been inoffensive and, one might even say, respectable.* Neither the historic, criminal indifference to racial minorities, nor the belated, half-hearted attention more recently directed to that issue, damn or justify American postwar policies toward the Soviet Union.†

Much of the discussion about communist countries rests upon this non sequitur. That we see a nation as possessing certain domestic virtues along with its vices, or vices along with its virtues does not necessarily tell us how to relate to it in the field of foreign policy, for its actions abroad may be dangerous to our security or not, conciliatory and moderate or abrasive and antagonistic, irrespective of how its social life might suit our tastes.

If the reason we oppose communist governments is that they are despotic, then why do we not pursue a hostile policy toward the many non-communist autocracies? Here the cold-war theoretician might reply that the non-communist dictatorships, whatever we might think of their social institutions, do not threaten our own peace and security. The question, then, is: Do the communist nation-states threaten our peace and security? and not, Are they undemocratic in their domestic arrangements? Thus we return to the contentions about international conspiracy, ideology, intent and action that have claimed our attention in this and the preceding chapters. Some answers have already been sug-

* The State Department and some members of Congress might not entirely agree. For a while hailed as our "staunch anti-communist ally," Madrid actually maintains trade relationships with Cuba, and seems never to seethe with the anti-Castroism that is found in Washington.

† I am not suggesting that there is never a relationship between the domestic and foreign policies of a nation; indeed, I find such a link between domestic and foreign anti-communism in America. But the relationship should be demonstrated and not assumed, and we should keep in mind that imperatives in one area may or may not be the same imperatives that operate in the other.

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gested, but we will further investigate other facts and fictions about the "communist threat." Before doing so, we might pause to consider the historical, cultural, and political context in which anti-communism has flourished.

NOTES

1. Jean Genet, *The Balcony* (New York: Grove Press, 1960).
2. *Nationalism* (London: Royal Institute of International Affairs, 1939), p. 10.
3. For a development of this distinction, see Robert V. Daniels, "What the Russians Mean," *Commentary*, October 1962, pp. 314-323.
4. *Ibid.*
5. Text of press conference in the *Washington Post*, 17 September 1959.
6. See Frederick Barghoorn, *Soviet Foreign Propaganda* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1964), *passim*.
7. Quoted in Harold J. Berman, "The Devil and Soviet Russia," *The American Scholar* 27 (Spring 1958), p. 147.
8. See Theodore Draper, "The Dominican Crisis," *Commentary*, December 1965, p. 59, for Severeid's remarks and Draper's comments.
9. J. William Fulbright, *The Arrogance of Power* (New York: Random House, 1966), p. 165.
10. *Yevgeny Yevtushenko, A Precocious Autobiography* (New York: E. P. Dutton & Co., Inc., 1963), p. 84.
11. See, for instance, Arthur Koestler's nightmarish statistics in *The Yogi and the Commissar and Other Essays* (New York: 1946).
12. Cf. Alec Nove, "Social Welfare in the USSR," in Samuel Hendel, ed., *The Soviet Crucible*, 2nd ed. (Princeton, N.J.: Van Nostrand, 1963), pp. 549-563, and Isaac Deutscher, *Russia in Transition and Other Essays* (New York: Coward-McCann, 1957).
13. Harold J. Berman, "The Dilemma of Soviet Law Reform," *Harvard Law Review* 76 (March 1963), pp. 930-950.
14. *Ibid.*
15. *Ibid.*
16. Harold J. Berman, "The Devil and Soviet Russia," *loc. cit.*, p. 7.
17. Bertram D. Wolfe, "Facts and Polemics," in Samuel Hendel, *op. cit.*, pp. 565-568.
18. Alec Nove, "Reply to My Critics," in Samuel Hendel, *op. cit.*, pp. 572-574.

America the Virtuous

It is a truth, which every man may see, if he will but look,—that all the channels of communication,—public and private, through the school-room, the pulpit, and the press,—are engrossed and occupied with *this one idea*, which all these forces are combined to disseminate:—that we the American people, are the most independent, intelligent, moral and happy people on the face of the earth.

An editorial in
THE UNITED STATES JOURNAL, *October 18, 1845.*

Nothing is more embarrassing in the ordinary intercourse of life than this irritable patriotism of the Americans.

ALEXIS DE TOCQUEVILLE, *1835*

Since its inception, America has been imbued with a sense of its own historical uniqueness and God-given virtue. To trace all the antecedents that shaped our national self-image is to write a history of the nation itself. Instead we might delineate those components of the American belief system, those national myths, which tell us something about this country's habitual response to "alien" faiths, and something about the particular intensity of American anti-communism. In referring to our cherished

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beliefs as "national myths" one need not presume they are devoid of historical foundation, nor that they are frivolous cultural traits. "Myth," as the anthropologist Bronislaw Malinowski observed, "in fact, is not an idle rhapsody, not an aimless outpouring of vain imaginings, but a hard-working extremely important cultural force."¹ If we define myth as the sacred tales which help enhance and codify belief, giving sanctity to the origins and destiny of a people, then the modern American is no more liberated from mythology than is the primitive Trobriander.

THE CHOSEN PEOPLE AND THE PERFECT SYSTEM

The image of America the Virtuous is rooted in the widely held myth of New World purity, and Old World corruption, a notion finding its earliest articulation in the seventeenth-century theocracy of Massachusetts Bay Colony. For the Puritan settlers, the Scriptural admonition to build a Zion in the virgin land took on a literal significance: "Know this is the place where the Lord will create a new Heaven, and a new Earth in new Churches, and a new Commonwealth together." Having lifted themselves and their children from the contaminations of the Old World, the Puritans faced the "howling wilderness" of America as might the Chosen People of Israel.

While Puritanism was itself too brittle and severe to survive intact, the idea that America was intended by God, History, or Destiny to occupy a special place in the world gathered strength as national consciousness took hold. "The hand of Divinity itself" shapes America's history, according to the youthful Hamilton. The truths that marshal the forces of independence are "self-evident," "the laws of Nature and Nature's God," wrote Jefferson in his Declaration. "There is still an option left to the United States," Washington believed. "Many hundred years must roll away," John Adams said, "before we shall be cor-

rupted. Our pure, virtuous, public spirited, federative republic will last forever, govern the globe and introduce the perfection of man." 2

Yet, the Founding Fathers were realistic enough to acknowledge that angels do not govern men and even the virtuous have their vices. If the hand of God had offered the option, it was the hand of man that was to fashion the fulfillment by providing for "the necessity of auxiliary precautions." The future depended upon the institutional arrangements—the Constitution, the laws, the quality of policy and leadership—which would dilute and dissipate the aggrandizing and corrupting human impulses.

A cautious document patched together by men who were conscious of individual and institutional imperfections, the Constitution nevertheless was to become an object of national devotion in the popular mind. The land, the people, and the Constitutional system all became part of something greater called the American Way of Life, something never explicitly defined because its existence has been so widely assumed to be a self-evident reality.* 3

THE CAPITALIST CULTURE AND THE AMERICAN DREAM

Cultural beliefs, e.g. the anti-radical, anti-socialist, anti-communist attitudes commonly shared by Americans, do not emerge full-blown from nowhere, nor do they cir-

- The American faith in "Democracy" as a sacred symbol has rarely been overburdened by a concern for the complex and troublesome actualities of democratic practice. Thus do almost all Americans believe in the superiority of "democracy," and some 97 percent believe in the right to free speech, but more than two out of three would refuse a communist the right to speak in their community, and almost the same proportion would deprive an atheist of a public platform.

See Samuel A. Stouffer, *Communism, Conformity and Civil Liberties* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1955), pp. 29-42; also H. Cantril and M. Strunk, eds., *Public Opinion 1935-1946* (Princeton, N.J.: 1951, p. 245.

culate themselves like so many disembodied spirits. Beliefs must be propagated by human beings functioning within primary and institutional groups. In many instances the institutional agencies that transmit beliefs are heavily influenced by those interests which control the material resources necessary for social life. One cannot easily overestimate the extent to which the "haves" of society successfully sanctify those beliefs which serve their interests, and stigmatize those which do not.

Throughout the industrial history of Europe and America, the propertied classes treated reformist demands as attacks upon civilization itself. "Every demand for the most simple bourgeois financial reform, for the most ordinary liberalism, for the most commonplace republicanism, for the flattest democracy, is forthwith punished as an 'assault upon society' and is branded as 'socialism,'" wrote Karl Marx in 1852. Today convictions about the virtues of private enterprise and the evils of socialism and communism are so widely disseminated among Americans of all classes as to have developed an inertia of their own. However, such beliefs, even if they sometimes seem to be of the air we breathe, have been quite consciously and strenuously propagated for several generations by the propertied interests in American society and by the institutional agencies over which these interests often exercised a substantial influence including the press, the professions, the public schools, the pulpit, the politicians, and the policy-makers. Radical socialism was denied its legitimacy as a system of belief worthy of serious consideration, and the corporate economy was treated as an unalienable mainstay of American life.

A belief system and the institutional interests that support and are supported by it seek to identify themselves with other sacrosanct institutions and symbols. "The Free Enterprise System" became indelibly associated with the symbols of Nation, Democracy, Family, Church, and Or-

der. There was a time in the late nineteenth century when one tycoon could lament the hostility felt by "the mass of the people in this country" toward the corporations.⁴ And Theodore Roosevelt could win popular support with a flurry of "trust busting"; congressmen on the Nye Committee investigating the munitions industry in 1934, could denounce the "war profiteers" and Franklin Roosevelt could heap disdain on the "plutocrats." But regardless of the ebb and flow of public sentiment, the entrepreneurial culture was never seriously challenged by a competing American ethos. After World War II, even as talk of a "mixed economy" and a "welfare state" was becoming more respectable, the corporate economy came to enjoy as great a popularity as at any time in our history. Today, attacks upon "Free Enterprise" often are equated in the public mind with un-Americanism. Capitalism is treated as a necessary condition—sometimes even a sufficient cause—for political freedom, contraposed as the sole alternative to "communist tyranny." The National Association of Manufacturers' two-volume study of private enterprise observes: "Two . . . things have been of outstanding and dominating importance in our development: our system of representative democracy and our system of individual enterprise. . . . Inevitably and irrevocably the two go hand in hand."⁵

By posing democratic capitalism and despotic socialism as the sole alternatives, the American ideology neglects the examples of *democratic socialism* (e.g., Israel, Sweden) and *despotic capitalism* (e.g., Spain, Portugal, South Africa, and most of Latin America). Capitalism is neither a sufficient cause for democracy nor a necessary condition. Capitalists have prospered under democratic and dictatorial political systems, and have lent wholehearted support to both, recognizing in their practice, if not in their rhetoric, that there is no inevitable one-to-one relationship between an economic and a political system.

While American capitalism claims to be an expression of the universal natural drive for individual gain, it also presents itself as something unique in the world. It credits itself with having forged "the arsenal of democracy," the industrial-military machine that guards our frontiers in the struggle against communism, and it considers itself an essential part of the very desiderata to be defended. As one liberal Democrat from New York stated: "Unless one understands that the war in Vietnam is but another episode in the twenty-year-long series of confrontations between the two major powers on earth—democratic capitalism and oligarchical communism—one cannot understand what is happening anywhere in the modern world, much less in Vietnam."⁶

The private enterprise system, it is said, creates equality of opportunity, rewards those who show capacity and initiative, justly relegates the parasitic and slothful to the bottom of the ladder, provides a national prosperity which is the envy of other lands, safeguards (through unspecified means) personal civil liberties and political freedom, promises continued progress in the endless proliferation of goods and services, and has made America the great, free, and beautiful nation it is. The extent to which ordinary Americans have internalized this credo is demonstrated by the Lynds who in their study of Middletown noted the tendency of workers during the depression to assume personal responsibility for their unemployment. Although they knew "times were bad," workingmen felt the system was less at fault than the individual exercising his talents in the marketplace.⁷ In his New Haven study, Robert Lane describes the workingmen he interviewed in 1957 as being plagued by money anxieties, engaged in a ceaseless striving for more income and more consumption. Yet economic egalitarianism, such as socialism or communism were believed to offer, found no place in their view of life. Income equality, Lane discovered, threatened to rob them of the

goals that gave meaning to life ("getting ahead," "getting more"), obliterating the standards of class and status whereby they placed themselves in society and saw order and security in the world. Convinced that each person, rich or poor, pretty much got what he deserved, they considered the present system to be the best of all worlds.⁸

The attitudes of these workingmen toward property and the corporate economy were similar in many respects to what might be expected of the managerial elite. The same has been true of the American labor movement which over the decades has opposed radical programs, giving wholehearted support to the private enterprise system, while concentrating on bread-and-butter issues and the attainment of middle-class consumption styles. Like the business, political, military and educational leaders, organized labor dedicated itself to the American anti-communist orthodoxy.*

One might say there is indeed a "classless" society in America—in the sense that practically all Americans adhere to the entrepreneurial creed, and are dedicated to the acquisitive individualism of the competitive marketplace, and to the race for a better place at the status-consumption trough. Individual solutions are given to social problems, and national progress is calibrated by the piling up of goods, services and income. America is the place where the Dream is always coming true. The choice, according to one business firm's advertisement, is quite clear:

If every Communist knew what every sane person in a capitalist country knows—the high standard of living

* Thus A. H. Raskin could write in the *New York Times*, 20 November 1966: "On foreign policy the AFL-CIO line is . . . a policy essentially unmodified since the earliest days of the cold war that views all steps toward East-West accommodations as a form of appeasement. When the [AFL-CIO] council . . . reviewed all its policy statements since 1955, it could not find a single comma it wanted to change."

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which capitalism makes possible, the pride of individual accomplishment, the satisfaction of knowing you can go as far as your own abilities and ambition will take you, the security of justice, the joy of knowing your son can go even farther than you have gone . . . if every Communist knew the facts about capitalism, there wouldn't be any Communists.⁹

THE GODLY AND THE UNGODLY

In some lands, such as Italy, many people who call themselves "communists" are also church-goers. In many Western European countries a new dialogue and mutual respect seem to be developing between Marxists and Christians. Even in Eastern European nations the communist governments have been willing to reach some kind of accommodation with the Church, and Soviet leader Gromyko has enjoyed an amicable audience with the Pope. In North Vietnam, according to various European and American observers, Catholics and Buddhists worship freely and openly. Despite these various signs, a quotation from Marx or Lenin is usually sufficient to establish the argument that communists are the implacable enemies of religion. Americans, in contrast, are the avowed boosters of religion. Whether or not they are devout practitioners, there is wide agreement among them that religion is a good and necessary thing.*

There is no established Church in the United States, but as Will Herberg notes, religion *per se*, as represented by the major faiths, is so closely identified with the patriotic process as to have become a kind of unofficial establishment.¹⁰ Like capitalism, religion has attached itself to

* Stouffer, *op. cit.*, finds that only 37 percent of our citizens are prepared to allow a person to voice public criticism of religion and churches; Milton Yinger notes that approximately 65 percent of the population attends church, but 97 percent profess a belief in God. See *Sociology Looks at Religion* (New York: Macmillan, 1961).

potent symbols beyond its own sphere. "Religion and democracy go hand in hand," said Vice President Barkley. "Religious faith remains in my opinion, our greatest national resource," asserted Adlai Stevenson, who went on to describe Americans as "the ordained guardians" of a creed reaching back to the Old Testament Prophets.¹¹ The particular denomination an American chooses is of no great public concern since the marriage of church and state is a nonsectarian one, leading the various faiths to the same God and the same Americanism.

What we have in America is the religion of nationalism and the nationalization of religion. Over a century ago, the prophetic Tocqueville wrote:

Among almost all the Christian nations of our days, Catholic as well as Protestant, religion is in danger of falling into the hands of government. . . . [Rulers] divert to their own use the influence of the priesthood; they make them their own ministers, often their own servants, and by this alliance with religion they reach the inner depths of the soul of man.¹²

Today the priestly-ministerial-rabbinical triumvirate has become an essential prop for presidential inaugurations, political party conventions, Congressional sessions, Thanksgiving Day dedications (a national not a religious holiday), and a host of other patriotic convocations. A variety of interfaith organizations exist to "fight communism" and aid "the victims of Red tyranny." On the eve of the 1964 elections, leaders of four faiths (including the Greek Orthodox) issued appeals urging voters to go to the polls to "protect their American heritage" and fulfill a "sacred obligation."¹³

As the lines between political and religious belief blurred, a nonbeliever faced the charge of "un-Americanism." Richard Nixon once went so far as to suggest that atheists be disqualified from Presidential office. The

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American Legion, not the churches, launched the first "Back to God" campaign in 1955, on which occasion President Eisenhower submitted the following remarkable observation: "Recognition of the Supreme Being is the first, the most basic, expression of Americanism. Without God there could be no American form of government, nor an American way of life."¹⁴ Faith, then, was not only conducive to patriotism, it became a necessary condition.

Furthermore, it was argued, America needed religion for the same reason it needed massive armies, vital leadership, viable institutions, growing industry, creative science, excellent schools, healthy children, good transportation—in order to win the cold war. The communists were successful because, in the words of John Foster Dulles, "As a nation, although still religious . . . we can no longer generate a spiritual power which will flow throughout the world. . . . We have no message to send to captive peoples to keep their faith and hope alive."¹⁵ Whether American cold-warriors were really concerned about the souls of men in Asia and Africa or, for that matter, the condition of their own souls, is a question we need not consider here. More important was that America and God fought side by side. "What is our battle against communism if it is not a fight between anti-God and a belief in the Almighty?" pondered Eisenhower. "Communists know this. They have to eliminate God from their system. When God comes in, communism has to go."¹⁶ But the image of a two-fisted Yankee-Doodle God joining Uncle Sam in a Big-Two Alliance against a common foe, while enough to offend the sensibilities of even an atheist, did not sufficiently assuage popular anxieties about the outcome of the contest.

THE VIGILANTE SPIRIT

Americans long have lived in fear of being contaminated by some alien ideological disease. Jefferson spoke

for most of his contemporaries when he envisioned America as "a home for the oppressed" while at the same time describing the newcomers as "a heterogeneous, incoherent, distracted mob," ready either to support despotic rulers or "imbibe principles of extreme licentiousness." ¹⁷

For the wellborn of the Federalist era, Jacobinism loomed as the worst of the Old World conspiracies, preaching "treasonable or secret machinations against the government," and reaching those who corrupt our opinion . . . the most dangerous of all enemies." Throughout much of the nineteenth century, nativists treated the influx of illiterate, indigent Irish peasants as part of a "papal conspiracy" and "Popish plot" to undermine the Republic. The hysteria of the Know-Nothing, anti-Catholic, anti-immigrant crusade was eventually superseded by a more general alarm over "foreign radicalism." The Immigration Act of 1903 was the first in a series of repressive governmental measures against the foreign born that continue to this day and have included such things as Palmer raids, alien surveillance, arrest without warrant, detention without hearing, executive hearings often without right to counsel, no provision for due deliberation, and no safeguards against error, prejudice and summary deportation. On the more "positive" side, there emerged a host of federal, state and local, chauvinistic "educational" programs for the propagation of something called "100 percent Americanism" among the foreign stock.

The traditionally conservative immigrant, fearful of authority, oriented to the confines of his ethnic community, longing for security and modest gain, was hardly suitable material for subversion or revolution. Nevertheless, from the Alien and Sedition Acts of 1798 to the McCarran-Walter legislation of 1954, we have most often assumed the existence of an innate affinity between the alien and the radical. If every alien was not necessarily a radical, certainly every radical was in some way alien, that

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is, un-American, even if he came from old-stock antecedents, as was most often the case.

It should be evident by now that the anti-communist impulse did not emerge suddenly in the postwar years as a defensive reaction to the "Soviet challenge"; it has been with us for many decades. In 1919 the emerging specter of Bolshevism sent a shudder throughout the bourgeois world. Having few investments in Russia, American capitalists suffered no noticeable deprivation at the hands of the Bolsheviks, but they saw the Soviet revolution as representing a socio-political order which fundamentally challenged their own system. For this reason the business community could support American participation in armed intervention against the Bolshevik revolutionaries while later displaying something of a benign indifference to the emerging insanity of Nazi Germany. Unlike the Soviets, Hitler did not appear to be attacking the institutions of profit and property.

In 1919 and the years following, the American plutocracy, the press, the pulpit, the university, the President, the Congress and other established agencies of society set about alerting the populace to the menace that loomed. Senate committee investigations produced witnesses who gave harrowing accounts of conditions in Russia; Robert Murray describes it well:

These witnesses declared that the Red Army was composed mainly of criminals, that the Russian revolution had been conducted largely by former East-Side New York Jews, that Bolshevism was the anti-Christ, and that a stronger policy of allied intervention was necessary. Ambassador [David R.] Francis reiterated before the committee his belief that Lenin was merely a tool of the Germans and further maintained that the Bolsheviks were killing everybody "who wears a white collar or who is educated and who is not a Bolshevik. . . ."

Anti-Bolshevik testimony was played up in the columns of the nation's newspapers and once again the reading

public was fed on highly colored tales of free love, nationalization of women, bloody massacres, and brutal atrocities. Stories were circulated that the victims of the Bolshevik madmen customarily had been roasted to death in furnaces, scalded with live steam, torn to pieces on racks, or hacked to bits with axes. Newspaper editors never tired of referring to the Russian Reds as "assassins and madmen," "human scum," "crime-mad," and "beasts." Russia was a place, some said, where maniacs stalked raving through the streets, and the populace fought with dogs for carrion. . . . Newspapers climaxed this sensational reporting with gigantic headlines: "RED PERIL HERE," "PLAN BLOODY REVOLUTION," and "WANT WASHINGTON GOVERNMENT OVERTURNED."¹⁸

Domestic labor disputes were treated as symptomatic of an impending Bolshevik takeover. The Philadelphia *Public Ledger* greeted the Boston police strike with the observation: "Bolshevism in the United States is no longer a specter." Headlines in the *Wall Street Journal* cried: "Lenin and Trotsky are on their way."¹⁹ Coolidge's military expedition into Nicaragua and other interventions in Latin America were justified largely as safeguards against communist uprisings. (Coolidge's actions moved Senator Borah to comment: "The specter of Russian Bolshevik activity in Latin America was conjured but refused to walk.")²⁰

The ad hoc legislative inquisitions in the 1920s and 1930s eventually led to the formation of the House Un-American Activities Committee in 1938. After World War II, anti-communist activities reached new proportions. Government employees and private citizens—from physicists to prize fighters—had their personal lives and opinions scrutinized by legislative committees, government security boards, the FBI and sometimes the local police. Millions were required to sign loyalty oaths. Prosecutions under the Smith Act, state sedition trials, and contempt proceedings during the 1950s, followed by prosecutions

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against peace advocates in the 1960s, gave America a growing number of political prisoners. A Democratic-controlled Congress overwhelmingly passed the McCarran Internal Security Act of 1950 which, among other things, authorized the construction of concentrations camps for purposes of interning without trial or hearing all suspected "subversives" should either the President or Congress declare a "national emergency." Of the six camps built in 1952 several have been maintained on a stand-by basis ready for instant use; other detention sites are available for immediate "activation." *

In the 1960s some of the more hysterical expressions of vigilantism diminished markedly but anti-communism showed no signs of disappearing as a politically repressive force. The Medicare Law passed by the liberal Eighty-ninth Congress as part of the Great Society Program contained a clause (later rescinded) denying hospital benefits to persons required to register under the McCarran Act. The same liberal Attorney-General Katzenbach, who had previously suggested that Congress repeal the registration features of the McCarran Act, initiated formal proceedings to require the DuBois Clubs to register as a communist front.† Soon after, a DuBois Club meeting place was

* The concentration camps are located in Allenwood, Pa.; El Reno, Oklahoma; Florence, Arizona; Wickenburg, Arizona; Tule Lake, California; they have an estimated capacity of 26,500. Other sites are available in West Virginia, South Carolina, Arizona, Alabama, Alaska and Washington State. See Charles R. Allen, Jr., *Concentration Camps U.S.A.* (Citizens Committee for Constitutional Liberties, 1966).

† The DuBois Clubs were suddenly confused in the minds of many Americans with the Boys Clubs of America; the latter, a charitable recreational organization, now found itself showered with abusive telephone calls and the possible loss of public donations. Richard Nixon voiced the conviction that the DuBois Clubs pronounced their name "doo-Boys" rather than "doo-Bwa" deliberately to cause them to be confused with the Boys Clubs, a ploy which he termed

bombed in San Francisco, and members of a Brooklyn Du-Bois Club were attacked and beaten by neighborhood hoodlums, then arrested by the police while the assailants skipped away untouched by the law. In numerous peace demonstrations throughout the nation marchers were assaulted while police offered little protection and made no arrests. When the Des Moines school board suspended five junior and senior high school students for wearing black armbands to school as an expression of mourning for persons killed in Vietnam and in support of a Christmas truce, it was reported that school authorities

. . . encouraged physical retaliation against the wearers. One student said that the football coach . . . had encouraged students in a gym class to chant "Beat the Vietcong" during calisthenics. . . . The coach said earlier that the students had chanted this spontaneously and had been "proving their Americanism." The student said the coach had asked two boys who refused to shout the slogans to stand and called them "pinkos or Communists." Armband wearers and sympathizers have also reported being struck and kicked since the dispute arose. [They protested that] those who had resorted to violence should be the ones to be suspended from school. . . . "We have been intimidated by the threat of violence and have thus allowed the ruffian element to determine educational policies." ²¹

High school students in Cleveland, Nyack and Merrick, Long Island, and elsewhere were also expelled for expressing their disagreement with government policy by wearing black armbands. In various communities local patriotic groups carried out vigilante actions against bookdealers, artists, folksingers, unpopular speakers, PTA organizations, and even groceries selling imported Polish foods.

"an almost classic example of Communist deception and duplicity." (*New York Times*, 13 March 1966.) It should be noted that the late Dr. DuBois pronounced his name "doo-Boys" throughout his ninety-six years.

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One might also recall such events as the “peace party raids” in New York by police and building authorities, the harassment of anti-war clergymen by their congregations, the expulsion of Julian Bond from the Georgia legislature for his pacifist remarks on Vietnam,* the court martial of scores of military personnel for their espousals of anti-war views and their refusal to cooperate in the war, the prosecution of 3,169 young men in the years 1965–67 for their unwillingness to obey the call to serve in the anti-communist Vietnam war, the voluntary exile of several thousand others, the reclassification or forced induction of thousands who either burned or handed in their draft cards, and the convictions against Dr. Benjamin Spock, William Sloan Coffin, Jr., and others for having conspired to counsel and abet noncooperation with the draft.

The 1958 study by Lazarsfeld and Thielens on conformity in higher education provides some sobering data about the academic world. Of the 165 colleges and universities surveyed, 102 reported instances of faculty members being fired for heterodox political views; there were numerous instances involving undercover classroom surveillance of teachers by students, requests from the FBI for reports on students, the reluctance of many faculty to become advisers to unpopular student political groups, the unwillingness of teachers to voice unpopular views, and their tendency to advise students to keep such opinions to themselves.²²

On many college campuses the fearful hush of the 1950s was replaced in the next decade by open demonstrations against the Vietnam war. But almost all college administrations still cooperated with FBI investigators seeking information on students applying for government positions. At Duke University a student admitted that he spied on campus war protesters for the FBI. At the State University of New York at Brockport, faculty members re-

* Bond was eventually re-elected and seated.

ported that the FBI sought to recruit them to inform on colleagues who took part in anti-war demonstrations, and that five professors took the job. The president of Brigham Young University admitted that the university recruited a ring of students in 1966 to spy on liberal professors, six of whom were forced to resign. At institutions throughout the country, from the University of Connecticut to the University of Florida, professors were denied contracts because of their political activities. At Temple University a group of anti-war protesters were surrounded by a mob of 400 fellow-students who, chanting "Kill the Cong," threw tomatoes and eggs, tore signs, and kicked and pummeled the demonstrators. At the University of New Mexico a mob of students and town residents stoned and attacked a small group of SDS peace demonstrators.* Four students at Cornell University were placed on probation for distributing literature favoring the NLF in 1965. At the secondary school level, scores of teachers were denied contract renewals because of their critical utterances against the Vietnam war. Educational authorities, frequently at the instigation of private vigilante groups, continued to scrutinize school libraries, course reading lists and classroom discussions for purposes of weeding out titles and teachers savoring of political heterodoxy.

There has been a tendency to discount anti-communist vigilantism as something representative of an earlier McCarthyite period. Yet almost all the items cited above refer to recent practices; many of the actions initiated at the federal level came a decade after the demise of Senator Joseph McCarthy and were the doings of a "liberal" Johnson Administration or a "liberal" Eighty-ninth Congress. One difference between the 1950s and the 1960s was that in the earlier period it was necessary to develop the legal

* As the war grew increasingly unpopular, such instances of patriotic hooliganism became less frequent, but federal and state prosecution became *more* frequent.

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and administrative instruments of repression whereas since then the apparatus has been available for immediate reactivation.²³

To summarize thus far: historically intolerant of dissent, fearful of contamination, and addicted to the values and myths propagated by the propertied classes, Americans (not surprisingly) see communism—or their stereotyped image of communism—as the diabolic antithesis of everything they have been taught to esteem. The communists are despotic, we are democratic; they are collectivistic, we are individualistic; they have a controlled economy, we have free enterprise; they are “extreme,” we are moderate; they are godless, we are God’s children; they are alien, we are Americans; they are evil, we are virtuous.

Many foreigners have speculated about America’s seemingly obsessive anti-communism. Trygve Lie once wondered why the strongest nation in the world was so terrified of a communist takeover at home and abroad while his own little Norway, close to the Soviet border and with a native communist party substantially larger than the CPUSA, betrayed none of the same phobia. Here we might offer a conjecture: the Norwegians, like any other people, must think well of themselves, but they are not as burdened as are the Americans by a sense of being God’s unique gift to mankind, the bastion of Freedom, a Nation endowed with “Our Most Perfect System,” etc. Possessed of no very special illusion of virtue, the Norwegians live without the preoccupation of falling prey to a very special evil. Believing that our nation occupies a unique and enviable position in a world of want and degradation, Americans tend to greet contemporary revolutionary ferment not with empathy but with the conviction that such political upheavals are the actual or potential thrusts of a global enemy who menaces the American Way of Life.

More thoughtful Americans are beginning to recognize the wisdom of Senator Fulbright’s remark: “. . . We are

not God's chosen savior of mankind but only one of mankind's more successful and fortunate branches, endowed by our Creator with about the same capacity for good and evil, no more or less, than the rest of humanity."²⁴ But for too many of our compatriots in high and humble station, such modest counsel remains unheeded.

NOTES

1. Bronislaw Malinowski, *Magic, Science and Religion* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1948), p. 97.
2. See Hans Kohn, *American Nationalism* (New York: Macmillan, 1957), p. 13.
3. Daniel Boorstin, *The Genius of American Politics* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1953), *passim*.
4. Quoted in Edward C. Kirkland, *Dream and Thought in the Business Community 1860-1900* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1959), p. 127.
5. Quotation in Francis X. Sutton et al., *The American Business Creed* (New York: Schocken Books, 1962), pp. 25-26.
6. Bernard D. Brown in *ADA World*, February 1966.
7. R. S. and H. M. Lynd, *Middletown in Transition* (New York: 1937), pp. 127, 147.
8. Robert E. Lane, *Political Ideology: Why the American Common Man Believes What He Does* (New York: Free Press, 1962), pp. 57-81, 250-267.
9. Cited in Francis X. Sutton et al., *op cit.*, p. 25.
10. Will Herberg, *Protestant-Catholic-Jew*, rev. ed. (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1960).
11. See *New York Times*, 15 August 1952 and 15 September 1952 for the Barkley-Stevenson statements.
12. Alexis de Tocqueville, *Democracy in America*, vol. 2 (New York: 1945), p. 323.
13. *New York Times*, 3 November 1964.
14. *New York Herald Tribune*, 22 February 1955; cited in Herberg, *op. cit.*, p. 258.
15. John Foster Dulles, *War or Peace* (New York: Macmillan, 1950), p. 259.
16. *New York Times*, 15 September 1952.
17. Quoted in Maldwyn Allen Jones, *American Immigration* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1960), pp. 79-81. See also

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William Preston, Jr., *Aliens and Dissenters* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1963).

18. Robert K. Murray, *Red Scare: A Study in National Hysteria, 1919-1920* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1955), pp. 95-98. Murray did a comprehensive study of the newspaper and periodical literature of that period.
19. *Ibid.*, p. 129
20. Quoted in Graham H. Stuart, *Latin America and the United States*, 4th ed. (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1943), p. 364.
21. *New York Times*, 22 December 1965.
22. Paul F. Lazarsfeld and Wagner Thielens, Jr., *The Academic Mind* (Glencoe, Ill.: University of Illinois Press, 1958), Chapters 2, 8, and 9.
23. See Marvin Karparkin, "Escalation and Emasculation," *Civil Liberties in New York*, July/August 1966.
24. J. William Fulbright, *The Arrogance of Power*, p. 20.

Anti-Communism as an American Way of Life

Whether arguments command assent or not depends less upon the logic that conveys them than upon the climate of opinion in which they are sustained.

CARL BECKER

In 1949, Professor Conyers Read, in his presidential address to the American Historical Association, argued that "dispassionate behaviorism" and "the liberal neutral attitude" in research violated the "social responsibilities of the historian." For "total war whether it be hot or cold enlists everyone and calls upon everyone to assume his part. The historian is no freer from his obligation than the physicist." The following year the succeeding AHA president, Samuel Eliot Morison, complained that isolationist his-

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torians like Charles Beard had left the younger generation "spiritually unprepared for the war they had to fight." In a similar view, a scholar of American diplomatic history, Samuel F. Bemis, once told his colleagues that when American foreign policy is suffering sustained attack from abroad, scholars should not contribute to the work of the nation's enemies.¹

But an examination of what goes on in most American schools should reassure Professors Read, Morison, and Bemis. Fredelle Maynard, a teacher who read 2,000 essays written by high school seniors taking the College Board English Achievement Test in 1967, concluded:

About Vietnam, the students are deeply troubled and not terribly well informed. Still, they support Administration policy and deplore the excesses of university student protests.

Communism is the great bugaboo. If we pull out of Asia, the communists will take over; whenever we relax our vigilance in any area—dress, morality, politics, religious faith—the communists are waiting.

Seldom is there any indication of historical or philosophical understanding; references to communism take the form of easy journalistic clichés (the Red Menace, the Iron Curtain). Few students mention fascism, although individual papers are sometimes fascistic in tone.²

A textbook published in 1963 and used today in at least one Long Island high school treats young readers to pronouncements such as:

The Communists do not care about peace. . . . The Communists hope that the man in the street will think that Communists could not possibly be preparing for war when they talk so much and so beautifully about peace. . . .

People who say one thing and believe another are called *hypocrites*. Communists are among the greatest hypocrites in history. . . .

. . . The years since World War II have given more than enough evidence of the determination of the Soviet

Union to destroy the United States and all that it stands for. . . .

It should be recognized, of course, that the great danger from Communists in the United States does not come from those who openly belong to the party. Rather, the most dangerous Communists are those who long ago dropped from sight or perhaps were never even in the party's records. These (and probably others sent to this country by the USSR) are awaiting the day when they will be given the order to destroy the dams and bridges and factories and military bases of the United States. In the meantime they will try to live as quietly as possible. They do not want to attract attention, which they will certainly get if they joined the party. . . .

The Chinese Communists . . . are willing to take the risk of atomic war because China is a backward, underfed nation of almost 700,000,000 people. . . . Of course, tens of millions of the Chinese people would be killed in such a war—but this does not particularly bother the Chinese Communist leaders.³

When the student leaves school he is treated to a daily fare of mass media anti-communism, thrilling to network television series portraying devilish communist conspirators and spies, and he will read editorials and reports in his daily newspaper which support his preconceived anti-communist notions of the world. Should he have the rare opportunity of enjoying a direct confrontation with the object of his anxiety it might prove most edifying. During the first decade of the cold war, trips to the Soviet Union were frequently the occasion for acute surprise. Harold Berman records that of the dozens of American tourists he encountered in Moscow from 1955 to 1957 (when such travel was still relatively uncommon) including editors, scholars, specialists in Soviet affairs and Congressmen, all found conditions much better than they had expected. "Many of them said, half in despair and half in jest, 'What am I going to say when I get back to the United States?'"

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Soviet travel restrictions and Soviet suspicion of foreigners contributed to Western misconceptions but the distortions in American journalism bear an important share of the responsibility. Note this incident, recounted by Berman:

Two years ago, an American newspaper correspondent in Moscow wrote an account of the May Day parade in which he described people singing and dancing in the streets and enjoying themselves thoroughly. His newspaper published the account, but at the same time it ran an editorial in which it portrayed an embittered Russian people forced by their hated government to demonstrate in favor of a revolution which they did not want.

The correspondent, in recounting this to me, said that he thereupon wrote a letter to his editor in which he said, "I was there—I saw it—they were not bitter, they were happy, they were having a good time." The editorial writer wrote back, in effect, that they may have appeared happy, but that actually they could not have been happy, in view of the evils of the system under which they live.⁴

Foreign visitors, bringing the perspective of the outsider, have frequently remarked upon the anti-communist orthodoxy of American mass media. Foreign journalists who were Fellows of The World Press Institute in 1965 concluded their on-the-job experience with major American publications, with the following observations:

[Mr. Thorndike of Peru]: I have found a kind of gentle pressure, let's call it that. One is all right as long as he agrees with the American point of view, which I have found is often a biased approach to national and international issues. There is a certain patriotism in the American press. Bad things must always have been provoked by Communists, and sometimes patriotism is equated with anti-communism. This is a simple, black-white approach, with no half-tones or shadows. It reflects a lack of knowledge of the issues, because one usually has a simple answer for a question he doesn't understand.

[Mr. Rongnoni of Italy]: A newspaper editor will cen-

sor himself no matter how well-educated he is because he knows he has to say more or less what the owner of the paper wants him to say. One difference between the American press and the Italian press is that Italy has eight kinds of newspapers ranging from black to grey to red, and so Italian readers get a wider scope and a number of different ideas and approaches. In the United States, on the other hand, the color is always grey. Almost all the publishers in the United States have a grey way of thinking, and so the editors and reporters have to write in this direction.

[Mr. Doyon of France]: There is a great moral fear in this country of being a traitor to the American code. Except for a few weekly magazines, no one in the press would try to take a public position different from that of the leading newspaper owners and political men here. It would be considered un-American, or Communistic, or unpatriotic. What small publisher in a small town, who is usually badly informed anyway, will try to take an unpopular attitude? He can't. He's a prisoner of the system.⁵

Since 1963 with the US-USSR *détente*, it has become respectable to consider the Soviets as something other than demonic, but mass media anti-communism did not change its fundamental tone; it readily discovered new villains in China and Vietnam without ever quite discarding the old ones.

The scholarly "experts," the Sovietologists and Kremlinologists from the various universities, have been as active as the ordinary journalists in propagating anti-communist stereotypes. Many of them are either Eastern European émigrés—e.g., Zbigniew Brzezinski—or ex-communists—e.g., Bertram Wolfe—who were intensely anti-Soviet well before they decided to become Soviet specialists. What is most impressive about them is how frequently they have been proven wrong. With a few notable exceptions* most

* Among those Sovietologists who were capable of a flexible and more accurate view of the Soviet Union, one might consider such

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of them insisted that no meaningful changes were forthcoming after Stalin's demise. For a number of crucial years most of them refused to consider the Sino-Soviet split as anything more than a "family quarrel." Many today are still reluctant to recognize or attach any significance to the liberalizing transitions within Soviet society. Before visiting Moscow in 1967, the writer Stanley Kunitz sought the advice of such experts:

. . . My friends among the Sovietologists, on whose linguistic finesse and rarefied special knowledge I had often leaned in the course of my translation of Russian poetry, told me precisely what to expect. As an official guest of the Soviet Union . . . I would be subject to constant surveillance; I would be permitted to see only those writers who were in the pocket of the bureaucracy; I would have no opportunity for private conversations or meetings; my audiences would be hand-picked and scanty—they might be nonexistent; I would be heckled and harassed about Vietnam.

My informants turned out to be wrong, dead wrong, on every count.⁶

During his year at Moscow University, George Feiffer was approached by Russian students who borrowed works by American Sovietologists from his bookcase.

The students were fascinated at first: the books provided a *Realpolitik* analysis—as well as information about the party hierarchy—which they had never seen. But soon they became bored. Finally they commiserated with me. "You're as bad off as we: you can learn almost nothing meaningful from *our* books about Soviet politics, and from the looks of these, yours aren't much better. This obsession with the *verxhuska* (ruling clique) conspiracy and intrigue. And this anti-Soviet overtone everywhere. Your writers

men as Bernard Morris, Samuel Hendel, George Feiffer and, most notably, Isaac Deutscher.

hate our 'regime' so much on our behalf that they can't see the woods for the trees.⁷

Yet, together with the mountains of rubbish, there are some excellent accounts of recent Russian history and Soviet daily life (and a fewer number on China). But these rarely enjoy a mass audience, and many of the readers they do reach, as Berman observes, "simply reject, subconsciously, those images which conflict with their preconceptions."⁸ Perception is a subtly evaluative process capable of superimposing an interpretation which denies the data's face value and reaffirms our habitual view of the subject. To discard the internalized psychic mechanism of censorship is especially difficult when the atmosphere of the entire society is geared to the propagation of the anti-communist faith.

Anti-communism has been the yardstick for allocating priorities in countless other areas of American life. "It has got so," regretted James Reston, "you can't get money for a school or road from Congress without arguing that failure to build them will mean the triumph of communism. . . ."⁹ Proponents of federal aid to education pointed to the necessity of "keeping up with the Russians," an argument especially effective in the post-Sputnik days. The enormous highway programs of the 1950s were justified in part by the necessity to expand the "vital links" of a nation facing the potential emergencies of cold and hot wars. On the grounds of cold-war necessity, liberal educators advocated more study programs on communism and Russia; linguistic and area specialists pleaded for more extensive language training; public officials called for the training of more scientists; free trade advocates pushed for closer economic relations with other Western nations; editors pressured for free travel to communist lands which were under State Department ban; shipping and airline in-

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terests demanded and received substantial subsidies; physical educators called for "physical fitness" programs for America's youths. Civil rights advocates argued that a nation in competition with communism for the loyalty of the colored two-thirds of mankind could not afford to practice racism at home (an argument that reduced the ethic of brotherhood to an anti-communist expediency).

More generally it was proclaimed that the building of a "better America" in all domestic areas meant a "stronger America," a fortifying of the material and inspirational arsenal of the Free World. (In the first Kennedy-Nixon debate of 1960 both candidates argued the importance of domestic well-being in just those cold-war terms.) ". . . The existence of Russia as our Grand Competitor seems to have become the main reason in America for thinking seriously about anything," complained David Bazelon, and to demonstrate his point, he went on to plead for serious thinking about the American economy "or else we will surely forsake the promise of the future and also fail in the cold war. . . ." ¹⁰ It remained for Averell Harriman, former Ambassador to the USSR, to suggest that American dynamism was actually beholden to "the communist challenge." More than once he observed that we Americans, instead of complaining, should be thankful for the existence of the Soviet Union for it stimulated us to new achievements and prevented us from becoming complacent and slothful. Thus do our fears become our virtues.

THE CALL TO ARMS

Foremost among our anti-communist achievements has been the growth of a vast "military-industrial complex" whose impact, Eisenhower warned, "is felt in every city, every state house, every office of the Federal Govern-

ment.” * The armed services presently compose the strongest lobby in Washington, exerting more influence over Congress than that body exerts over the Defense Department. The military has entered the mainstream of American life, spending millions of dollars on public relations to propagandize its needs and glorify its role. The leading beneficiaries of armaments contracts, the large corporations, help nurture cold-war predilections with skillful lobbying of governmental agencies and mass advertising stressing the sacred task of keeping America strong. “Few developments,” writes one student of the armed services, “more dramatically symbolized the new status of the military in the postwar decade than the close association which they developed with the business elite of American society.”¹¹ As a result of this new partnership, enormous portions of American purchasing power have been siphoned off by the government through taxation and channeled into the major corporations, with the ten largest companies receiving almost two-fifths of the total contracts for weapons productions, thereby further centralizing corporate wealth.

“An immense industrial empire has developed,” Cochran notes, “whose sole customer is the government, and whose operations are risk-free.”¹² The government uses the taxpayer’s money to undertake or subsidize the risk capital for private industries in war technology, in atomic energy, aerospace, electronics and computer development. “Thus public tax coffers absorb the risks our mythology more glamorously assigns to the private entrepreneur. . . . Socialism for the rich, at the poor man’s expense: it is the American version of Marx.”¹³ By 1968 corporate profits on defense contracts were running at approximately 4.5 billion dollars a year.¹⁴

* For additional observations on the military’s influence in American life see Appendix I, “The Martial State.”

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The influence of our military state is nowhere more heavily felt than in the academic community. It would be difficult to find a major institution of higher education in America that does not make some allocation in space, building funds, and maintenance to programs financed by the Pentagon or some other cold-war agency, and which, in turn, did not draw anywhere upwards to 80 percent of its annual budget from these same government sources. "These schools must maintain their governmental research projects or face bankruptcy," Edward Greer concludes.¹⁵ At least ninety universities and colleges are actively researching such problems as counterinsurgency weaponry, combat communications, troop deployment, command-control systems, defoliation techniques, topographical and climatic factors salient for counterinsurgency efforts, internal security and anti-riot strategies, population relocation and control methods, seismic and magnetic detection systems. At least fifty-six universities and colleges are engaged in research on chemical and biological warfare.¹⁶ "Academic scientists," observes Cathy McAfee, "are finding it increasingly difficult to pursue their careers without contributing to [defense] work. Not only do they depend on government contracts for support, but often they must become involved in defense projects merely to gain access to the information and equipment they need for research."¹⁷

A growing number of social scientists are joining in programs financed by the federal cold-war apparatus, including psychological, sociological, economic and political studies devoted to counterrevolutionary techniques and the manipulation of opinion at home and abroad. In hundreds of conferences and thousands of brochures, articles and books written by members of the intellectual community who are directly or indirectly in the pay of the government, cold-war propaganda is lent an aura of aca-

demic objectivity, complete with statistical and sociological embellishments. Casting a shadow on their own integrity as scholars and teachers, such intellectuals transmit to an unsuspecting public the official view of reality and the Pentagon's sense of its own indispensability and dedication to perpetual anti-communist struggle.*

Testifying before the Rooney Congressional subcommittee, USIA official Reed Harris described his agency's book development program as one "under which we can have books written to our own specifications, books that would not otherwise be put out, especially those books that have strong anti-communist content, and follow other themes that are particularly useful for our purposes. Under the book development program, we control the thing from the very idea down to the final edited manuscript."¹⁸ But no public acknowledgment is ever made of the agency's connection with the book. Another USIA official testified that the agency tried to enlist "outside" writers of stature not closely associated with the government: "This results in greater credibility." There is strong evidence that some of the money channeled to writers and

* Consider Professor Bernard Brodie's *Escalation and the Nuclear Option* (Princeton University Press, 1966) which attacks the Johnson Administration for not having a more "nuclear-minded" policy in our strategic confrontation with the USSR. Brodie was in the pay of the Air Force-financed RAND corporation when he wrote the book. The generals cannot criticize policy but they can, with taxpayers' money, pay others, who pose as independent scholars, to do so. Of the many RAND-financed tracts that pass themselves off as scholarly works there is Professor Charles Wolf, Jr.'s *United States Policy and the Third World* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1967) which among other things advocates destroying the homes, livestock and food supplies of native populations as a necessary and desirable feature of counterinsurgency. Similarly Professor Frank Trager was secretly paid \$2,500 by USIA to write *Why Viet Nam?* (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, Inc., 1966), an apologia for United States policy and an anti-communist polemic.

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publishers by USIA and other agencies may actually have come from the CIA. Praeger admitted publicly to publishing "fifteen or sixteen" books at the CIA's behest.¹⁹

The proliferation of Pentagon-financed "independent" corporations such as RAND and the Hudson Institute, the "think-tanks" that solve technical and logistical military problems for a fee, testifies to the growing role played by the nonmilitary man. The armed services, progressively less able to provide the brainpower for all its needs, simply buys up such human resources from the universities, corporations, and planning institutions. "What this means," Jules Henry points out, "is not so much that the military are being pushed out of the war, but that the civilians are being sucked into it. . . ." ²⁰ It comes as a staggering realization that over two-thirds of all the technical research in America is being consumed by the military.

Millions of other Americans who make their living either directly or indirectly from the Pentagon's billions have committed themselves to the armaments race. "Just about every district and every state, and every labor union, and every store owner is getting a cut out of present expenditures in the name of 'defense,'" observed Congressman J. L. Witten of the Defense Appropriations subcommittee. The protests from Congressmen—who themselves were usually responding to fierce constituency pressures—over the closing of a handful of obsolete military bases and two Navy yards in 1965 was one demonstration of the grassroots civilian economic dependency on Pentagon funds. Defense spending has been twice as important as private investment in expanding the American economy since 1948.²¹ Taking into account the multiplier effect of a dollar spent, and the network of subsidiary services which indirectly feed on the defense dollar, possibly a fifth of all economic activity in America has been dependent on war expenditures.²²

From three-fourths to four-fifths of every federal bud-

get consists of military allocations not including the \$20 billion a year to pay for past wars, *viz.*, interest on the national debt, veterans benefits, etc. The Pentagon commands more personnel and money than all other government departments, agencies and bureaus combined. Despite ex-Secretary McNamara's much publicized reorganization of the Defense Department, the military budget increased by as much as 33 percent during his first five years, and during the sixth year alone the Vietnam expenditures came to almost another \$30 billion. In the two decades following the Truman Doctrine close to nine hundred billion dollars was expended for past, present, and future wars.

As early as 1960 the Pentagon owned more than thirty-two million acres of land in the United States and 2.6 million acres in foreign countries—larger than the combined areas of Delaware, Connecticut, Rhode Island, New Jersey, Massachusetts, Maryland, Vermont and New Hampshire. The United States built an overseas military empire that dwarfed all previous ones; it was the only nation that had military bases on every inhabited continent and a fleet on every open sea; its nuclear armed bombers flew thousands of miles from its own skies over foreign territories frequently close to communist borders; it trained, equipped, and financed the military forces of many other nations. "Arms and military equipment," *Forbes* magazine noted, "are one of the US major export items. Without them, few defense companies would be earning the kind of money they do." In the period from 1953 to 1967 the United States sold or gave other nations over \$35 billion in military assistance, thereby establishing itself as the greatest producer and supplier of instruments of violence.

If we define "military state" as any polity which devotes the major portion of its public resources to purposes of war, then America is a military state, the strongest mili-

tary power in the history of mankind. Our leaders proudly proclaim that fact. Given the more limited technological bases at their command, none of the communist states can make such a claim. Contrary to the conventional view, a democracy is as capable of becoming a militaristic power as is a dictatorship. The political system of a nation is of less importance in determining its capacity for violence than is the level of its industry and wealth and the intensity of its anxiety about domestic and foreign enemies.

POWER AS CAUSE AND EFFECT

It was not the military that manufactured anti-communism, but anti-communism that built the military state. The military state, then, is a symptom of anti-communism, but symptoms have a way of generating their own subsequent effects. An effect can be discernible only as a change in the environment; if there is no observable change then we say there is no effect. But anything which represents a change in the environment becomes a source of subsequent reactive adjustments; that is, it tends to generate new effects thus becoming a cause in itself. To say that the military-industrial complex is merely a "symptom" is to arbitrarily cut off the chain of causality and to declare prematurely that all the important effects have been counted. But the military establishment now maximizes the very conditions that gave it rise, and by developing into a powerful lobby and national institution, commanding the talent, energy and income of the commonweal, manipulating many symbols and images of public life, the military has created new constituencies and supporting interests.

To say, then, that power is a "neutral" value having a potential for right or wrong depending upon how it is employed, is to overlook the fact that power may generate its own propensities and imperatives. A power that has evolved into gargantuan proportions is not prone to let it

go at that. It was Tocqueville who observed in classic understatement that the patience and tolerance of men in the presence of obstacles does not increase with the consciousness of their own strength. Today the armed services make claims on national priorities, resources and loyalties that were undreamed of in an earlier part of this century.

The very immensity of the military's presence tends to convince us of its necessity and importance. It is in the nature of ordinary mortals, such as the Americans are, to find growing evidence of a menace in the very precautions taken against it. This is one of the effects of power. The imposing presence of the military establishment seems to confirm our worse fears about the communist devil. The same is true of all anti-communist actions and commitments. When does "communist subversion" seem more threatening than when men preoccupy themselves with loyalty oaths and inquisitions? When does an atomic attack seem more imminent than when millions are engaged in the grotesque charade of civil defense? * When do the Russians or Chinese seem more menacing than when our war leaders call for still more defense weapons and more armed interventions? The greater the precautions, the more self-evident seems the danger and the further removed the question of whether the menace is commensurate with the kind of response made to it. A nation armed to the teeth for the apocalyptic onslaught begins to see a world of apocalyptic options (e.g., "better dead than Red"). The future is constricted, and alternatives are limited by the very instruments intended to maximize our maneuverability. Power is bought at a price, and great power comes dearly.

* See Appendix II, "Civil Defense: Kill a Neighbor."

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NOTES

1. William Neumann, "Historians in the Age of Acquiescence," in *Voices in Dissent* (New York: 1958), pp. 137-42.
2. Fredelle Maynard, "The Minds of High School Seniors," *New Republic*, 20 May 1967, pp. 11-12.
3. The above selections are from the school text; Dan Jacobs, *The Masks of Communism* (Evanston, Ill.: Citadel Press, 1963), pp. 156, 157, 171, 175, 222-23. Jacobs' book is hardly the worst of the lot used in American schools.
4. Harold J. Berman, "The Devil and Soviet Russia," *op. cit.*
5. "A Foreign Look at the American Press," *Mass Communication* (The Center for the Study of Democratic Institutions, 1966), pp. 3, 4, and 5, respectively.
6. Stanley Kunitz, "The Other Country Inside Russia," *New York Times Magazine*, 20 August 1967.
7. George Feiffer, "Looking Aghast at Soviet Russia," *The Nation*, 23 May 1966.
8. Berman, "The Devil and Soviet Russia," *op. cit.*
9. *New York Times*, 14 March 1962.
10. David T. Bazelon, *The Paper Economy* (New York: Vintage Books, 1965), p. 4.
11. Samuel P. Huntington, *The Soldier and the State* (New York: Vintage Books, 1964), p. 361.
12. Bert Cochran, *The War System*.
13. Edward Greer, "The Public Interest University," *Viet Report*, January 1968, p. 5.
14. *New York Times*, 3 May 1968.
15. Greer, *op. cit.*; see also Clark Kerr, *The Uses of the University* (New York: Harper & Row, 1966), p. 55.
16. See the wealth of data—most of it from published government and university sources—gathered by Greer, C. Brightman, C. McAfee, M. Klare, D. Ransom, B. Leman, R. Rapoport, and M. Locker in *Viet Report*, January 1968.
17. *Ibid.*, p. 9.
18. Quoted in David Wise, "Hidden Hands in Publishing," *New Republic*, 21 October 1967, p. 17.
19. *Ibid.*, p. 18.
20. Jules Henry, *Culture Against Man* (New York: Vintage Books, 1963), p. 106.
21. Cochran, *op. cit.*; see also Tristram Coffin, *The Armed Society: Militarism in Modern America* (Baltimore: Penguin, 1964).
22. See Cochran, pp. 142-144.

The Liberal and Conservative Orthodoxy

I fancy a number of people all over the Western World still think of themselves as liberals, but are in essence no such thing. In their hearts they believe that their society won't (and shouldn't) change much, that Communism is the enemy absolute, and that the only tasks open to men of good will are to fight the Cold War with one hand and perform minor benevolent activities with the other. That is a tenable attitude, but it is one of people who have given up the intellectual struggle. C. P. SNOW

In the doctrinal sense, we in America also have in certain respects a one-party system; for the two parties are ideologically undistinguishable; their pronouncements form one integral body of banality and platitude; whoever does not care to work within their common framework is also condemned, like the non-party person in Russia, to political passivity—to an internal emigration.

GEORGE F. KENNAN

In his study of Southern politics V. O. Key observed how segregationist politicians outdid each other in their

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racist pronouncements, each accusing his opponent of being insufficiently dedicated to the white man's cause.¹ The only issue all Southern politicians agreed upon was the one they spent most of their campaign time debating. It seems that when a particular orthodoxy begins to monopolize the universe of discourse, interdicting all alternative beliefs, those who compete for power must do so within the boundaries of that orthodoxy. It is in the nature of a competitor that he advantageously differentiate himself from his rivals, but since rivals also assume orthodox postures then the best he can do is insist that his own expression of orthodoxy is somehow more wholehearted, more pure, indeed, more orthodox than his opponents'.

This interminable reiteration of an already accepted belief by all competitors feeds the obsessional qualities of the belief. As orthodoxy magnifies itself into monomania, anxieties about heterodoxy *increase* rather than decrease. The air is filled with charges and countercharges that one or another leader is insufficiently dedicated, or is even "treasonous" to the sacred cause. Obsessional orthodoxy raises an undefined impossible standard which no person can claim to emulate flawlessly, and even the inquisitor might find himself hauled before the tribunal to account for the sincerity of his conviction. One ignores the charge of heterodox impurity only at the risk of one's political or even biological life; one's only recourse is to show that *his* way is not heresy but is actually a more effective defense of the orthodoxy than the opposing way, thereby helping to place orthodoxy that much more above challenge.

For at least twenty years liberals and conservatives, Democrats and Republicans, have been outdoing each other in making strenuous claims to anti-communist orthodoxy, with each side presenting its own brand of anti-communism as the more effective way of combatting the evil. Thus liberals repeatedly argued that, at a time when

Americans should have been attentive to the *real* menace of Soviet imperialism, McCarthyism crippled the morale of the very personnel needed to execute the diplomatic, military and propaganda tasks of the cold war. That *Tass* and *Pravda* repeatedly attacked the Wisconsin Senator as a "fascist" and a "madman" was further evidence to the liberal that Joseph McCarthy was supplying grist for the communist propaganda mill, and was playing right into the hands of the Soviets who allegedly rejoiced over the havoc he caused at home and among our allies abroad. The liberals did not seriously consider the possibility that the Soviets, like the liberals themselves, were intimidated by the emerging specter of extremist anti-communist power in America. If McCarthy were hurting America, as the liberals said, then the Soviets must have been actually delighted even as they gave every appearance of being apprehensive.*

McCarthy's attack against the Voice of America was criticized by liberals not because it represented an extreme expression of an already irrational anti-communism, but because it allegedly impaired the efficiency of the American cold-war struggle. "The net effect," said the American Committee for Cultural Freedom in a gingerly critique of the Senator, ". . . has been to frustrate the very possibility of the United States embarking on a program of psychological warfare against world communism." ² From

* Speaking when McCarthy was still a disruptive power, George F. Kennan asserted that as we "mess up our own affairs and bring dismay and anxiety into the hearts of those who would like to be our friends and our allies, this is reflected at once by a new birth of false hopes and arrogance in the minds of those who rule the roost in Moscow." For Kennan's liberal audience, the indictment was sufficiently clear: McCarthy, by making fools of us all, was feeding Soviet temerity.

George F. Kennan, *Realities of American Foreign Policy* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1966), p. 94; a reprint of his 1954 Princeton lectures.

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the same anti-communist premise liberals criticized the loyalty-security program, contending (accurately) that it failed to unearth any Communist Party members in government, while undermining the morale of government employees, thereby hurting the United States rather than the communists.³ Nevertheless, it was the liberals under the leadership of Harry Truman who initiated the first loyalty-program surveillance of two-and-a-half-million government employees, at which time Truman is reported to have said: "Well, that should take the Communist smear off the Democratic Party."⁴

Liberals argued that the non-communist affidavits and loyalty oaths were an indignity which "loyal Americans" were made to suffer, while the communists, being of unscrupulous nature, would sign any oath and mouth any lie, apparently without fear of subsequent investigations and perjury indictments. (In fact, the American Communist Party was as vehemently opposed to the oaths as was anyone.) Liberals like Adlai Stevenson argued in 1952 that ferreting out communists in the government was a job for "a highly professional, nonpolitical intelligence agency," specifically the FBI, a remark which seemed to accept the truth of McCarthy's accusation that subversives had infiltrated the government. While Eisenhower charged the Democrats with being indifferent to the problem of communist subversion, Stevenson—not to be outdone—accused the Republicans of underestimating the communist threat, pointing out that the struggle against communism in America was "an infinitely tougher and harder battle than most of the Republican leaders have ever admitted or evidently even understood."⁵

As early as 1919, Senator Albert Beveridge had argued that repressive measures against radicals were wrong because "attempts to smother thought by force only make converts to the very doctrines thus sought to be destroyed."⁶ Four decades later many liberals were enter-

taining a similar view: repression only attracted more people to the forbidden cause; communism can best be defeated by exposure in the free market of ideas.⁷ At other times, it was argued that repression would only force the Party to dig deeply underground, thereby making it more difficult to control—and thus more lethal. The communist should be allowed his freedom because only then could he be exposed and defeated. During the 1950s few liberals argued that the communist should enjoy full protection under the First Amendment as part of his inherent right as a human being and as an American. Most liberals defended academic freedom for non-communists only. Some liberals such as Leslie Fiedler, Diana Trilling, Sidney Hook and others wholeheartedly succumbed to the anti-communist impulse and spent a good portion of their time calling their fellow liberals “dupes” for having been in some way insufficiently alerted to the Red Menace. Some, such as Hubert Humphrey (from his first anti-communist crusade in the ADA, to his later sponsorship of the Communist Control Act, to his more recent support of Johnson’s foreign policy), built their careers around “fighting Communism at home and abroad” in imitation of less liberal politicians.

Either out of conviction or fear, the liberal adopted the basic rhetoric of anti-communism. The McCarthy inquisitor and his victim had one thing in common (to the lasting disadvantage of the latter): both built their arguments on anti-communist orthodoxy. When liberals like James Wechsler and Owen Lattimore were brought before McCarthy’s committee they justly defended themselves as free Americans exercising their Constitutional rights. But not content to rest their cases there, they took pains to demonstrate their orthodoxy by quoting selections from their past anti-communist writings and citing occasions when communists had attacked them. Wechsler referred to his anti-communist newspaper editorials and his past battles

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with communists in the Newspaper Guild. Lattimore's *Ordeal by Slander*, an account of his confrontation with McCarthy, is replete with anti-communist, cold-war admonitions. Appearing before the McCarthy committee, he felt compelled to quote "criticisms of my books in Russian and American [communist] publications," as proof of his anti-communism. Another China expert, John K. Fairbank, defending himself against the McCarthy witchhunt, observed: "In Washington I was 'identified' . . . as part of a 'hard inner core' of an alleged pro-communist conspiracy. In Peking I have been cited as an 'imperialist spy' and 'the number-one cultural secret-agent of American imperialism' et cetera." ⁸ One might pity the journalist or scholar who had never been attacked by the communists or—worse still—had actually won a favorable word from the communist press. By essaying to live up to the anti-communist standards set by the inquisitor, the liberal victims inadvertently helped intensify the very aura of unchallengeable orthodoxy which gave McCarthy his strength.

Over the years, liberals also fell into the habit of using their anti-communist foreign policies as evidence of their anti-communism at home. Thus Lattimore, when defending himself before McCarthy, argued that he had always tried "as emphatically as I could to warn the people of this nation that the communist threat in China and other countries of the Far East is very real indeed." ⁹ And Harry Truman, referring to his commitments to Greece and Turkey, observed "All over the world, voices of approval made themselves heard, while Communists and their fellow-travelers struck out at me savagely." ¹⁰ It seems never to have occurred to liberals that their constant emphasis on the "far greater menace" of the USSR and their advocacy of a wholesale cold-war effort abroad exacerbated the very public anxieties which bred witchhunting at home.

Even today many liberals do not raise any questions about anti-communism's presumptions and goals but con-

centrate their criticism on anti-communist tactics. In 1967, Dwight Macdonald criticized the witchhunting of the 1950s and the Vietnam war of the 1960s on the grounds that such policies played right into the communists' hands. "The principal results [of Senator Joseph McCarthy's attacks] were to give publicity to an expiring CPUSA . . . and, by the absurdity and unfairness of his accusations, to gain sympathy for Communism." Macdonald's argument becomes all the more interesting when applied to Vietnam: Johnson's policy was deplorable chiefly because "our President's genocidal crusade in Vietnam makes the enemy look good, relatively." Less subtle minds oppose the genocidal crusade because it is genocidal, but Macdonald is primarily interested in demonstrating the superior resourcefulness of his own anti-communism: "As an old Commie fighter, I rate Johnson about as, I imagine, old Indian-fighters voted General Custer: rash, hot-headed, vain and alarmingly ignorant of the nature of the enemy." ¹¹

If, on the domestic front, liberals were defensive, taking their cues and tailoring their rhetoric to the conservative attack, in foreign affairs—being of more activist interventionist leanings and in control of the White House—they usually held the initiative. Just as conservatives alerted liberals to the "internal threat," so might it be said that liberals alerted conservatives to the "overseas menace." Opposing communism abroad entailed involvements with European nations, billions of dollars in armaments and aid, a growing federal budget, deficit spending and Big Government—all offensive to conservative predilections. "My own feeling," commented Senator Robert Taft on Truman's overseas commitments, "is that this policy . . . unless restrained, can only lead to arbitrary and totalitarian government at home, as foreign affairs comes more and more to dominate our domestic activities . . ." Taft opposed United States participation in NATO because involvement was "more likely to incite

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Russia to war than to deter it from war," and he was against the Truman intervention in Korea on the grounds that we had no vital interests in that country.¹²

Conservatives such as Senators George Malone and Harry Byrd maintained—not without accuracy—that large outlays of foreign aid were usually wasted by incompetent and corrupt recipients, rarely reaching the people most in need of help and usually earning us more resentment than popularity abroad. The best way to fight communism was to keep America self-sufficient and strong. Some ultra-conservatives went further: to pour good American dollars down foreign "ratholes," was just the thing the communists wanted to see; knowing that we in our instinctual anti-communism would advocate anything they opposed, the communists, according to this theory, perpetrated a decoy attack on foreign aid in order to encourage us to dissipate our treasure.*¹³ Conservatives could conjure up occasional anxieties about inflation, insolvency, gargantuan government, "Uncle Sap," parasitic foreigners, etc., but the liberals always had Joseph Stalin, and in congressional debate after debate, fiscal conservatism proved no match for the big-spending interventionist liberal forces abetted by the dread specter of a Stalinist world victory.

So it came to pass that each side succumbed to the more activist and more fearful anti-communist rhetoric of the other. Just as liberal policymakers learned to live with, and eventually utilize loyalty oaths, internal security laws, and Justice Department investigations, so did conservatives become supporters of overseas security pacts, armed intervention and huge military budgets. In foreign affairs, conservatives eventually became more militantly activist than liberals, accusing the latter of "no-win" and "faint-hearted" policies.

* It might be noted that this farfetched argument was not too removed from the one used by the liberals who contended that the communists were secretly delighted by the havoc wreaked by McCarthy even as they launched repeated attacks upon him.

On occasion American liberals fought the good fight. Many of them opposed Dulles' inclination to view Mao as Satan and Chiang as the Archangel, and advocated recognition of Peking and UN membership for China. Many raised their voices against nuclear contamination of the atmosphere and against the macabre charade of civil defense. Some even thought we were excessively rigid in our dealings with the Soviets. (Some moderate conservatives might also take credit, notably President Eisenhower who with his immense personal prestige and good will convinced Americans that peaceful negotiations with the Soviets was not tantamount to appeasement.) But regardless of the flashes of sanity they injected into US foreign policy, liberals need to be reminded of the extent to which they found themselves propagating the phobic militaristic anti-communism of the postwar era. Having accepted without debate the axiom that communism was a relentless, diabolic, conspiratorial force dedicated to our destruction, they found themselves the prisoners of their own premise and were soon supporting as necessary evils policies which did violence to their best liberal instincts. Thus liberal Presidents were among the most active proponents of huge military outlays, and liberal Congressmen fairly consistently supported the growing armaments allocations, voting with congressional majorities so overwhelming as to approach unanimity.

Much has been written about the plight of leftist intellectuals in Europe and America who continued supporting the Soviet line at such cost to their own integrity and humanistic principles. Little has been said about the self-compromises and deceptions which the American liberals have swallowed in violation of their own values. Sidney Lens aptly sums up the liberal's predicament:

In rhetoric the pragmatic liberal has doubts about militarism as a means of "containing communism," but in deed he finds a *modus vivendi* with the rightist and the conservative. He too votes for \$50 billion defense budgets

. . . he utters little protest when American troops land in Lebanon to "protect American interests" against a revolution in Iraq, and he sees nothing wrong in shipping troops to Thailand as a measure against civil war in Laos. He is silent when the CIA finances and guides rightist revolts against sovereign regimes in Guatemala and Iran. Though he hates dictatorships, he finds it expedient to continue relations with Fascist Spain, apartheid-ist South Africa, and the dozen other tyrannies that are called part of the "free world." He votes continued aid to Paraguay, Guatemala, Nicaragua, South Viet Nam, Pakistan, Jordan and Saudi Arabia, though their regimes are reactionary or have come to power through illegal coups d'etat or rigged elections . . . Where communism is concerned the rules are suspended. We are in a permanent war.¹⁴ ✕

Several conclusions emerge from the foregoing pages. First, it should be clear by now that a preoccupation with anti-communism has not been the exclusive expression of any fringe group. The Birchites, McCarthyites, and Goldwaterites were no more responsible for our anti-communist policies in the world than they were for electing the various Presidents who fashioned such policies. While some conservatives argued for more drastic military measures in Korea, Cuba (Bay of Pigs), and Vietnam, it was the liberals, Truman, Kennedy, and Johnson, who perpetrated the actual interventionist deeds. Second, throughout the history of the cold war, as liberals and conservatives tried to outdo each other in their antagonism toward something called "communism," their obsessional pursuit seemed to carry its own justification, allowing no opportunity for debate, and no investigation of the presumptions underlying the anti-communist impulse. A chronic, often mindless, anti-communist stance became the *sine qua non* of legitimacy and survival in American political life.

We discover that one-party states are not the only ones that successfully smother challenges to the political value

system. Orthodoxy may be the operational reality even in a political system that believes it is maintaining a wide-open democratic dialogue. On the issue of anti-communism, the American political system has rarely been able to confront fundamental images, or serve as an instrument of creative discourse, or even engage in public discussion of heterodox alternatives. The two-party competition which supposedly is to provide for democratic heterodoxy, in fact, has generated a competition for orthodoxy. In politics, as in economics, competition is rarely a certain safeguard against monopoly and seldom a guarantee that the competitors will produce commodities which offer the consumer a substantive choice.

The American political system, rather than performing with the explorative virtues that are the peculiar genius of the democratic process, has, on the issue of communism at least, propagated the most unthinking and irrational slogans and dogmas. No orthodoxy could ask for a more consummate victory. And while we need not cease condemning the agencies of thought-control in Russia, China and elsewhere, we also might begin to show concern for the poverty and paralysis of our own political life and thought.*

* A more recent expression of the liberal anti-communist phobia may be found in the chronic and somewhat obsessive New Left-baiting that preoccupies so many liberals today. While speaking of an impending right-wing whiplash, liberal college professors, administrators, journalists and writers are waging their own campaign of attrition to discredit, misrepresent, and immobilize radical protesters. Without offering any substantial supporting evidence, many liberals seem convinced that their war against the young leftists is a war against Stalinism. That the great majority of young radicals are critical of both the Stalinist and post-Stalinist social orders as they have existed in the Soviet Union seems to be of no account. That they are passionately concerned and committed to opposing the evils of war, poverty, racism, economic exploitation and bureaucratic authoritarianism seems to weigh much less in the minds of many liberals than that some of them have committed acts of incivility and

NOTES

1. V. O. Key, Jr., *Southern Politics* (New York: 1949).
2. Quoted in Christopher Lasch, "The Cultural Cold War," *The Nation*, 11 September 1967, p. 205.
3. Both Seth Richardson, who headed the loyalty program under Truman, and Philip Young, in charge under Eisenhower, testified that security proceedings failed to unearth any card-carrying communists in government. See L. A. Nikolovic, "The Government Loyalty Program," *The American Scholar* 19 (Summer 1950).
4. Quoted in David Horowitz, *The Free World Colossus* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1965), p. 101.
5. *New York Times*, 1 October 1952.
6. Quoted in Murray, *The Red Scare*, p. 243.
7. See, for instance, Justice William O. Douglas' opinion in *Dennis v. United States*. Although it is not his major argument, Douglas does suggest that communism is best beaten in open competition, not by repression.
8. John K. Fairbank, *The United States and China*, rev. ed. (New York: Viking Press, 1958), p. 273 *fn.*; see also Owen Lattimore, *Ordeal by Slander* (New York: 1950).
9. Lattimore, *op cit.*
10. Harry S Truman, *Memoirs*, vol. 2 (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1956), p. 106.
11. Dwight Macdonald in *Commentary*, September 1967, p. 55.
12. Robert A. Taft, *A Foreign Policy for Americans* (New York: 1951).
13. This argument was made repeatedly and in all seriousness by the Hearst publications, the *New York Journal American* from 1947-1949. Not all conservatives went this far.
14. Sidney Lens, *The Futile Crusade* (Chicago: Quadrangle Books, 1964), p. 37.

civil disobedience when confronting Dow Chemical representatives and US Marine recruiters. In this age of missiles, militarism, and mass murder, the young protesters are accused of being the peculiar purveyors of violence. Thus do many liberals expend more time, passion and energy attacking those who protest the enormities of this world than attacking those who perpetrate such enormities.

Virtue Faces the World

Would some power the gift to give us,
To see ourselves as others see us.

ROBERT BURNS

The wicked are wicked no doubt, and they go astray
and they fall and they come by their deserts; but who can
tell the mischief which the very virtuous do?

WILLIAM MAKEPEACE THACKERAY

To understand our policy toward communists and revolutionaries, and toward the world in general, we need to appreciate the messianic image we have of ourselves and the extent to which we portray American international behavior as a succession of righteous acts. What follows is neither a comprehensive history of American foreign policy nor an unearthing of new historical facts, but an attempt to show that the picture Americans have of their own international behavior is colored by a presump-

tion of virtue rarely justified by historical actualities, and that this presumption when put into operation leads to effects varying widely from the professed intent. This self-serving image of national virtue, while markedly pronounced in our history, is hardly unique to America; but America is unique in the magnitude of its powers, and our national illusions—unlike those of smaller nations—represent a force of great moment for the well-being and survival of all humanity.

The history of the United States has been one of territorial, commercial, and military expansion. This statement alone would jar many American readers, yet how else does a nation emerge from an obscure settlement of thirteen coastal enclaves into the world's greatest power except by expansionism? Here we are faced with an American success story that craves explanation: in a ruthless unsavory world how do the virtuous manage to be so successful? Or, to put the question another way, how do the successful manage to remain so virtuous?

As our common reading of history would have it, expansion was accomplished by a process of natural accretion: westward settlement, land purchases, defensive wars, reluctant acquisition of spheres of influence, commitments to defend a weaker people, the protection of overseas properties and nationals, the enforcement of treaty agreements—such were the innocent, almost accidental, growing pains whereby the virtuous allegedly became powerful while keeping their virtue intact. Unlike any other nation in history, the United States apparently developed a mighty empire while never being sullied by imperialistic practices. If imperialism is admitted, it is most often described as a kind of momentary lapse occurring sometime between the Spanish-American War and Theodore Roosevelt's "big stick" policy.

In reality, from the very beginning of its history, the nation suffered quite overtly from expansionist pangs. As

early as 1787, John Adams concluded that the young republic was "destined" to extend its rule over the entire northern part of the hemisphere, and anticipated such expansion as "a great point gained in favor of the rights of mankind." In 1801 Jefferson, having seen that "the American people was a chosen people . . . gifted with superior wisdom and strength," and understanding that "God led our forefathers, as Israel of old," dreamed of a United States encompassing the entire Western Hemisphere.¹ Convinced that "God and destiny had so dictated" that Canada be part of the United States, Americans coveted the Northern British Provinces for half a century. And only after armed invasion met with dismal failure did we eventually reconcile ourselves to the idea of a northern border.

In the South we "rounded out" our boundary by forcing Spain to cede the Floridas. Although it is still "repeated *ad nauseam* in the school texts that the United States 'purchased' the Floridas for the sum of \$5,000,000,"² a closer study of history would reveal that after a series of insurrections and territorial incursions, the United States acquired *de facto* control of the Floridas and, in the treaty of 1819 promised to make satisfaction for the claims of Spanish citizens up to the sum of five million dollars should such claims be considered valid by a US Commission. No purchase occurred and no money changed hands. In this way did America realize Gouverneur Morris' earlier assertion that Florida is "joined to us by the hand of the Almighty."³

At about this time our crimes against the Indian nations were gathering momentum. Some of the most poignant and most neglected passages of Tocqueville's *Democracy in America* give contemporary accounts of the heart-breaking mistreatment of the American Indians. In 1832 Americans knew what they have known ever since—those few who cared to look—that the Indian nations were being systematically obliterated, their treaties violated, their

lands expropriated and their populations decimated by white America. Many violations are still perpetrated upon the surviving remnants of the Indian nations, from the Seneca tribe in New York State to the Nisqually and Puyallup in Washington State. Yet for most Americans the Indian remains little more than a vaguely amusing caricature or a marauding savage. By Hollywood's magical treatment of history, genocide became cowboy heroism, aggression became covered-wagon doggedness, and the roles of victim and victimizer, massacred and massacrer, were reversed. At the same time, as Commager observes, American history texts contrasted our allegedly enlightened policy toward the Indians with the brutal practices of the Spaniards, "conveniently overlooking the elementary fact that the Indians survived in Mexico and South America but not in the United States." ⁴

Also overlooked in America's picture of its own history is the shameless aggression perpetrated against a feeble Mexican regime in 1846. Few of us were taught that the provocative advance of Taylor's army to the Rio Grande and an American blockade of that river instigated the first armed clash, a battle fought on the *south* side of the river. Van Alstyne's account is revealing:

This successful manoeuvring of the Mexicans into firing the first shot worked out extremely well for President Polk. The date of the battle was April 24; the date on which news of it arrived in Washington was May 9; an entry in Polk's private diary under May 8, the day preceding, reveals that the President had already made up his mind to go to war. With an air of injured innocence Polk wrote, with apparent sincerity, of his "duty" to "act with promptness and energy"; but still he and his cabinet were ludicrously anxious that the Mexicans commit the first hostility. When the good news finally arrived, he had his cabinet all assembled within the hour, and with their blessing he was now able to tell Congress that Mexico "has passed the boundary of the United States, has invaded our

territory and shed American blood upon the American soil . . . war exists, and notwithstanding all our efforts to avoid it, exists by the act of Mexico. . . ." ⁵

It was Congressman Abraham Lincoln who aptly characterized Polk's story as "the sheerest deception."

Expansionist appetites were not quite satiated by the acquisition of Texas and the California territory (the richest part of all of Mexico); for a time, the whole of Mexico was coveted. Until 1847, the Mexicans had been considered a shiftless, incorrigible people worthy of being trounced in war and shunned in peace. Soon after, however, almost every publication in America, pro-slavery and abolitionist, Whig and Democrat, was speculating about whether annexation might not be the means whereby America, as the Almighty's agent, could spread moral regeneration.⁶ The *New York Sun* believed that "Providence had willed the war" to "unite and exalt both nations." * Expansionists observed that the Mexicans seemed to "deprecate nothing so much as the withdrawal of our army, and the restoration of Mexican authority." Expansionism, as Carl Schurz critically described it, was anchored in the belief that "this republic, being charged with the mission of bearing the banner of freedom over the whole civilized world, could transform any country, inhabited by any kind of population, into something like itself simply by extending over it the magic charm of its institutions."⁷

The Spanish-American War is another monumental example of that alchemy which transforms national egoism into international altruism, and jingoism into divine mandate. Impelled by filibusters and arms salesmen, and a populace shocked by yellow-journalistic accounts of Spanish atrocities in Cuba, the American government moved per-

* That such philanthropy never materialized into policy was due less to moral ideology than to the emergence of a variety of sectional and political considerations and the reluctance to acquire too great a Mexican population.

emptorily toward intervention. The specific textbook justification for entering hostilities was the mysterious sinking of the battleship *Maine* in Havana harbor. In truth, there has never been any evidence that might implicate the Spaniards. Spanish authorities had begged us not to dispatch the battleship to Havana for fear it might precipitate some serious incident. "The Spanish government," Kennan notes, "did everything in its power to mitigate the effects of the catastrophe, welcomed investigation, and eventually offered to submit the whole question of responsibility to international arbitration—an offer we never accepted."⁸ Soon after, the Spanish Crown gave clear indication of its desire to meet our demands, including an armistice in Cuba and the early implementation of a system of autonomy. Yet such offers were spurned in the American press as "procrastinations." Congress by now was hysterically clamoring for war. As one newsman described the scene in the House: ". . . Members rushed up and down the aisles like madmen, exchanging hot words, with clenched fists and set teeth; excitement was at fever heat. Not for years has such a scene occurred."⁹ Congress passed a resolution, tantamount to a declaration of war, calling for the immediate withdrawal of all Spanish authority from Cuba, and directing the President to use force to secure that objective. Thus began what Theodore Roosevelt described as "the most absolutely righteous war" of the century. He branded as "impertinent" any European leader "whether Pope, Kaiser, Czar or President" who proffered a less flattering evaluation of American actions—and many European leaders did.

America, from all announced intentions, was fighting to free Cuba, not the Philippines. Yet American forces swiftly wrested the Philippines from the Spanish Crown. The question immediately arose as to what was to be done with the islands. Admiral Dewey had described the natives as more capable of self-government than the Cubans, but

as the great economic and strategic value of that territory became apparent, less was said about native capacity for self-rule.¹⁰ McKinley told how he pondered the question through many a sleepless night, finally falling on his knees to beseech "Almighty God for light and guidance," at which moment he was blessed with the revelation that

. . . there was nothing left for us to do but to take them all, and to educate the Filipinos, and uplift and civilize and Christianize them, and by God's grace do the very best we could by them, as our fellow-men for whom Christ also died. And then I went to bed, and went to sleep and slept soundly . . .¹¹

Unfortunately the Filipinos were not put to rest by this vision, and their response to McKinley's decision offers a lesson that is particularly salient today. The Filipino guerrillas led by Aguinaldo, having been engaged in a protracted war for national liberation against the Spanish colonial rulers, saw the American occupation as a continuation of that same struggle. Commanding overwhelming military power, the American generals were optimistic about crushing the insurgent forces. But even as they assured the McKinley Administration that they were winning, they requested more men and arms. After some hesitation, the requests were fulfilled because, as the President proclaimed, they were fighting for "the world's best civilization." A war that began as a minor distraction soon became a major intervention. With 20,000 men already under his command, General Otis assured McKinley that 30,000 would do the job. When anti-war critics in the United States began demanding withdrawal from the islands, McKinley denounced them as "the prophets of evil." General Otis requested 40,000 men.

American forces found their superior equipment ineffective against a hostile populace. No matter how many guerrillas were killed, Aguinaldo found replacements. We

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drove them from the villages only to have them return the moment we left. General Otis asked for 50,000 men; his view was that most Filipinos knew we were "liberators." He granted that many of them had been "intoxicated by the cry for independence and self-government," but he believed the terrorism of Aguinaldo's guerrillas had disillusioned them. Otis later requested 60,000 troops. He was now convinced that once he destroyed the Filipino main force, and secured the major population centers, the rest would be an easy matter of mopping up scattered armed bands. The main force did dissolve and became an even worse problem when operating as widely disbursed units. This was the beginning of the bloodiest phase of the war. General Lawton, Otis' commander, called for 100,000 men. McKinley denounced the war critics as "misguided."

Eventually the American military, now led by General Arthur MacArthur (the father of Douglas), adopted a new strategy based on the assumption that our enemy was the people, issuing a proclamation renouncing "precise observance of the laws of war." Among other things, MacArthur permitted his men to torture prisoners, civilians included. Unfriendly villages were burned down and surviving inhabitants put in concentration camps. Only a few years earlier, when the Spanish General Valeriano Weyler was doing the same in Cuba, Americans had called him "Butcher Weyler." But MacArthur was hailed as a hero for he did succeed in crushing the rebellion.¹² The Americans lost many times more men than in the war against Spain. The toll of Filipino victims including civilians was tragically high. Throughout the bloody struggle militant American patriots who a few years before had never heard of the Philippines,* steadfastly insisted that maintaining an American presence in the islands was essential for the

* McKinley himself admits that upon first receiving news of Dewey's victory he had to consult a map to determine the location of the islands.

sake of national honor and national prestige, for the future security of our nation, to protect the Philippines from falling under the domination of some foreign power, namely Germany, Japan, or Great Britain, and to bring the blessings of civilization and freedom to less fortunate peoples. It was Woodrow Wilson who, in retrospect, decided that the Spanish-American War "awakened us to our real relationship to the rest of mankind," that is, "our peculiar duty" to teach colonial peoples "order and self control" and to "impart to them, if it be possible . . . the drill and habit of law and obedience which we long ago got out of . . . English history."¹³

The American empire that burgeoned in the Pacific with the acquisition of Samoa, Hawaii, and the Philippines, subsequently depended less upon direct territorial acquisition than on commercial control and expansion. Business interests, hitherto somewhat indifferent to the opportunities in the Far East, now called for their share of the new markets. Avoiding all references to "Providence" and "our duty to mankind," Mark Hanna asserted with refreshing candor: "If it is commercialism to want the possession of a strategic point giving the American people an opportunity to maintain a foothold in the markets of that great Eastern country [China], for God's sake let us have commercialism."¹⁴ The Open Door Policy proclaimed in 1899 can be seen as a diplomatic incarnation of this new interest; its "equal commercial opportunity" clauses provided the wedge whereby late-coming American interests could enter into the "spheres of influence" carved out by other European nations.*

The Open Door Policy was motivated largely by the crassest materialistic concern: it made little impression upon the other powers and was abandoned in a few years

* No power was to discriminate within its sphere of influence against other nationals on matters of harbor dues, railroad charges, investments, duties and port accommodations.

by the United States itself, when discriminating trade conditions were promulgated in the Philippines and Puerto Rico. Yet it was received in this country as a resounding victory for American diplomacy, and a defeat for European avarice. Secretary Hay was hailed as a great statesman, and as Kennan notes, "A myth was established which was destined to flourish in American thinking for at least a half-century"; specifically that, in the face of European imperialism, the United States had altruistically and successfully re-established the "integrity of China." If one measures the actual effects of our China policy it becomes clear that the myth had little basis in fact and that the Chinese had slight cause for rejoicing over American interest in their destiny.

For most Americans, the new markets, the expansion of national power and glory, and the uninvited attempts to "uplift the backward peoples" were part of the same divine task. The ebullient Senator Beveridge appropriately weaved together the predominant themes of God, Gold and Glory:

We will not repudiate our duty . . . We will not renounce our part in the mission of our race, trustee under God, of the civilization of the world . . . We will move forward to our work . . . with gratitude . . . and thanksgiving to Almighty God that He has marked us as His Chosen People, henceforth to lead in the regeneration of the world . . .

The Pacific is our ocean . . . Where shall we turn for consumers of our surplus? . . . China is our natural customer. . . . The power that rules the Pacific . . . is the power that rules the world. And, with the Philippines, that power is and will forever be the American Republic.¹⁵

By the turn of the century, direct annexation of territories was no longer the most expedient way of enjoying the fruits of empire. As our experiences in Cuba and Latin America were to demonstrate, a great power could own much of the wealth, exploit the labor and resources, and

control the internal and international policies of neighboring lands without troubling itself with *de jure* possession. The first move toward establishing a preponderate interest in Latin America came with the promulgation in 1823 of the Monroe Doctrine, which declared an end to further European colonization and intervention in the New World, and pronounced all such interferences a threat to the peace and security of the United States. Americans of that day (and Americans ever since) treated the Doctrine as an exhilarating example of a young republic's magnanimous defense of weaker sister republics against Old World despotism. In fact the Continental powers, distrustful enough of one another, had little interest in direct political intervention, and any potential impulses in that direction were discouraged not by an American ukase, but by the presence of the powerful British fleet.¹⁶

More importantly the significance of the Monroe Doctrine for American interests is to be ascertained in what was left unsaid. Secretary of State Adams and President Monroe had been reluctant to issue a joint pronouncement with Great Britain less out of a feeling of national pride and more because of an unwillingness to accept the British proviso that neither the United States nor Great Britain would appropriate any part of Spanish America. With Texas, California, and Cuba still in Spanish hands such a pledge would have been a renunciation of all future American expansion.¹⁷ What the Monroe Doctrine implied, in effect, was that the United States would be the sole political and colonizing power in the New World and that the Western Hemisphere was to be an American sphere of influence.

Our subsequent hemispheric policies made it evident that we had no intention of practicing the restraint we preached to European powers. A year after the Doctrine's promulgation, Adams informed South American liberator Simón Bolívar that the Doctrine "must not be interpreted

as authorization for the weak to be insolent with the strong." It was Bolívar who as early as 1829 mournfully and prophetically forecast the next hundred years: "The United States appears to be destined by Providence to plague [Latin] America with misery in the name of liberty."¹⁸

Forceful intervention into Latin America began as far back as 1854 when an American warship bombarded a Nicaraguan port; three years later the operation was repeated and marines were landed (in retaliation for the Nicaraguan failure to pay heavy indemnities for the wounding of an American citizen). The following year Nicaragua was forced to sign a treaty granting the United States free passage and free intervention as we saw fit. This was followed by intervention in Honduras in 1860 and occupation of Samana Bay in Santo Domingo in 1871. The ensuing decades saw the growing dominance of United States commercial interests throughout Latin America along with increasing applications of military and political intervention. The forceful acquisition of the Panama Canal Zone by Theodore Roosevelt ("I took the Canal and let Congress debate") was but one of some sixty United States interventions in the first three decades of this century. Here is a far from exhaustive selection: United States troops in Cuba, 1898–1902; Cuba transformed into a quasi-protectorate under the Platt Amendment 1901,* troops in Cuba 1906–09, 1917–22; custom house control in the Dominican Republic in 1905 to protect investments and maintain debt payments, a financial supervision extending until 1941, and troops in 1913 and again in 1916–24; a military occupation to "restore order" in Haiti from

* Under the Platt Amendment Cuba could not permit a foreign (i.e., non-American) power to assume partial or complete control; agreed to sell or lease naval sites to the United States; allowed the United States the liberty to intervene for the purposes of preserving order and "maintaining Cuban independence."

1914 to 1941, with marines shooting over 2,000 Haitians who resisted "pacification"; military occupation of Nicaragua 1909-10, 1912-25, financial supervision from 1911 to 1924, large-scale military operations in 1927 (Coolidge's "private war") and occupation until 1933; the bombardment and capture of Vera Cruz with considerable loss of Mexican lives in 1914.¹⁹ In other areas, occasional wars, threats, one-sided treaties, and financial pressures made marine landings unnecessary.

It was the most morally impelled of our Presidents, Woodrow Wilson, who once said: "I am going to teach the South American republics to elect good men,"²⁰ and who then proceeded to intervene most frequently and quite brutally into Latin American affairs. "We are the friends of Constitutional government in America," Wilson announced before the Vera Cruz expedition; "we are more than its friends, we are its champions because in no other way can our neighbors . . . work out their own development in peace and liberty."²¹ With less lyricism, the much-decorated Major General Smedley Butler of the Marine Corps presented a different vision of good-neighborly assistance: "I helped make Mexico . . . safe for American oil interests in 1914. I helped make Haiti and Cuba a decent place for the National City Bank boys to collect revenue in . . . I helped purify Nicaragua for the international banking house of Brown Brothers in 1909-1912. I brought light to the Dominican Republic for American sugar interests in 1916. I helped make Honduras 'right' for American fruit companies in 1903."²² There were those who saw no contradiction between Wilson's professions and General Smedley's statement—including Woodrow Wilson himself. In their view, to bring the energetic blessings of capitalism to Latin America was as much a part of the nation's sacred mission as was disseminating Christianity and constitutionalism.

Whatever the various reasons for intervention (protect-

ing American nationals or investment interests, safeguarding the Canal Zone, staving off European intervention, revenging insults to the flag, restoring order, safeguarding or teaching democracy, etc.), each venture rested on the presumption that the United States had the moral right to police an area as huge as a hemisphere. In almost every case, intervention came over the strenuous protests of the native governments and went far beyond what international jurists considered the limits of interposition. But America had assigned itself—at the request of no other power in the hemisphere—the role of an “international police force” (to use Theodore Roosevelt’s description); and whereas Monroe had originally intervened not to stop revolutionary disorder but to prevent others from stopping it, the United States now became the self-appointed guardian against popular insurgencies.²³

The eve of World War I found American power predominant in the Western Hemisphere and substantial in the Pacific basin. The United States was not merely Mistress of the Caribbean, she had become something of a balance of power in the world. It was at this point in history that leadership was assumed by a man who embodied the American messianic tradition. Americans had always preferred to think of their actions as reflecting man’s nobler impulses, but it remained for Woodrow Wilson actually to step onto the world stage to proclaim the American mission to all mankind.

To Wilson, as to most Americans, the World War in its early years was something to be avoided. “America,” he noted, “did not at first see the full meaning of the war. It looked like a natural raking out of the pent-up jealousies and rivalries of the complicated politics of Europe.”²⁴ Our policy consisted of an insistent defense of what we considered to be our neutral rights, punctuated by intermittent pleas that the European powers end the unprincipled bloodletting. Few Americans are aware that our neutrality

was something less than pure; large-scale American assistance to the Allies, coupled with American acquiescence in the British blockade, drove the Germans to the desperate measure of unrestricted submarine warfare. In a war in which supplies and matériel were of the greatest necessity, the disadvantages either side might suffer, were they to honor Wilson's strictures, seemed greater than the risk of American intervention. In the confiscation of American property the Allies were more persistent violators than the Germans, but it was the Germans who were taking American lives at sea; while the British had their blockade, the Kaiser had the submarine as his only countermeasure.²⁵

The reasons for our entrance into the War are still debated, but what is significant is that once having decided upon hostilities, America changed its definition of the War itself. The very virtue which had kept us in splendid neutrality now required us, in the historically pathetic phrase, "to make the world safe for democracy," the first task in such a momentous endeavor being a total victory over "Prussian militarism." The Wilsonian vision, anticipating the transformation of Europe into so many mirror images of American Constitutionalism, called for a new world order free of secret treaties, punitive indemnities, minority oppressions and policed by a League of Nations. The transcendent fervor of Wilson's convictions seemed to free him from any sense of how such policies could be implemented in the face of the enormous complexities and chaos of the European situation.* At Versailles, according to John Maynard Keynes, who was a British official, Wilson evinced only the most ill-formed and vague notions of how a new European order might be built.²⁶ The story of his ensuing

* Thus, to take one example, it never seems to have occurred to Wilson that independence for certain national groups—e.g., Czechoslovakia, Poland and Yugoslavia—meant the creation of nations which contain within them still other minorities, e.g., the Sudeten Germans.

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defeat and disillusionment needs no retelling, but there is a dimension to the picture which should not be overlooked. It is common to characterize Woodrow Wilson as a prophet who eventually found himself without honor in his own country, a tragi-heroic figure possessed by a vision for all men which few took seriously. Actually, Wilson's illusions were something more than personal. His belief that America was, in its origins, institutions, history, and international conduct, God's chosen nation was something few Americans doubted. That his people preferred normalcy and isolation to the League of Nations does not mean they for one moment rejected the Wilsonian image of a uniquely virtuous America, but that they chose an expression of this virtue other than the one Wilson thrust forth; just as he had once changed the national expression from virtuous neutrality to righteous intervention, so now did they revert to noninvolvement. America's presumed moral superiority could be expressed either as a desire to abandon other nations to their follies, or a desire to rescue them. The American populace chose the first course, the Wilsonian interventionists the second.²⁷ But all operated under the same presumption that those aspirations and claims put forth by other nations which conflicted with America's picture of the world were not really worthy of patient tolerance and respectful recognition.

Such was the nature of America's encounter with the world. Military intervention halfway across the world in Manila or Château-Thierry one day, then splendid isolation the next; repugnance for the "meaningless squabbles" of other nations, followed by a holy crusade against the bloodthirsty Hun, followed again by a return to normalcy; from absolute neutrality, to absolute war, to absolute withdrawal. But whatever course chosen, it was always the path of the righteous.

There is something left unsaid concerning the isolationist-interventionist struggle. If, after World War I, the

popular attitude strongly favored withdrawal from international involvement, can the same really be said of America's political and industrial leadership, including those who vanquished Wilson's League? If isolationism is defined as opposition to any involvement in international events, then the United States was never really isolationist. The anti-Wilsonians opposed the League's collective security system as an arrangement which placed international constraints and obligations upon American sovereign action. America's task, as far as Lodge, Hughes, and Hoover were concerned, was to extend its own economic empire throughout the world, and the League was neither necessary nor desirable for that purpose.* "Let us make it our policy," Lodge advised, "that what we shall do and when we shall do it shall be determined by us."²⁸ At no time did the "isolationists" seriously counsel an ostrich-like withdrawal from world involvement, nor were they any more indifferent than Wilson to the revolutionary upheavals that might threaten overseas expansion.

If the Lodge and Wilson factions were divided on methods (i.e., the League), they were in accord on the diagnosis: the liberal capitalist world was facing a broad revolutionary challenge which had to be met. From the beginning Wilson and most of his opponents shared a phobia of Bolshevism. That far-off revolutionaries in Petrograd and Moscow presented no immediate threat to American overseas investments was less important than that they challenged the "natural order" of things. "The Bolsheviks," Secretary Lansing told a concurring Wilson, "are wanting in international virtue." They sought "to make the ignorant and incapable mass of humanity dominate the earth"

* A smaller faction led by men like Senator Borah did argue from an anti-imperialist premise. Being against both political and economic expansion, they aligned themselves with the Lodge group in the League debate. In actual ideology and world view Borah had less in common with Lodge, Hoover, *et al.* than the latter had with Wilson.

and "to overthrow all existing governments and establish on the ruins a despotism of the proletariat in every country." Their appeal was to "a class which does not have property but hopes to obtain a share by process of government rather than by individual enterprise. This is of course a direct threat at existing social order in all countries." The danger was that it "may well appeal to the average man, who will not perceive the fundamental errors." The goal was to see that "social order and governmental stability are . . . maintained."²⁹

The Bolshevik leaders, caught between German invaders in the west and an expansionist Japan in the east, made repeated overtures for friendly relations with the United States, but Wilson remained adamant in ideology and action. "I don't think you need fear of any consequences of our dealing with the Bolsheviki," he wrote a US Senator in 1918, "because we do not intend to deal with them."³⁰ Nightmarish imaginings of what the Bolsheviks might someday do to the world were soon treated as descriptions of what they were actually doing, thereby providing the justification for American and Allied military intervention in the Soviet Union—an intervention which, Williams estimates, prolonged and intensified the Civil War, seriously damaged the Russian economy, and brought a loss in human and material costs beyond anything caused by the Revolution itself.

Forgetting his dedication to the principle of self-determination, Wilson told the British leaders that he supported intervention even "against the wishes of the Russian people knowing it was eventually for their good . . ."³¹ Thus did he initiate the strategy of permanent counterrevolution and help lay the ideological and policy foundations for the cold war to come.

While a few influential Americans opposed intervention on the belief that the Bolsheviks were willing to do business with the United States and were able to retain

power in their own country, the great bulk of our political leaders closed ranks behind Wilson. "Communist Russia," Herbert Hoover said, speaking also for the President, "was a specter which wandered into the Versailles Peace Conference almost daily." Faced with a communist revolution in Hungary, Wilson and Hoover—despite their differences over the League—were able to work effectively together, manipulating food supplies and sending military aid to counterrevolutionaries.

What has been said of Pope Pius XII, that he displayed only tepid opposition to Nazism because of his preoccupation with Bolshevism and that he even considered the Germans a potential bulwark against Soviet Russia, might certainly be said of many Western policymakers during and after World War I. It was Secretary Lansing who noted that Absolutism and Bolshevism were the two great threats in the modern world, but Bolshevism was "the greatest evil since it is destructive of law and order."³² The ambiguities of British and French policy in the Spanish Civil War, the Western vacillations toward Hitler's prewar expansionist demands, the unwillingness of Western leaders to join the Soviets in any pact against Nazi Germany, and the United States's refusal to sign a nonaggression pact with the USSR and China against the Japanese militarists—all suggest that the Western capitalist leaders were ultimately more concerned with the Bolshevik spectre than with the fascist threat. Mussolini's advent to power was hailed in the American press in the 1920s as a healthy stabilizing antidote to Italy's problems,³³ and Hitler's rise was not viewed as any great danger to world peace. The American preoccupation was with the communist international conspiracy.*

The American reaction to Axis aggression was mixed.

* Specifically the Red Scare of 1919–20, the Palmer raids and the emergence of popular and congressional anti-communist vigilantism. See Chapter Four.

Some of those in circles close to Roosevelt saw Japan and Germany as potential dangers to American trade routes, overseas markets and raw material areas. In 1940, as in 1914, large segments of the American populace defined the conflict as "none of our affair." Some corporate and political leaders, fearing the revolutionary upheavals that come in the aftermath of war, believed that America should concentrate on building an impregnable economic empire in the Western Hemisphere while allowing the belligerents to exhaust themselves.³⁴ "The role of this great Republic," asserted Senator Harry Truman in 1939, "is to save civilization; we must keep out of the war." However, once Pearl Harbor resolved the question, we committed ourselves to a vision of victory which promised a total solution to the problems of war and peace. The United States emerged from World War II determined not to make "the same mistakes" again, dedicated to some untested idea of collective security and global interventionism, and convinced that "Destiny has thrust upon a reluctant nation" the burdens of world leadership. The threat this time was said to be Soviet Communism, and the stakes were the nation and all of civilization itself. If Wilsonian globalism lost the battle of the League, it had won the war of American minds in the generation after Munich.

NOTES

1. Albert K. Weinberg, *Manifest Destiny* (Chicago: Quadrangle Books, 1963), pp. 39-40.
2. R. W. Van Alstyne, *The Rising American Empire* (Chicago: Quadrangle Books, 1965), p. 90.
3. Weinberg, *op. cit.*, p. 49.
4. Henry Steele Commager, "A Historian Looks at Our Political Morality," *Saturday Review*, 10 July 1965, p. 17.
5. Van Alstyne, *op. cit.*, p. 142.
6. Weinberg, *op. cit.*, pp. 170-180.
7. Carl Schurz, "Manifest Destiny," quoted in Weinberg, *op. cit.*, p. 180.

8. George F. Kennan, *American Diplomacy 1900-1950* (New York: New American Library, 1952), p. 15.
9. Quoted in Thomas A. Bailey, *A Diplomatic History of the American People* (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1947), p. 509.
10. Bailey, *op. cit.*, p. 517.
11. This well-known and remarkable passage is quoted at greater length in Bailey, *op. cit.*, p. 520.
12. This account of the Filipino-American war is heavily indebted to Harold Lavine, "1898 and All That," *New York Times*, 12 January 1968.
13. Quoted in Van Alstyne, *op. cit.*, p. 197.
14. Quoted in Bailey, *op. cit.*, p. 517.
15. Quoted in Van Alstyne, *op. cit.*, p. 187.
16. Cf. Dexter Perkins, *The Monroe Doctrine, 1823-1826* (Cambridge: 1927).
17. Bailey, *op. cit.*, p. 183.
18. Quoted in John Gerassi, *The Great Fear in Latin America*, rev. ed. (New York: 1963), pp. 226-227.
19. Bailey, *op. cit.*, *passim*; also, Gerassi, *op. cit.*, Chapter 17, *passim*.
20. Quoted in E. Stillman and W. Pfaff, *Power and Impotence* (New York: 1966), p. 27.
21. Quoted in Weinberg, *op. cit.*, p.
22. Gerassi, *op. cit.*, p. 231.
23. Cf. Weinberg, *op. cit.*, pp. 414-416.
24. Speech of July 4, 1919, quoted in Kennan, *op. cit.*, p. 64.
25. See Bailey, *op. cit.*, pp. 641-646, and Kennan, *op. cit.*, pp. 64-65.
26. Stillman and Pfaff, *op. cit.*, p. 38.
27. See Hans J. Morgenthau, "Globalism: The Moral Crusade," *The New Republic* 3 July 1965.
28. Quoted in William Appleman Williams, *The Tragedy of American Diplomacy* (Cleveland: 1959), p. 87.
29. See William Appleman Williams, "American Intervention in Russia: 1917-1920," in David Horowitz, ed., *Containment and Revolution* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1967), *passim*.
30. *Ibid.*, p. 61.
31. *Ibid.*, p. 57.
32. *Ibid.*, p. 61.
33. Fred Israel, "Mussolini's First Year in Office as Reflected in the New York Press" (M.A. thesis, Columbia University, 1955).
34. Williams, *The Tragedy of American Diplomacy*, p. 144.

The Holy Crusade: Some Myths of Origin

For the American a war is not a war unless it is a crusade.

SAMUEL P. HUNTINGTON

The preceding chapter suggests that a nation which believes the mythology of its past at such expense to historical truth will not be inclined to free itself from self-righteous illusions about its more recent actions—especially since today's events act upon us with an urgency that makes dispassionate assessment all the more difficult. Would, for instance, the reader who is prepared to admit that long ago we were unfair and aggressive toward Indians, Spaniards, Mexicans, Filipinos, Nicaraguans, etc., be

as ready to concede that more recently we have been self-deluding, unfair, and aggressive in our dealings with Russians, Cubans, and Chinese? Nowhere is America's predilection to see virtue in its actions more evident than in the kind of thinking that brought us to the cold war. Let us examine the cold-war mentality, proposition by proposition.

"THEY STARTED IT"

To most Americans, the Soviet Union was guilty of perpetrating the cold war. The sociologist Daniel Bell concluded: "I supported containment, as a policy of the American government, in the late 1940s and the 1950s . . . because the Soviet Union was aggressively expansionist." Mose Harvey, a Senior Member of the Policy Planning Council of the United States State Department, and a "Soviet specialist," described the origins of the holy crusade in these words: "The Soviets had chosen to, as it were, declare war on us—*much to our surprise*. We had little choice but to concentrate on the various threats they thrustured before us." ¹

The presumption is that the United States was innocent of any hostile predisposition toward Russia. Were that true, it would have represented a most dramatic reversal of a long-standing anti-Soviet stance. Anti-communist propaganda was muffled during the wartime alliance and in many instances replaced by praise for the heroism and sacrifices of the Russian people. But for most Americans, and certainly for American leaders, the anti-Soviet attitude that emerged after the war was a resumption of views which had been conventional before 1941. Even before the end of hostilities, as opinion studies showed, large segments of the American public remained "dubious about the prospects of building the peace together with Russia." ² Well before America's entry into the war, the ambivalent atti-

tude of many American leaders was expressed by Senator Harry Truman: "If we see that Germany is winning the war we ought to help Russia and if Russia is winning we ought to help Germany, and in that way let them kill as many as possible, although I don't want to see Hitler victorious under any circumstances."³ Senator Robert A. Taft was more decisive: "The victory of Communism would be far more dangerous to the United States than a victory of Fascism."⁴

It was Harry Truman who succeeded to the Presidency before the war's end, and no reading of his opinions and actions would uphold the view that the United States was motivated by a sincere intention to extend friendly cooperation, only to be taken by surprise by Russian aggressiveness. If Truman brought anything to the White House it was an urgency shared by Harriman, Vandenberg, Byrnes, and others "to get tough" with the Kremlin. "Unless Russia is faced with an iron fist and strong language, another war is in the making," he concluded as early as 1945. Soon after taking office, he asserted to one visitor "that the Russians would soon be put in their places" and that the United States would then "take the lead in running the world in the way that the world ought to be run . . ." ⁵ On the eve of the first atomic test—before Potsdam and long before the alleged "Soviet betrayals"—Truman's first thoughts were of the Russians, not the Japanese: "If it explodes, as I think it will, I'll certainly have a hammer on those boys." His Secretary of State, James Byrnes, told one scientist that the bomb was needed to "make Russia more manageable in Europe."⁶ In the Oppenheimer hearings of 1954 the head of the Manhattan Project, General Groves, testified: ". . . There was never—from about two weeks from the time I took charge of the project—any illusion on my part but that Russia was the enemy and that the project was conducted on that basis . . . Of course, that was reported to the President."⁷ As Bert Cochran notes, such are

the contingencies of international politics that a monster bomb, developed by European refugees to defeat Hitler, was dropped instead on two Japanese cities, and was, even before it was tested, seriously considered as a weapon to brandish against our Russian ally.

Long before the wartime alliance had begun to disintegrate, the Truman entourage was convinced that amicable postwar dealings with the Soviet Union were neither possible nor desirable, and that compromise—which is the essence of diplomacy—was tantamount to self-defeat or sellout. Senator Vandenberg, considered one of the architects of our bi-partisan cold-war policy, rejoiced over President Truman's early bluster: "This is the best news in months. FDR's appeasement of Russia is over." He and Harriman frequently stressed the necessity to avoid any compromise with the Soviets. Truman himself, again in 1945, wrote: "I do not think we should play compromise any longer."⁸

It became clear, as early as 1945-46, that the only way the two nations could arrive at a settlement of issues was for the Soviets to capitulate to every American demand concerning spheres of influence, Poland, German reparations, etc. Anything short of this would necessitate some kind of compromise, and compromise was now ruled out as wrong policy. It was this kind of mentality that moved Walter Lippmann to observe: "The history of diplomacy is the history of relations among rival powers which did not enjoy political intimacy and did not respond to appeals to common purposes. Nevertheless, there have been settlements . . . [T]o think that rival and unfriendly powers cannot be brought to a settlement is to forget what diplomacy is about."⁹

Truman and his advisors were proudly on record as being antagonistic to the Soviet Union well *before* those postwar events which allegedly precipitated the cold war. Here, the cold-war ideologue might argue: if, in fact, the

Truman Administration anticipated and prepared for a struggle with the USSR long before the actual disruption of the wartime alliance, then that Administration should be congratulated for its foresight because, indeed, such a conflict did evolve. This view sees Truman's actions and attitudes as merely anticipating realities that were destined to emerge; it assumes that American diplomacy had no share in creating these very realities. What is overlooked is the probability that Truman's own belligerent, uncompromising, and ungracious approach was a major factor in actualizing the struggle and in preventing the kind of accommodation between the United States and the Soviet Union that is just beginning to emerge today.*

"WE PREPARED FOR PEACE, THEY PREPARED FOR WAR"

It is widely accepted by most writers that the early postwar era found the United States engaged in full-scale demobilization while, in contrast, the Soviets retained their massive armed forces. "There was, in fact, a period of such rapid withdrawal of American forces abroad," claim Arora and Lasswell, "that communist forces were given a new lease on life in many countries."¹⁰ It is not clear where the rapid United States withdrawal took place: certainly not from West Germany, France, Italy or Japan. It is true that Western forces were not kept anywhere at wartime strength, but the same holds for the Red Army. The USSR demobilized three-fourths of its armed forces, reducing them to 25 percent of the 1945 figure compared to the United States reduction to 13 percent. Keeping in mind that the Soviets had a long and potentially hostile frontier, while the United States had atomic bombs and no hostile frontier, the 1948 Soviet forces, numbering 2.9

* Herz, *Beginnings of the Cold War*, reproduces the text of the Hopkins-Stalin talks of 1945 in which Stalin observes that Truman's advent to power and the new belligerency of American policy caused "a certain alarm" in the Kremlin.

million, were not excessive to the American 1.5 million.

Furthermore, American reductions were counterbalanced by continued production of A-bombs and long-range B-29s, planned production of B-36s, a \$13 billion allocation for the War and Navy departments and the establishment of overseas air bases—all this in 1946, the year of “demobilization.”¹¹ (Within three years there were 400 American long-range bomber bases ringing the Soviet perimeter.) American air carrier fleets controlled the seas and the sky above, whereas the Soviets had a rather meager navy and no strategic long-range air force. It was this situation in 1946 that caused Henry Wallace to observe:

These facts rather make it appear either (1) that we are preparing ourselves to win the war which we regard as inevitable or (2) that we are trying to build up a predominance of force to intimidate the rest of mankind. How would it look to us if Russia had the atomic bomb and we did not, if Russia had 10,000 mile bombers and air bases within 1,000 miles of our coastlines, and we did not. . . ?¹²

Not long after Wallace publicly raised these questions, Truman asked for his resignation.* More in keeping with the President's tastes were the views enunciated by a Texas Congressman, Lyndon Johnson (on behalf of American defense and the rising Texas aircraft industry): “No matter what else we have of offensive or defensive weapons, with-

* The official propensity was to see Red aggression in every Russian move. Witness the reaction to Stalin's promulgation of a new five-year plan. A half-year after the war's end, in early 1946, when Stalin announced plans for industrial rehabilitation and expansion, garnishing his remarks with standard boasts of socialist superiority, Secretary of the Navy Forrestal was certain the action proved “that there was no way in which democracy and communism could live together.” While William Bullitt, in turn, saw the USSR's plan to raise her annual steel production to sixty million tons as confirmation of her aggressive intent.

See Cochran, *The War System*, p. 214.

out superior air power America is a bound and throttled giant, impotent and easy prey to any yellow dwarf with a pocket knife." 13

One might argue that America, being essentially an air-sea power in contrast to Soviet land power, had to maintain elaborate striking forces as a means of guarding against a Russian sweep across Western Europe. (This contention at least discards the myth about America's "total post-war disarmament.") What is missing, however, is any evidence that Stalin had entertained such plans or that the Soviets were capable and willing, to embark once more upon full-scale war. By conservative estimates the Russians had lost between fifteen and twenty million citizens in World War II; fifteen large cities either completely or substantially destroyed; six million buildings obliterated, depriving twenty-five million people of shelter; 31,850 industrial enterprises, 65,000 kilometers of railway, 56,000 miles of main highway, 90,000 bridges, 10,000 power stations, 3,000 oil wells, and 127,000 schools, colleges, and libraries destroyed; 98,000 collective farms sacked and hundreds of millions of livestock slaughtered—the list could be extended.¹⁴ In contrast the United States had within its own boundaries three-fourths of the world's invested capital and two-thirds of its industrial capacity. That the exhausted, mutilated, nearly mortally wounded Soviet Union of 1946–47, with a military force that had been reduced by 75 percent, and a population that longed passionately for peace after having suffered untold death and destruction, was about to embark upon aggressive war across Europe should seem highly questionable even to the nonexpert.

"THE RUSSIANS WERE UNCOMPROMISING, DECEITFUL, TREACHEROUS, ETC. . . ."

For over two decades it has been the American interpretation that Russian postwar diplomacy consisted prin-

cipally of betrayal and bad faith. Looking back from the year 1962, Adlai Stevenson could tell the UN Security Council: "The record is clear; treaties, agreements, pledges and the morals of international relations were never an obstacle to the Soviet Union under Stalin."¹⁵ That may or may not be true. There is no gainsaying that Stalin played power politics at the "Big Three" conferences—as did Churchill and Roosevelt. The agreements reached by the three leaders were based on a mutual recognition of military actualities and spheres of influence rather than on any self-sacrificing dedication to building a new world.* Concessions were made on both sides—itsself an observation that may come as a surprise to those American readers who believed we were "sold down the river" at Yalta.† Indeed, since most of the agreements came in the areas occupied by Soviet forces, one might concur with Secretary of State Stettinius (who accompanied Roosevelt to Yalta) that "the Soviet Union made more concessions to the [West] than were made to the Soviet Union," and that "as a result of the military situation, it was not a question of what Great Britain and the United States would permit Russia to do in Poland, but what the two countries could persuade the Soviet Union to accept."¹⁶

The image of Stalin as a deceitful, uncompromising revolutionary hatching his plot for world domination at Teheran and Yalta seems less plausible than the one of Stalin as the cautious nationalistic leader, aware of the extent—but also of the limitations—of his own power, sometimes able to press for an advantage yet capable of making

* Churchill and Stalin formalized the spheres-of-influence agreement as follows: Russia was to have predominant influence in Rumania, Bulgaria and Hungary; the British were to predominate in Greece; and influence in Yugoslavia was to be equally shared.

† Years later, Republican critics were to argue it both ways: (1) that the Stalin-Roosevelt agreements at Yalta gave the Russians legal authority for all their actions, (2) that the Russians broke all their Yalta agreements and acted illegally.

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concessions, frequently distrustful of Western intentions* yet continually hopeful of cooperative action, sometimes ambiguous yet most often keeping his word. His goal was the securing of agreements that would protect immediate Soviet interests. His method was not ideological challenge but traditional diplomacy.

Nor, in any case, were his diplomatic successes very impressive. He failed to obtain oil rights in northern Iran while American oil companies moved back into that country in full force. At the insistence of the Western powers, Stalin reluctantly accepted the inclusion of France in the Control Commission for Germany. At their insistence, he finally agreed at Yalta to enter the war against Japan in three months—which he did, three months to the day, while at the same time trading American predominance in China and Japan for temporary economic and strategic rights in Manchuria. The Russians, not without first stripping the factories, voluntarily withdrew from Manchuria in full obedience to treaty agreements. It would have been impossible for any power to have dislodged them and in fact they easily could have used the excuse that withdrawal would have transformed Manchuria into a battleground for the Chinese civil war, causing the Russian railway to suffer—as indeed happened.

Aware that the USSR would be a minority in the United Nations, and mindful of the way the League of Nations had pilloried Russia during the Russo-Finnish war of 1939 (“the same League that had never lifted a

* This distrust was not always unfounded. To cite one early instance: it has been suggested by Cornelius Ryan that Moscow's suspicions were so aroused by Allen Dulles' secret negotiations with Nazi generals in Switzerland (and the United States' blatant denial that such separate negotiations were taking place) that Stalin concluded other Western statements of that time were also lies.

See Cornelius Ryan, *The Last Battle* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1966); see also Gar Alperowitz's thoughtful review in *The New York Review of Books*, 23 March 1967.

finger against Hitler and never done anything against any act of aggression”), Stalin held out for a strong veto system and somewhat outlandishly requested sixteen votes in the UN (one for each of the Soviet republics).¹⁷ Instead of sixteen, he settled for three,* and then, in the spirit of *quid pro quo*, he negated his gain by agreeing that the United States should also have three votes in the UN, a right of which the US never availed itself.†

The image, given wide circulation in the American press, of an uncooperative, surly Soviet delegation bent on stalling or wrecking postwar conferences is not an accurate representation of Soviet behavior in the early days of negotiation. At the founding session of the United Nations in San Francisco, for instance, the atmosphere was quite amicable until a serious clash developed between the United States and the USSR over the admission of Argentina. At Yalta, Roosevelt had twice promised Stalin that Argentina, the refuge of the fascist movement in the Western Hemisphere, would not be supported by the United States for admission into the UN. But at San Francisco, the Truman-Vandenberg policymakers were of a different mind. Armed with sufficient Latin American votes to defeat Molotov's request to postpone the question (“. . . for a few days for further study. . . . This is the only request made by the Soviet delegation”) the United States succeeded in pushing through the admission of Argentina.‡ But what-

* The Ukrainian and Byelorussian republics were recognized as UN members with their own votes.

† The United States also insisted upon a veto system as a means of preserving its sovereignty, and ~~probably would not have joined the UN under any other conditions.~~

‡ Secretary of State Cordell Hull felt that the vote had done “irreparable harm” and “if the American delegation were not careful we should get Russia into such a state of mind that she might decide that the United Nations organization was not going to furnish adequate security to her in the future.”

See Cordell Hull, *Memoirs*, vol. 2 (New York: Macmillan Co).

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ever the discords at San Francisco, James Reston was able to write at that time: "The Conference record shows, the delegates note, ten concessions by Russia which have contributed greatly to the liberalizing of the Dumbarton Oaks proposals." And the conservative Arthur Krock could write that the USSR had conducted herself "as a great power and a generally cooperative one on the task at hand."¹⁸

Russian intransigence and hostility, it has been commonly argued, defeated all efforts at peacetime international control of atomic energy. The famous Baruch Plan, proposed by the United States in 1946, was allegedly just such an effort. It was hailed by Americans as a solution designed to forestall the proliferation of atomic weapons by harnessing all atomic industry for the benefit of mankind. Sidney Hook describes it as an "offer by the United States to surrender its monopoly of atomic bombs to an international authority . . ."¹⁹

A closer inspection of the Baruch proposals leaves us with a quite different picture: an international atomic commission (with the United States controlling a majority vote) was to have absolute ownership over all atomic research, raw materials, and industries throughout the world. This would necessitate unlimited surveys of Russian soil and industry, and the surrender of sovereign control of all Soviet atomic development to the international authority. Meanwhile the United States would go on manufacturing atomic bombs until satisfied, at some unspecified time, that total control had been established and all other conceivable risks to her security had been removed; we then would convert our existing stock to peaceful uses "subject, of course, to our constitutional processes," and share United States information and technology with the international authority. It was a simple matter of giving the Americans all the guarantees and the Russians all the risks. However,

1948), p.1722; see also the account in Horowitz, *op. cit.*, pp. 38-40, and Fleming, *op. cit.*, pp. 281-288.

there was one danger: what if Moscow, in a fit of masochism, accepted the proposal? It was freely predicted that the Senate then would refuse to ratify the agreement; neither the Congress nor the military were interested in international controls, no matter how loopholed and topsided.* 20

"WE HAD TO STOP SOVIET-INSPIRED REVOLUTION"

The accusation that the Soviet Union started the cold war in 1945-46 by fermenting revolutionary agitation throughout Europe, seems at odds with the strikingly restrained course chosen by Moscow. Stalin generally took an unenthusiastic view of revolutionary prospects in Western Europe. If anything he seemed more interested in stabilizing his relations with the Western powers, securing German reparations and American aid, establishing a buffer zone of friendly states in Eastern Europe, and keeping Germany prostrate. Taking pains not to antagonize his allies, he urged the Italian Communists to make peace with the House of Savoy, and he himself, in 1944, went so far as to recognize the Italian government of Marshal Badoglio, much to the dismay of the Italian left. He prevailed upon the French and Italian Communists, the strongest parties in their respective nations, to disarm their partisan and worker cadres, and give full support to, and accept minor positions in, the postwar bourgeois governments,†

* In his memoirs, Truman reprints a letter from Baruch showing that the elder statesman himself had second thoughts about the international involvement called for in his Plan.

† In 1946, Joseph Alsop was struck by the support communists gave to reconstruction in France: "The key to the success of this Monnet plan . . . is the enthusiastic collaboration of the French Communist Party. The communists control the . . . great French confederation of labor unions. Communist leadership has been responsible for such surprising steps as acceptance by the key French unions of a kind of modified piecework system . . . Reconstruction

positions "from which they could not hope to seize power either now or later and from which they were eventually to be ousted, almost without effort by the other parties." ²¹

Elsewhere, Stalin's actions showed the same conservatism. In keeping with the Stalin-Churchill bargain of making Yugoslavia a "fifty-fifty" Anglo-Soviet sphere of influence, he strenuously demanded of Tito that he support the Yugoslavian monarchy, and ordered him to bring King Peter's exiled government to Belgrade. Tito refused to comply. Similarly, Stalin urged Mao Tse-tung to accept a subordinate position in the Chiang Kai-shek government. At Potsdam he went so far as to disavow the Chinese Communists, asserting that the Kuomintang was the only political force capable of ruling China. But unlike the French and Italian Communists, and more like Tito, Mao flatly refused, declaring that ultimately he would win all of China.²² These instances lend little support to the contention that Stalin precipitated the cold war by moving "inexorably along the prescribed path" in a direct revolutionary challenge to the West.

"THE RUSSIANS SEIZED CONTROL OF EASTERN EUROPE"

This proposition has the merit of bringing us closer to the real issues that led to the cold war. In 1945 the Truman Administration wanted the Russians to relinquish the control and influence the Red Army had won in the war against Hitler. Years later the Republicans, led by John Foster Dulles, were to demand a "roll-back" in Eastern Europe. "Few now realize how unoriginal the demand was," Gar Alperovitz noted, "for a 'roll-back' effort—without its latter day label—was, in fact, at the center of Harry Truman's first postwar policy. The President, we now know, made this effort in a spurt of confi-

comes first, is the Party line." (New York *Herald Tribune*, 12, July 1946, cited in Lens, *op. cit.*)

dence derived from the new atomic bomb.”²³ In refusing to accede to American demands, the Soviets cannot be accused of “breaking their agreements.” “The general sense of the Yalta accords—which were in any case quite vague—was to assign to the Soviet Union a controlling influence in Eastern Europe.”²⁴ To Stalin this meant nothing less than Eastern European governments that were not hostile to Soviet Russia. Enjoying a nuclear monopoly, American policymakers tried to take back what they had conceded at Yalta.

The significant fact is that *it was not the “Soviet challenge” to the Western position but the Western challenge to the Soviet position in Europe that led to the first serious conflicts.* That the Soviet Union simply would not “come to terms” in the Balkans, by acquiescing to American demands in a manner prescribed by Truman was taken as evidence of Russian antagonism. Truman’s decision to intervene and engage American prestige in Eastern Europe failed in any material way to reduce Soviet hegemony and extend American influence in that region. If anything it may well have had the effect of hardening Soviet policies. For it is not at all certain that in 1945–46 Stalin intended to establish absolute communist control in the Eastern nations. As Deutscher observes:

Communist propagandists there spoke a nationalist and even clerical language. King Michael of Rumania was left on his throne; and he was even awarded one of the highest Russian military orders for his part in the *coup* in consequence of which Rumania had broken away from Germany. The Soviet generals and the local Communist leaders did honor to the Greek Orthodox clergy in the Balkan countries. In Poland they courted the Roman Catholic clergy. There was no talk yet of socialization of industry. Only overdue land reforms were initiated.²⁵

In Hungary, and in the Russian zone of Austria in 1945, the Communists were swamped in Soviet-sponsored

free elections. In the latter country, the Soviets eventually signed a peace treaty, withdrew their troops, and a Western-style democratic government pledged to neutrality emerged for the entire country.* In Czechoslovakia, the Red Army pulled out in late 1945, and a democratic government was instituted acceptable to both Russia and the United States.

If the Russians were laying plans for an iron-clad communist control of Eastern Europe, they most certainly were making it difficult for themselves by sponsoring free elections, accepting coalition and non-communist regimes, and withdrawing Russian military forces. In fact, it seems the Soviets were prepared to countenance democratic and even non-socialist regimes along their borders as long as such governments did not oppose the Kremlin on matters of foreign policy and defense. Finland was the model for such border states, as was Czechoslovakia, before the coup of 1948.† Shulman sums it up this way:

It is by no means evident that the Soviet Union had begun its process of consolidation in Eastern Europe with a clear design in mind for proceeding toward the creation of what came to be called "Peoples' Democracies." A large degree of improvisation seems to have been involved, which represented not so much the opening of a new revolutionary advance in an immediate sense, but the securing of what were regarded as the fruits of victory, and the bulwarking of its security.²⁶

* In another ex-Nazi satellite with weak democratic traditions, Bulgaria, "the 1945 elections were complicated by competition for Great Power support among the various internal factions. Certainly the results were not perfect, but most Western observers (except the State Department) felt they should have been accepted." (Gar Alperowitz, *The New York Review of Books*, 23 March 1967; see also Herz, *op. cit.*)

† The democratic Czech government of pre-1948 days voted *with* the Soviet Union on most UN issues.

The issue which most rankled the Americans and was to become the focus of anti-communist slogans about "Soviet betrayal" was that of "free elections" and "non-interference" in Poland. Stalin refused to accept the Western-sponsored anti-Russian Polish exile group in London, described by Deutscher as "a motley coalition of half-Conservative peasants, moderate Socialists, and of people who could not by any criterion, 'Eastern' or 'Western,' be labelled democrats."²⁷ Determined that Poland, which had twice been the corridor for a German invasion into Russia, should have a pro-Soviet government, and convinced that the West had agreed to his having a free hand in that area, Stalin installed his own Lublin group,* an act that was eventually followed by the suppression of political opposition and the rigged elections of 1947.

Whatever the legitimacy of the Soviet interest in Poland, there is no moral justification for the arrests, executions and other acts of political tyranny perpetrated in that land. But the West's insistence that Stalin introduce democracy, Western-style, into Poland, while laudatory in itself, was accompanied by no compelling urge to practice the same in its own spheres of influence. Instead, the United States and Great Britain supported dictatorships in Greece, Turkey, Iraq, Egypt, and Kuomintang China. In Greece, British troops re-established a proto-fascist monarchist regime, committing more interventionist acts of violence, murder and political suppression than the communists were finding necessary to commit in Poland.†

* Stalin's great fear seemed to be—as he told Harry Hopkins in 1945—a British-sponsored Polish government that would be hostile to the USSR and would become part of a Western *cordon sanitaire* designed to isolate the Soviet Union. He had no intention of allowing Russophobic conservative Poles back into power.

† The 1945 British-Greek right-wing terror included incarceration of 13,000 citizens without trial or habeas corpus, the wholesale takeover of administrative and police functions by royalists and ex-Nazi

"Noninterference in the internal affairs of other nations" became the shibboleth that challenged Soviet predominance in Warsaw, yet throughout the War every power had interfered in the domestic affairs of every country in which it had established a military presence.* The idea of joint "Big-Three" consultations in all occupied zones was never honored in practice. As one writer notes:

In fact, East and West kept each other at arm's length. When the Anglo-American forces conquered Italy, they ran things to suit themselves and kept Russia out of their counsels. When Russia overran Rumania and Hungary, she followed the identical procedure. Stalin, whose thinking was heavily weighted with the Old World power notions and *condottieri* predilections, assumed this was the tacit agreement. It seemed to him a piece of churlishness and bad faith for the Westerners to make a moral issue of Poland after he had scrupulously carried out his part of the bargain in turning over Greece to Britain, in telling the communists of Yugoslavia and China to accept subordinate positions in coalition governments, and in giving his allies a free hand in France, Italy and Belgium.²⁸

The Soviet Union, in the early postwar days, was a nation greatly concerned with its own industrial reconstruc-

collaborators, the purging of elected labor union leaders by the government, the destruction of forty-eight liberal and leftist printing presses, the political murder of 258 opponents of the Voulgaris regime. The New York *Herald Tribune* of September 17, 1946, reported "a pitiless war on scores of thousands of women and children in a desperate effort to halt a growing rebellion and wipe out not only communists but all democratic, liberal and republican elements." Cited in Lens, *op. cit.*, p. 60; see also Horowitz, *op. cit.*, pp. 65-68.

* The British and Russians had jointly interfered in overthrowing the pro-German government in Persia. The British intervened in Egypt and Iraq, the Russians in most of the Eastern European countries. The Americans had intervened in domestic political battles in China, France and Italy.

tion, determined to be recognized and treated as a great power, and still hopeful of economic aid, trade, and stabilized relations with her former allies. In 1945, *Izvestia* emphasized the necessity of resolving issues by negotiation while achieving economic cooperation with the West.²⁹ Stalin's view of the future was decidedly optimistic: If given the peaceful opportunity to develop inside Russia, communism would appeal to more and more countries throughout the world, especially in the underdeveloped areas. As late as 1952 in a major policy statement entitled *Economic Problems of Socialism*, Stalin castigated those within his party who anticipated war with the West. While he himself was, by that time, convinced that the capitalist powers posed a great danger to Soviet security, he believed that as long as Moscow could maintain its strength, the West would be discouraged from attacking. Furthermore, he predicted that the capitalist countries, unable to solve the immense irrationalities of their socio-economic systems, faced with chronic overproduction, unemployment, and competition for markets—made all the more intensive by the loss of colonial possessions—would eventually come into severe conflict with one another. With all apparent seriousness, Stalin predicted that the next major war would involve capitalist nation against capitalist nation in classic competition for markets. The Kremlin's task, then, was to secure its western frontier, continue to build up its economy and its defenses, avoid adventuristic policies abroad, and let Marxist-Leninist history take its course.

This caution and conservatism, bred of an ideologically optimistic world view, was nothing new to Soviet diplomacy. ~~Since its inception, the USSR had learned the necessities of restraint in foreign policy.~~ This is not to say, however, that the Russians were incapable of fear and anxiety in regard to the West. Since the days of Allied interventionism, the Soviet mentality had been beset by

fears of "capitalist encirclement," "Wall Street conspirators," "bourgeois subversion" and—after the war—"German militaristic re-emergence." Aware of her own past and present vulnerabilities, suspicious that she would once more become the target of a Western conspiracy that threatened encirclement and debilitation, convinced of the growing hostility of the most powerful nation in the world, the only one possessing an atomic bomb, the Soviet Union began to see sinister intent in almost every American move. Soviet diplomacy after 1947 was to become increasingly peremptory, testy, and rigid, so as to develop into something of a mirror image of our own, while Soviet publications began to match the American press in propagating hostile, fearsome, cold-war stereotypes.

The point made here is that nothing in our own actions was designed to assuage the Russians' worst convictions. American cold-war diplomats condemned the USSR for a break-up of the wartime alliance, even as they themselves, from the very beginning, entertained no thought of continuing that alliance. They castigated Moscow for its allegedly uncompromising ways even as they themselves renounced compromise as a method of diplomacy. After the war, they began accusing the Soviet Union of bad faith while they, during the war, had come to the conclusion that the cultivation of trust would be a waste of time. They deplored Soviet "belligerency" while they prided themselves on their own "get-tough" approach. They denounced Soviet militarism while they encircled Russian territory with nuclear air bases. They denounced Soviet oppression in Poland, and themselves supported tyrannical oppression in Greece and other countries. They accused the Russians of trying to dislodge them from Western Europe as they sought to "roll-back" the Soviets from Eastern Europe. They operated on the assumption that peace and cooperation could emerge only when the Soviets "learned" to cooperate, and then defined "cooperation" as capitulation to American terms.

Years later some cold war theorists were to argue that our "tough" policy in Europe brought about a "mellowing" of Soviet behavior: confronted with a United States military build-up which prevented them from devouring all of Europe, the Soviets gave up their invasion plans, resigned themselves to reality, and eventually became more moderate in their attitudes toward the West. This theory presumes the very thing which might be severely questioned: were the Soviets operating with intent to conquer Western Europe? We might note, as did Fred Warner Neal, that we armed ourselves against what we imagined to be an impending Soviet invasion and when that imagined invasion never came, we considered this a validation of what we did to prevent it.³⁰ The theory also assumes other questions which will be dealt with in the next chapter: does toughness from one side induce mellowness from the other? And was the Soviet militancy of the late 1940s and 1950s a cause or an effect of American belligerency, or was it both?

NOTES

1. Daniel Bell's statement is in *Commentary*, September 1967, p. 36; Mose Harvey in "Focus on the Soviet Challenge," Westinghouse Broadcasting Co., c. 1964.
2. Williams, *The Tragedy of American Diplomacy*, p. 165.
3. *New York Times*, 24 July 1941.
4. Quoted in Henry F. Graff, "Isolationism Again—With a Difference," *New York Times Magazine*, 16 May 1965.
5. Williams, *op. cit.*, p. 168.
6. The Truman and Byrnes quotations are in Williams, *op. cit.*, p. 169; see also Gar Alperowitz, *Atomic Diplomacy: Hiroshima and Potsdam* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1965), p. 242 and *passim*.
7. Quoted in Cochran, *The War System*, pp. 42-43.
8. Harry S. Truman, *Memoirs*, vol. 1 (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1955), p. 552; also, Arthur H. Vandenberg and J. A. Morris, eds. *The Private Papers of Senator Vandenberg* (Boston: 1953), pp. 175-176.

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9. Walter Lippmann, *The Cold War* (New York: 1947); see also Martin F. Herz, *Beginnings of the Cold War* (Bloomington, Ind.: Indiana University Press, 1967).
10. Satish K. Arora and Harold D. Lasswell, *Political Communication* (typescript), p. 419.
11. Cf. Patrick M. Blackett, *Studies of War* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1962), p. 242; also David Horowitz, *The Free World Colossus*, pp. 29-30, 62-63.
12. Quoted in D. F. Fleming, *The Cold War and Its Origins* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1961), pp. 420-421.
13. Lyndon B. Johnson (Congress, 15 March 1948) quoted in *Ramparts*, December 1967, p. 55.
14. See Fleming, *The Cold War and Its Origins*, also Horowitz, *The Free World Colossus*. The figures are from the official survey by the Extraordinary State Committee (USSR).
15. Quoted in Horowitz, *op. cit.*, p. 12.
16. Edward Stettinius, *Roosevelt and the Russians* (New York: 1949), p. 6.
17. Isaac Deutscher, *Stalin: A Political Biography* (London: Oxford University Press, 1949), p. 525.
18. Cited in Horowitz, *op. cit.*, p. 12.
19. Sidney Hook in *Commentary*, September 1967, p. 47.
20. See Cochran, *op. cit.*, pp. 213-216.
21. Deutscher, *Stalin*, p. 518.
22. See James F. Byrnes, *Speaking Frankly* (New York: 1947), p. 228; also Lens, *op. cit.*, and Deutscher, *Stalin*, p. 529.
23. Alperowitz, *Atomic Diplomacy*, Chapter 7. See also *New York Review of Books*, 23 March 1967.
24. Christopher Lasch, "The Cold War, Revisited and Revisioned," *New York Times Magazine*, 14 January 1968.
25. Deutscher, *Stalin*, p. 519.
26. Marshall D. Shulman, *Beyond the Cold War* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1966), pp. 6-7.
27. Deutscher, *Stalin*, p. 521.
28. Cochran, *The War System*, p. 42.
29. Williams, *op. cit.*, p. 163.
30. Fred Warner Neal, "The Cold War in Europe: 1945-1967," in N. D. Houghton, ed., *Struggle Against History* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1968), pp. 20-39.

Sacred Doctrine and Self-Fulfilling Prophecy

The evil which you fear becomes a certainty by what you do.

GOETHE

If men define situations as real, they are real in their consequences.

W. I. THOMAS

Not sharing Russia's view of her own security needs, Truman sought by various pronouncements and pressures to dislodge the Soviets from their position in Eastern Europe.* When it became evident that this objective could not be achieved, the United States shifted to a

* The abrupt ending of lend lease, the mishandling of the Soviet request for a loan, the halting of German reparations, the personal abuse and threats Truman heaped on Molotov prior to the United Nations conference and the various protests over Poland might serve as examples of early instances. See also the preceding chapter.

policy of "containing" Soviet power.¹ The "roll-back" policy had been based on the assumption that the Russians were seeking to entrench themselves in Eastern Europe; now "containment" was predicated on the idea that they were trying to extend their power throughout all of Europe, the Middle East, Asia, etc. American policy was defined in ostensibly more defensive terms only by envisioning Soviet policy in more offensive ones. By shifting from the complaint that "the Russians won't get out of Poland" to the indictment that "the Russians want to take over everywhere," American leaders could define any political upheaval outside the Soviet sphere as a projection of Moscow's power, and thereby could justify any American intervention as an attempt to contain that power. Thus the more defensive we became, the more aggressively interventionist we acted.

THE "DOCTRINE"

The first momentous pronouncement of the escalated crusade came in 1947 when President Truman, responding to Great Britain's inability to continue her expedition in Greece and her aid to Turkey, went before Congress to request military and economic assistance for those two countries and to announce "the Truman Doctrine." To get the measure approved it was necessary, in the words of Senator Vandenberg, "to scare hell out of the country," and Truman, finding his ideological proclivities reenforced by political necessity, did just that. He proclaimed that every nation faced a choice between two ways of life:

One way of life is based upon the will of the majority, and is distinguished by free institutions, representative government, free elections, guarantees of individual liberty. . . .

The second way of life is based upon the will of a minority forcibly imposed upon the majority. It relies

upon terror and oppression . . . and the suppression of personal freedoms. . . .²

The "free peoples" of Greece and Turkey, as Truman called them, had chosen the democratic way, and the United States was committing itself to defend their right to self-determination. The 1947 Greek and Turkish governments were, in fact, reactionary regimes, characterized by economic privilege for the few and grinding poverty for the many, stringent press censorship, police terror, and suppression of most forms of political opposition.³ The same could be said of most of the "Free World" of 1947 including Spain, Portugal, most of Latin America and the Western colonial empires in Asia and Africa.

The Truman Doctrine did not receive unanimous acclaim when promulgated. American commentators such as George F. Kennan, Walter Lippmann, and Marquis Childs, along with a substantial number of diplomats and observers from non-communist nations voiced opposition to the tone and specific proposals of the new credo. A Gallup poll indicated that 55 percent of the American people disapproved of Truman's having by-passed the United Nations.⁴ In time, the Doctrine came to enjoy something of the hallowed aura associated with the Monroe Doctrine and the Open Door Policy while suffering from much of the same simplistic self-righteousness.

The cold warrior might argue: "Even if the inspirational rhetoric about 'two ways of life' did not coincide with reality, the United States could not afford to pick and choose its allies. The Truman Doctrine's real intent was to contain Soviet aggrandizement, and this necessitated bolstering even those reactionary regimes that did not live up to the usual democratic standards." But was the civil war in Greece a manifestation of Soviet aggrandizement? If Stalin's own private reactions are any indication, it would seem that the Kremlin was not involved. In his *Conversations with Stalin*, Tito's erstwhile lieutenant

Milovan Djilas quotes the Russian leader as urging the Yugoslavs in 1947 and again in 1948 to cease aiding the Greek uprising and put an end to the insurgency "as quickly as possible." He made similar remonstrances to the Bulgarians.⁵ While Truman was convinced that in Greece he was fighting the Kremlin by proxy, in fact Stalin was opposed to the venture.

The results of the American "success" in Greece should not go unnoted. When the Americans replaced the British, the massive military repressions continued. The right-wing Greek army employed to crush the social revolution was larger than the one the Germans had needed to conquer all Greece. Over 100,000 Greek citizens fled into exile in Bulgaria, Yugoslavia and Western Europe. Many other thousands were killed and thousands more were interned in camps and prisons. Despite the billions in American aid over the next twenty years, Greece still was as far as ever from any kind of substantial economic betterment. Some 400 families owned most of the wealth and land, while the great mass of Greeks, especially those in the rural areas, continued to live in abject poverty.

The Truman Doctrine was not merely a *response* to the Greek situation, it was the expression of a long-standing messianic anti-communist antagonism that went looking for a situation. As early as the London Conference of Foreign Ministers in September of 1945, Truman had decided to proclaim an ideological crusade against Russia and a division of the world between the Free and the Enslaved. "He made up his mind then that, when a fitting opportunity arose and one which Congress and the people would recognize as such, he would proclaim the new doctrine," wrote Arthur Krock in *The New York Times*. "On several occasions he thought the time had come, but some of his important advisors talked him out of it." The British withdrawal from Greece provided the event for his "long held purpose."⁶

FROM "TOUGHNESS" TO MADNESS

The Soviet reaction to the Truman Doctrine was not long in coming: the Soviet press, in apocalyptic language akin to Truman's, asked the world to choose between people's democracies and imperialist aggression. While the Americans prepared for intervention in Greece, the Russians proceeded to slam down on Hungary, arresting democratic leaders in Budapest. That same year of 1947 saw the Marshall Plan implemented, soon to be followed by the West's unilaterally scrapping the Potsdam disabilities and uniting its own zones into a West-oriented Germany. The Russians were now convinced that the United States was setting about to construct an anti-Soviet bloc in Western Europe, and, worst of all, a bloc which would incorporate a militarily revived Germany, an obsessional Soviet fear. Vyshinsky voiced the Soviet view:

As is now clear, the Marshall Plan constitutes in essence merely a variant of the Truman Doctrine adapted to the conditions of post-war Europe. . . . An important feature of this Plan is the attempt to confront the countries of Eastern Europe with a bloc of Western European States including Western Germany. The intention is to make use of Western Germany and German heavy industry as one of the most important economic bases for American expansion in Europe, in disregard of the national interests of the countries which suffered from German aggression.⁷

Throughout the postwar years, the political arrangements in Europe revealed a kind of "fearful symmetry." The Western nations, under the presence of victorious Allied armies, had been organized as bourgeois governments, with the communists given weak cabinet positions within the ruling coalitions. The Eastern nations, under the presence of the Red Army, were constituted as predominantly communist or left-socialist governments with non-communists similarly accorded relatively unimportant

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cabinet positions. After promulgation of the Truman Doctrine, under pressure from Washington, the communists were ejected from the French and Italian governments and subsequently the non-communists were ousted from the Eastern European governments. Political factions even remotely inimical to Soviet interests were crushed and the already cooperative Czechoslovakian democracy was overthrown in a bloodless coup, thereby lending substance to the Western nightmare of communist subversion. The effect of the Truman Doctrine and NATO was precisely to hasten the Stalinization of Eastern Europe. In Moscow, the "hard line" was now clearly the order of the day. Stalin's lieutenant, Zhdanov, called for unity in the Eastern camp and a regrouping of all communist parties within the Cominform to confront the Western "menace."

In 1948 Dean Acheson became Secretary of State and from the beginning he placed little faith in reaching an accommodation with the Soviet Union. His view, in perfect accord with Truman's, was that the Russians understood and respected only "situations of strength." That Acheson was attacked during the McCarthy era by the right-wing GOP as being "soft on Communism" led many liberals to crediting him with a flexibility and moderation in policy he never possessed. An investigation of the Secretary's mentality reveals an interesting repository of apocalyptic images. Speaking of the "Communist Menace," he said:

. . . We are faced with a threat not only to our country but to the civilization in which we live and to the whole physical environment in which that civilization can exist. . . .

It is our country, with its belief in freedom and tolerance, its great productive power, its tremendous vitality, which stands between the Kremlin and dominion over the entire world. We must not forget that it is we, the American people, who have been picked out as the principal target of the Soviet Communists. . . .

We must use every means we know to communicate the value of freedom to the four corners of the earth. . . . And this doctrine of freedom will carry conviction because it comes not out of the Government alone but out of the hearts and souls of the people of the United States. Because it is the authentic voice of America, freedom will ring around the world. . . .

[A] real and present threat of aggression stands in the way of every attempt at understanding with the Soviet Union. For it has been wisely said that there can be no greater disagreement than when someone wants to eliminate your existence altogether.⁸

Convinced that the Kremlin wanted to obliterate him and his fellow Americans in order to establish its dominion over the entire world, Acheson set about with proclaimed toughness to establish the North Atlantic Treaty Organization and a coordinated military force in Germany (thereby fully realizing Vyshinsky's fears of a remilitarized Germany in an anti-Soviet bloc). At the same time, every American show of force was now being matched by the Soviets. The unilateral creation of a West German Government was countered by a Soviet blockade on Berlin. American rearmament of West Germany was followed by (a more limited) Soviet rearmament of East Germany.*

* It would not take too much to see why the Russians have been suspicious and hostile on the German question: At the end of the war we violated the four-power agreement by forming a unified West German government. After assuring the world that we would never allow German rearmament, we equipped German troops with American arms. In 1950, the United States said it would never permit Germany to rebuild its war industries; nine years later our war industries entered into partnership with Krupp, Messerschmidt, *et al.*, to produce almost every kind of military weapon. In 1959 we said Germany would be given no nuclear weapons, but the German army now has at least twelve rocket-equipped divisions and a "missile capacity." As Kennan noted, they do not yet have the warheads but they have the missiles. See James P. Warburg's observations in James Roosevelt, ed., *The Liberal Papers* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1959), p. 70.

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The NATO Pact was answered by the Soviet-sponsored Warsaw Pact. In 1950, Truman ordered work begun on a hydrogen bomb; soon afterwards, the Russians undertook a similar project.

The spiral continued upward. In 1954, Eisenhower's Secretary of State, John Foster Dulles, enunciated the sensational doctrine of "massive retaliation." If confronted by any local revolutionary turmoil which we deemed a communist aggression, rather than engage in costly land wars we might choose to strike the original source of the aggression, presumably Moscow, with any means at our disposal. Dulles was not peculiarly alone in his thermonuclear visions; other voices in Congress and the nation were calling for a "final showdown" with Moscow. A year earlier Senator Lyndon Johnson had urged:

We should announce, I believe, that any act of aggression, anywhere, by any Communist forces, will be regarded as an act of aggression by the Soviet Union. . . . If anywhere in the world—by any means, open or concealed—Communism trespasses upon the soil of the free world, we should unleash all the power at our command upon the vitals of the Soviet Union. That is the policy we should build toward.⁹

When embraced and proclaimed by Dulles, the "massive retaliation" thesis caused a shudder of apprehension throughout the world and brought a round of criticism from domestic dissenters. Yet to most Americans, as Cochran notes, "this all-or-nothing strategy . . . fed our self-righteous hunger for playing the world umpire. And it promised to save money. A bigger bang for the buck! Who could resist it?" Certainly not the Russians. In 1953 they exploded a highly advanced thermonuclear device and within half a year after Dulles' proclamation they unveiled their first long-range and medium jet bombers. "Massive retaliation" had become a two-way street.

In October 1953 the first tactical atomic weapons began

arriving in Europe to become part of NATO's striking power amidst prognostications from American military commanders that in any confrontation with the Red Army such weapons would be used with devastating effect. The reaction was not long in coming: the Red Army which had fallen substantially behind the American forces in quality of equipment began a full-scale modernization including the introduction of new tactical atomic weapons. "Tactical deterrence" like "massive retaliation" was nobody's monopoly.

Military escalation went hand-in-hand with rigid diplomacy. By 1956, forty-two nations were aligned in mutual defense pacts with the United States. A nation which had fought wars to defend its right to be neutral now had a Secretary of State, Dulles, who announced that "the principle of neutrality . . . has increasingly become an obsolete conception and, except under exceptional circumstances, it is an immoral and shortsighted conception."¹⁰ Senator Lyndon Johnson ruled out the possibility of there being any negotiable middle ground: ". . . There is a very clear conclusion we can all draw. There are only two alternatives to winning the cold war—hot war or slavery."¹¹ By the 1950s most of our Western allies including the early cold-war architect, Winston Churchill, were questioning this rigid American stance. "I am of the opinion," Churchill said, "that we ought to have a try for peaceful co-existence, a real good try. . . . I am rather inclined to think . . . that they [the Soviets] will not throw away such an opportunity."¹² While President Eisenhower reintroduced the word "peace" into American policy, defining it as a worthy objective which did not of necessity entail a "sellout," his Secretary of State continued to show contempt toward all overtures for negotiation. Thus Dulles rejected Churchill's 1953 proposal for a summit conference, contending that such a meeting would be a *de facto* recognition of the *status quo* in Europe; instead he talked of liberating East-

ern Europe by a revolutionary "roll-back" of communism. America, by his view, should not negotiate with murderers, but should place its reliance on "positions of strength," specifically a rearmed Germany and a superior thermonuclear striking capacity.¹³

But as our armaments increased, so did our apprehensions about a Soviet attack. ~~As our weapons grew more menacing, we ourselves felt more menaced.*~~ In most instances our fear was of an *imaginary* rather than an *actual* military situation. As early as 1947, military spokesmen like Generals Spaatz and Groves gave vivid testimony on the horrors and the immediacy of a Russian nuclear attack; this was two years *before* the Soviets had even tested an atomic bomb, and several years before they had developed anything resembling a strategic long-range air fleet. Similarly, in 1956, military leaders, corporation lobbyists, publicists and their Congressional allies alerted the American people to a dangerous "bomber gap." Only after massive allocations were made to the Air Force was it acknowledged that no such gap had ever existed and that the Soviets had no more than 15 to 200 long-range bombers as against our force of 680 B-52s and B-58s (not including the British and NATO air forces).

The "missile gap" scare followed the same disreputable course. Two years after the Soviets tested a long-range missile, the experts, assisted by the military-industrial lobby and by the 1960 Democratic campaign speeches of Presidential candidate John F. Kennedy, were predicting a disastrous defense vulnerability. Liberal Democratic Senator Henry Jackson announced that "we and our free-world partners may soon face the threat of ballistic blackmail." Only after the military budget was swollen to a \$50 billion peacetime level was it revealed that we had exaggerated the Russian missile threat by thirty times. Rather than the four to one lead predicted for 1962, the USSR had built

* See Appendix II, "Civil Defense: Kill a Neighbor."

only about 50 ICBMs, approximately as many as—or somewhat less than—we already possessed.¹⁴ *The New York Times* summarized the situation:

“The same forces and the same Congressional and journalistic mouthpieces who manufactured an alleged bomber gap in the 1950’s sponsored, and indeed invented, the alleged missile gap in the 1960’s. Today . . . the ‘missile gap’ has vanished; the quantitative advantage, if any, is on the side of the United States.”¹⁵

Although the Russians did not embark upon maximum production of intercontinental missiles, and although the “missile gap” was nothing more than a fabrication, the United States entered upon a massive program designed to furnish us with 1,770 Atlas, Titan, Minuteman and Polaris missiles in addition to our B-52 and B-58 bomber fleets.

In 1955, the Soviet Union signed an Austrian peace treaty and withdrew its army from that nation. Western cold-war theorists have never satisfactorily explained this event except to argue that the Russians, doing nothing from the goodness of their hearts, agreed to a treaty because they had no vital interest in maintaining a military presence in Austria. But if Soviet policy were dedicated to the relentless extension of communist power in Europe, Moscow’s willingness to withdraw from Austria, leaving that country free to adopt a Western-style democratic system, would seem to have defeated the Kremlin’s own expansionist goals. If, however, we entertain the possibility that Russia’s primary interest was not *aggrandizement* but *security* on its western frontier, then the disengagement of Western and Russian troops and the emergence of a united but neutral and disarmed Austria was an understandable, indeed a desirable, Soviet policy objective.

Soon after the Austrian treaty, the Soviets cut their forces. In 1960, Khrushchev announced a further one-third

reduction in military manpower along with substantial reductions in the armaments budget. During the 1960s, however, NATO continued its build-up, increasing by 45 percent the number of combat-ready divisions and tripling its missile forces. NATO striking power and nuclear capacity was superior to that of the Warsaw Pact armies, but this no more assuaged American anxieties than did American superiority in nuclear stockpile, bombers and ICBMs.* American officials continued to stress the necessity of strengthening the "NATO shield" against possible Soviet attack.

The explosions of American hydrogen bombs were followed by a detonation of a Soviet "monster" bomb; the development of an American nuclear submarine fleet equipped with underwater launching devices was eventually succeeded by similar Soviet accomplishments including a Polaris-type missile. The American civil defense program was followed—but only after some years lag—by a less elaborate Soviet civil defense program. (The Russians, perhaps because of their experiences in the last war, remained more convinced than we that civilian populations could not be saved in a hydrogen conflict.) Upon his accession to the Presidency, John Kennedy immediately added \$6.5 billion to Eisenhower's last military budget. The following fiscal year, his own military and space budget showed a 50 percent increase over Eisenhower's. By 1965, the United States could hurl a 23,000 megaton load at the Russians, and they a 10,000 megaton load at America; each side was now measuring how many times it could "over-kill" the other.

The signing of the nuclear test-ban treaty in 1963 and

* C. L. Sulzberger notes that in 1963 NATO's members spent more than \$71 billion for defense while the Soviet bloc spent less than \$37 billion. This proportion remained approximately steady in the decade after 1955. See Horowitz, *The Free World Colossus*, p. 412.

the subsequent United States–Soviet “détente” led many to suppose that the arms race had leveled off. More likely, the race was conducted with somewhat less fanfare. That Moscow and Washington were no longer indulging in the kind of saber-rattling bellicosity that characterized the earlier antagonism did not mean that armaments research, production and proliferation had diminished. Two years after the test ban, the United States and then the USSR utilized the treaty loophole to explode massive underground bombs. In the first half of 1966, the United States increased the number of its nuclear warheads in Western Europe—mostly in West Germany—by 20 percent, from 5,000 to 6,000, causing one writer to observe that “the cold-war confrontation in Europe, in fact, appears to have acquired its own computer-fed momentum.”¹⁶ The Vietnam war instigated even greater efforts in military logistics and weapons development.

In a repetition of the “bomber gap” and “missile gap” campaigns of earlier years, familiar voices warned in 1967 of a newly developing “anti-ballistic missile gap.” It was reported that the Russians were building an ABM defense system around Moscow, and we had better embark upon a \$30 billion ABM system of our own. The United States had already started a multibillion dollar program to outfit our missiles with multiple warheads and other devices to penetrate any anticipated Russian ABM defenses. The following year, the Russians were said to be taking similar steps in anticipation of the U.S. decision to build an ABM system and were expected to have sophisticated multiple warheads by 1972 or so. Most defense experts, including Secretary McNamara, admitted that a foolproof ABM system was an impossibility; nevertheless, the Administration laid plans for a \$5 billion “thin” ABM system which, while useless against a Russian attack, would allegedly deter the Chinese. Our “second-strike” retaliatory capability remained as a superabundant deterrent against any first at-

tack by the Soviet Union but oddly enough was not considered a sufficient defense against a vastly weaker China. What seemed most evident was that the ABM system was a \$5 billion "sop" to the military-industrial complex and a kind of insurance against the charge—chronically made by the opposing political party—that the party in power was "neglecting our defense needs." ¹⁷

The East-West "détente" did not bring any noticeable rapprochement on other important military matters. The 1963 Soviet offer to reduce its forces in Eastern Europe if the West did likewise was a proposal the United States did not see fit to negotiate. Premier Kosygin's proposal in February 1966, calling for a joint pledge not to use nuclear weapons against non-nuclear states which have no nuclear weapons on their territory received a cold response from Washington. The United States also steadfastly refused to sign any mutual agreement pledging the signatories not to be the first to employ nuclear weapons.

We can at this point summarize the East-West military confrontation with the following propositions:

The very attempt by the United States to gain a military advantage by stupendous investments in new weapons seems to have induced the Soviets to augment their own military efforts at least enough to provide a "deterrence capability," one which, if not as powerful as ours, can cause enough destruction so as to make us refrain from any attack. In short, every new weapons "gain" tends to spur the other side to renewed efforts which eventually negate the anticipated advantage of the original investment.

In an effort to construct defenses against each other, Washington and Moscow have perpetrated a strategic military revolution in which offensive weapons have achieved an alarming advantage over defensive ones. For even if the defender could obliterate 90 or 95 percent of the attacker's missiles, the remaining nuclear rockets would cause tens of millions dead on each side. Both sides could destroy the

main industrial and population centers of the other, no matter who struck first.

The consequences of all this is that "military power is no longer an accurate measure of national security."¹⁸ Both the United States and the Soviet Union grow ever more powerful and less secure with the development of each new weapon. The very quest for security has maximized insecurity, and the growing insecurity only further spurs each side to greater quests for the nonexistent ultimate deterrent.

MIRROR IMAGES AND MUTUAL NIGHTMARES

By now the rhetoric of the armaments race should be discernible to us. First, we set the premise that some particular country is committed to an inexorable aggression which can only be thwarted by American counterforce. This is the fundamental axiom of containment policy whether applied to Russia, China, or tiny Cuba. As in any axiom, no proof is required.

Next, we greatly exaggerate the adversary's military capabilities, forgetting that most of the measures taken by the Soviets were subsequent to, and in response to, our own superior military growth. This does not prevent us from stressing the necessity of "keeping up with the Russians" even if, all the while, we are well ahead of them. While our military precosity does not necessarily prove us to be the real aggressors, neither does it lend support to the widely accepted notion of a hard-pressed defensive America reacting to an aggressive Soviet Union.

Finally, having taken note of our opponent's military capacity we then argue *intention* from *capability*; that is, if he has the *capability* to destroy us, it must be because he has the *intention*. (Had the Soviet leaders adopted that line of reasoning throughout the 1950s and 1960s they could have argued, simply by pointing to the superior and

ever-growing American nuclear stockpile and striking capacity, that the United States was preparing for preventive war. Indeed, some Soviet military leaders were of that opinion.) In sum, we postulate the existence of a Soviet aggression which must be contained by a growing American military might, then we point to the growing Soviet military capability as evidence of Soviet aggression.

In so many words, the cold-war theoreticians have argued that Russian militarism is one of the major causes of the East-West conflict while American militarism is merely one of the major effects. American actions are seen as purely defensive reactions, a view that can be maintained only by overlooking the actual sequence of events in the armaments race, and by assuming that the United States operates on the world scene primarily as a dependent variable in response to the actions of other powers. Even if we believe that this is so, we must recall that other powers are similarly reacting in response to, and in anticipation of, American power and policy. American actions are never merely an effect, they are also a cause. By the sheer weight of its presence, the United States generates responses, often negative ones, from other countries.

It seems to have escaped us that the adversary may be reacting defensively toward us even when we are reacting defensively toward him. He sees our power and actions not as justifiable security measures, but as the manifestations of aggressive intent. With each side making the same assumptions about the other, we arrive at what the psychologists Ralph K. White and Charles E. Osgood have referred to as the "mirror-image" in American-Soviet relations.¹⁹ Each side labors under the following presumptions:

(a) A refusal to believe that the other side is motivated by fear of our side ("What could *they* have to fear from us?"), a position that can be maintained only because of:

(b) A mutual belief that the other side has the same picture of us that we have of ourselves ("Not only do *we*

know we don't want war, but *they* know we don't want war. *They* know we are peace-loving, trustworthy, devoid of aggressive intent, etc."). Their very unwillingness to admit to this opinion is taken as evidence of shameless duplicity.

(c) A mutual belief that the other side has the same picture of *itself* that we have of them. ("Not only do they know *we* are virtuous, but they know *they* are deceptive, aggressive, ill-intentioned, evil, etc. Of course they would not admit it, but show us a devil who does not know he is a devil.")

(d) In view of the above suppositions, the antagonism shown by the other side is seen as motivated by aggressive intent rather than defensive fear. And aggression can be deterred only by instilling into the aggressor a respect for one's own power. Thus each side feels compelled to remind the other of its own military capacity and potential belligerency, while simultaneously professing its devotion to peace, an incongruity which appears as little more than hypocrisy in the eyes of the opponent.

Concessions, we come to believe, will be taken by the opponent as a sign of weakness, "a lack of firmness," an invitation to him to take advantage of us. At the same time our unwillingness to make concessions increases his intransigence, thus allowing us to castigate him for *his* reluctance to cooperate toward building peace. All policy is reduced thereby to one belligerent and impoverished posture: "strengthen the forces of freedom."

At a certain point in the antagonism, perhaps at an early stage, it becomes difficult to tell which side is acting and which is reacting. What we are confronted with is one of the most common and troublesome phenomenon of human relations: the self-fulfilling prophecy. Convinced we are facing a mortal enemy, we begin to treat him like one, and he soon becomes one. A false, or partly false, definition of the situation evokes a behavior that tends to make the

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initially false representation come true. Every hostile action generates a response from the adversary which seems to justify the original action and to call for further "toughness." "The specious validity of the self-fulfilling prophecy," Robert Merton notes, "perpetuates a reign of error." ²⁰

According to Washington policymakers, many of whom have been less than clear and consistent on this point, communists can be divided into those who believe in revolution by peaceful gradual transition and those who advocate violent upheavals. The latter are presumably more threatening and more evil than the former. If we are to strengthen the hand of the moderates, the argument goes, then we must be tough and unyielding in our military ventures, thereby demonstrating to the militant, hardline communists that their policy of violent activism will not work. In short, to encourage the communists to pursue a peaceful, moderate, and trusting path we must ourselves use violence and toughness in Vietnam and elsewhere. Were we then to become "soft" as former State Department official William Bundy argued, this would "be an encouragement to the hardliners in Peking." ²¹

One could more easily and sensibly argue the other way around: since it is the moderate communists who argue in the councils of their respective governments that the United States is basically a reasonable, nonaggressive nation with whom peaceful co-existence is possible, and it is the hardline "Stalinist" factions that insist we are violent, militaristic, uncompromising imperialists who want to rule or ruin, it would seem that our murderous toughness in Vietnam and our eagerness to play the world's policeman in a never-ending series of global interventions support the hardline communist view of us and weaken the position of the moderates. The hawks in one country always fortify the position of the hawks in the opposing country by perpetrating actions which actualize and seem-

ingly justify aggressive images. The Soviet generals, in their struggles for greater military allocations, had no more persuasive ally than the Pentagon. Whether the hard-line neo-Stalinists or the more conciliatory moderates win out in Moscow will be determined "more readily in Washington than in Moscow," according to former *New York Times* Moscow correspondent Harrison Salisbury. "Sober-minded Soviet officials made no secret of their concern that the rise in international tensions, stemming from Vietnam, was producing reactionary results within the Soviet Establishment." ²²

The presumption that the other side will become more pliant if we are more belligerent is ironically characterized by Isaac Deutscher in this manner:

Of course in order to preserve peace in the world you have to be tough: you mustn't appease the Russians, you mustn't appease communism. There is much talk in America just now about the 'hawks' and the 'doves,' and our policy-makers assume, of course, that the hawks and doves are bred only here in the West. The Russians, apparently, don't have those breeds of birds. Certainly, if we in the West send out our ferocious hawks in sufficiently great numbers the Russians will, of course, send out their doves to meet them. And the Chinese will presumably do the same.²³

There is no reason to think the Russians or Chinese are any more capable than we of facing external threats with either obsequiousness or fearless indifference. Belligerency breeds belligerency, intransigence invites intransigence, threat leads to counterthreat, and the antagonists find themselves at the edge of an abyss.

It has been the custom of American leaders to insist that we "are ready anytime" for conciliation as soon as the other side makes the reassuring moves; when we have proof that they are acting in good faith then we will respond in

kind. What constitutes "proof," however, is hard to determine, for there have been numerous significant occasions over the years when friendly communist overtures have not been recognized as such by Washington and have been treated as nothing more than ploys. Furthermore, it is not clear why we need assume that the other side has the exclusive capacity to initiate a rapprochement. Apparently we can make no move toward peace unless we have the reassurance of substantive concessions from them, but they are capable of extending trust and friendship right into the mouths of our guns without the benefit of encouraging initiatives from us. Underlying this logic is the familiar presumption that they must take every pain to demonstrate they are not evil while we need not exert ourselves to confirm the already self-evident quality of our virtue.

Almost as an article of faith we have contended that US postwar policy was a response to the "Soviet challenge." In these pages I have tried to demonstrate that Soviet behavior can just as readily be understood as a reaction to the "American challenge." If it is true that we are not merely ~~reacting to others~~ and that our own policies have a profound effect on communist nations, we might consider the possibility that restraint will encourage restraint, moderation will invite moderation and conciliatory overtures, nonintervention and gradual disarmament will bring similar responses from the other side. Just as the hawks of one nation create self-fulfilling situations that bolster the hawk position in the opposing country, so it may be with doves. The cold-war cycle can gradually be reversed as those in one land who support rapprochement and de-escalation reinforce the policies of softliners on the other side by offering cooperative reassurances in word and deed.

To argue that such a policy is chimerical because communists in their unmitigating hostility would never re-

respond in kind, is to forget that a gradual accommodation by a process of "mutual example" already was underway between the United States and the USSR by 1963. Not only did the Soviets respond favorably to the opportunity for better relations, they initiated most of the earlier moves. Nor did President John Kennedy's positive, if belated, response to Khrushchev's repeated overtures for an East-West détente become the occasion for Soviet treachery or renewed militancy. The softer, saner United States line only further strengthened the moderate faction in Moscow. The subsequent American intervention in Southeast Asia deterred this process of rapprochement. Our self-professed "firmness" in Vietnam, rather than silencing the Kremlin hawks, has tended to lend persuasiveness to the urgings of the militant, anti-US faction.* By 1968, the Russians were sending substantial military aid to North Vietnam, repeatedly attacking United States Vietnam policy, showing a greater reluctance to engage in closer relations with Washington, and forcefully intervening in Czechoslovakia. Meanwhile, the United States was now preoccupied with newer and supposedly deadlier communist demons in the Far East, and was once more placing its faith in toughness, rigidity and violence.

* In October 1967, during the height of the Vietnam war, Marshal Grechko, Soviet Defense Minister, submitted a proposal for extended military service before the Soviet parliament (the Supreme Soviet) and called for greater military preparedness: "The ruling circles of the United States, behind the screen of talk of peace and cooperation, are stepping up military preparations against the Soviet Union and other countries of Socialism and these are creating dangerous hotbeds of war in various regions in the world . . . It is only a strongly growing military might, brought to the highest level, that can cool the bellicose ardor of aggression and guarantee our country against possible hazard." It was understood that the Marshal spoke for the "hawks" in his government. The proposal was approved along with an almost \$14 billion increase in the military budget. See *New York Times*, 13 October 1967.

NOTES

1. The best known containment proposal was George F. Kennan's "The Sources of Soviet Conduct," *Foreign Affairs* 25 (July 1947), pp. 566-582.
2. Truman announced his Doctrine on March 12, 1947.
3. See Lens, *op. cit.*, p. 57, *passim* and Horowitz, *The Free World Colossus*, p. 193, *passim*; see also the parallels Todd Gitlin draws between Greece and Vietnam in "Counter-Insurgency," Horowitz, ed., *Containment and Revolution*, pp. 40-181.
4. Horowitz, *The Free World Colossus*, p. 102.
5. Milovan Djilas, *Conversations with Stalin* (London: 1962), pp. 164, 181-182.
6. *New York Times*, 23 March 1947.
7. Andrei Vyschinsky, "Speech to the UN General Assembly," *Official Records* (Plenary Session, 18 September 1947), pp. 86-88.
8. Address of April 22, 1950, reprinted in G. A. Lanyi and W. C. McWilliams, eds., *Crisis and Continuity in World Politics* (New York: Random House, 1966), p. 526 ff.
9. Johnson's speech of February 1952 is quoted in Robert Sherrill, *The Accidental President* (New York: Grossman Publishers, 1967), p. 224.
10. Fleming, *The Cold War and Its Origins*, pp. 780-783.
11. Speech of May 11, 1955, quoted in Sherrill, *op. cit.*, p. ***.
12. See Fleming, *op. cit.*, pp. 693-694.
13. *Ibid.*
14. See Cochran, *The War System*, pp. 86-87.
15. *New York Times*, 27 November 1961.
16. Arnaud de Borchgrave in *Newsweek*, 15 August 1966.
17. *New York Times*, 15 and 17 September 1967; see also Jerome B. Wiesner, "The Case Against an Antibalistic Missile System," *Look*, 28 November 1967, pp. 25-27.
18. Cf. James Reston, *New York Times*, 22 January 1967.
19. Ralph K. White, "Misconceptions in Soviet and American Images," cited in Charles E. Osgood, *An Alternative to War or Surrender* (Urbana, Ill.: University of Illinois Press, 1962), p. 139, *passim*.
20. Robert K. Merton, *Social Theory and Social Structure*, rev. ed. (Glencoe, Ill.: Free Press, 1957), pp. 434-435.
21. *New York Times*, 29 November 1966.
22. Harrison Salisbury, *New York Times*, 3 November 1967.
23. Isaac Deutscher, "Myths of the Cold War," in Horowitz, *Containment and Revolution*, p. 19.

CHAPTER NINE

The Yellow Demon I

The change of adversaries has not persuaded us to reexamine the theory . . .

RONALD STEEL

It is a very curious thing about superstition. One would expect that the man who had once seen that his morbid dreams were not fulfilled would abandon them for the future; but on the contrary they grow even stronger . . .

SØREN KIERKEGAARD

The historian C. P. Fitzgerald once noted that during the late nineteenth century many people in Europe and, to a lesser extent, America, lived in dread of the teeming hordes of China, i.e., the Yellow Peril.

It may now be thought that this myth had a common enough psychological explanation: it was not China that was then engaging in aggressive wars but those who feared it, and their aggression was frequently directed against China itself. The mental trick of picturing the victim of an attack in the role of the cruel and dangerous assailant

is an established mechanism for diminishing a sense of guilt. In reality the Chinese had more cause to see a White Peril, and they still do. It was the peoples of Europe who had forced their way into the Far East, seized bases, extorted concessions, invaded China, and at the turn of the century proposed to establish spheres of influence which were clearly understood to be blueprints for future colonial acquisition.¹

When the Chinese launched the Boxer Rebellion, the West saw its nightmare materializing. The alarm subsided somewhat when a small expeditionary force easily crushed the uprising and drove the Manchu court into flight, but Westerners never quite lost their uneasiness about the hordes of the East.

By the 1960s we were once more possessed by fears that Asiatic hordes, this time led by Peking Communists, would someday engulf the Western World. Only yesterday, American Sovietologists and policymakers were portraying Russia as a relentlessly expansionist power, capable of fashioning diabolic strategies that would prove irresistible throughout the world. "It having since been discovered," writes one China expert, "that Moscow must cope with a world as unpredictable and refractory to its own purposes as it is to ours, the same style of thought has now been transferred to China."² Howard Zinn made a similar observation:

A political scientist doing strategic research for the government told me recently with complete calm that his institute decided not long ago that they had been completely wrong about the premise which underlay much of American policy in the postwar period—the premise that Russia hoped to take over Western Europe by force. Yet now with not a tremor of doubt . . . the invading-hordes theory is transferred to China.³

The limited détente with the Soviet Union did not free America from her anti-communist preoccupations. The

stereotype of the Russians was changing, but the image of the demon communist remained as virulent as ever. The net result was merely a shifting of our anti-communist pre-occupations onto a new object. As we began to think of the Russians as somewhat human, we started viewing the Chinese as ever more satanic. Our vast psychological, political, military, and economic cold-war apparatus remained in high gear, preparing to do battle with dragons instead of bears. The Soviets were still communists, policymakers assured us; but by late 1964 it was understood that the Devil, although occasionally on call at the Kremlin, had taken up permanent residence in Peking.*

MOSCOW'S PUPPET

For many years we considered Communist China as little more than an extension of Moscow's influence. In 1950, Deputy Under-Secretary of State Dean Rusk, allegedly an Asian expert, dismissed Communist China as "a colonial Russian government—a Slavic Manchukuo on a large scale—it is not the government of China. It does not pass the first test. It is not Chinese."⁴ The following year, George Marshall said that Russia had, in effect, made a "conquest" of China.†⁵ While we were fighting the *Chinese* in Korea,

* For a discussion of the reasons for this shift in American attitudes see Appendix III "The Devil Moves East."

† Such views were offered despite the evidence of history. Mao Tse-tung had won control of the Chinese Communist Party against the opposition of a Moscow-trained leadership. It seems Stalin never seriously considered the Chinese Communists—as led by Mao after the Long March—to be more than armed peasants interested in land distribution, a party with the wrong leadership, methods and objectives. Nor did he seem particularly dedicated to their struggle. Eager for stable relations with Nationalist China, Stalin urged the CCP to suspend revolutionary activity in 1927, and again in 1936 when he sought an alliance with Chiang against Japan, and again in 1945 as a time when Mao already had control of an area containing 90 million Chinese. A few months before Mao's total victory, Stalin finally opened Soviet consulates in communist-held territory,

Senator Lyndon Johnson was threatening *Russia* with nuclear attack, warning her that "we are tired of fighting your stooges. We will no longer sacrifice our young men on the altar of your conspiracies." ⁶ As late as 1954, speaking for most of America's ostensibly informed liberal opinion, Kennan declared: "[China's] political association with the Soviet Union has brought many advantages to the Kremlin. The use of the Chinese as puppet forces to assume the burden of opposing us on the Korean Peninsula was only the most conspicuous of these." ⁷ Years later, when our animosity toward Peking outran our hostility toward Moscow, Dean Rusk, who during the Korean conflict had considered China a Russian puppet state, would cite Korea as an example of "Chinese aggression." ⁸

To this day we do not know what miscalculations led to the Korean war. It is not known whether Stalin ordered the attack, or whether it was a deliberate attempt at forceful reunification or a pre-emptive war induced by the North's anticipations of a South Korean attack.* But we

but still maintained diplomatic relations with the Kuomintang. Soviet aid to Mao throughout the civil war had been almost non-existent. See Herbert Feis, *The China Tangle*, also Fairbank, *The United States and China*, pp. 232-34; Crankshaw, *The New Cold War: Moscow v. Peking*, pp. 16-17; and Edgar Snow, *Red Star Over China*, rev. ed. (New York: Grove Press), p. 415 ff.

* Rhee and his Defense Minister had been threatening to invade North Korea for months, declaring that South Korea could take Pyongyang within a few days. The Moscow press was late in reporting the outbreak and had no ready explanation, an unlikely situation had the invasion been approved and anticipated by Moscow. The North Koreans were deprived of Soviet planes, and Moscow took the interesting step of withdrawing its advisors from North Korea soon after hostilities commenced. With an estimated 70,000 troops and 70 tanks, the North Koreans overran three-fourths of the South within weeks, Rhee's army putting up little resistance. A number of public figures in the South, disgusted with Rhee's rule, joined the North.

See Fleming, *Origins of the Cold War*, p. 599 ff., Horowitz, *The Free World Colossus*, p. 120 ff.

do know that Stalin kept out of the war and that Mao initially followed suit. There is no evidence that Mao had anything to do with the decision to cross the 38th parallel, nor that he even favored such a venture. No Chinese armed support was given and the befuddled silence of the Peking press during the first twenty-four hours of hostilities seems to indicate that the Chinese were not privy to the decision or, at best, were informed at a very late hour.⁹

Nor is there any evidence that Mao's belated entry into the conflict was at Stalin's command. The Chinese moved only after American troops had overrun most of North Korea and ~~were~~ within a few miles of the Manchurian border, threatening the Yalu electrical power complexes which supplied China's industrial heartland. The Chinese action came after Peking's repeated warnings to Washington that military action north of the 38th parallel would force China to intervene, and after Acheson's assurances that we would not advance to the Manchurian border. Their entry was, in their view, a defensive action against American forces which were overrunning a neighboring communist state and sweeping to within miles of their border.

VIRTUE FACES EAST

Testifying before a House committee many years after the events, Rusk observed:

In the months after the Chinese Communist takeover in 1949 we watched to see whether *the initial demonstration of intense hostility* toward the United States . . . was momentary or reflected a basic Peking policy. Then came the aggression against the Republic of Korea, to which . . . the Chinese Communists committed large forces, thus coming into direct conflict with the United Nations and the United States.

We have searched year after year for some sign that Com-

munist China was ready to renounce the use of force to resolve disputes. We have also searched for some indication that it was ready to *abandon its premise that the United States is its prime enemy*. [Italics added] ¹⁰

Rusk's assertions raise several questions: Why did China adopt the premise that "the United States is its prime enemy"? And, in fact, was it the Chinese who displayed "the initial demonstration of intense hostility"?

In September 1944, after a history of disappointment with Moscow, and after a top-level Party debate, the Chinese Communists concluded, as Williams notes, "that they preferred to work with the United States rather than with Russia in the future development of China." ¹¹ In December 1945, leaders of the CCP participated in the Chungking conference with Chiang and US Ambassador George Marshall, and once more "made much of their wish for cordial relations with the United States." ¹² Marshall's efforts did bring a temporary cease-fire; the communists even agreed to merging their army and party into a coalition government under Chiang. But after years of civil war neither side was ready for peaceful coalition. Augmented by the steady flow of American arms, Chiang was in no frame of mind to share his rule with the CCP. In order to achieve a peaceful settlement the United States would have had to exert pressure on the Nationalists to pursue some sweeping economic and democratic reforms. As we were to discover repeatedly, it is impossible to change a regime politically while aiding it militarily. The Nationalists could see no reason for entering into agreements with the Communists as long as the U.S. inundated them with aid. "Chiang and his generals . . . preferred to do things their way. They relied on their new arms." ¹³ Washington greeted Mao's final victory as a disaster for the Free World and as something of a personal defeat for America. It is not surprising that by then the Chinese Communists were en-

tertaining a growing awareness of Washington's enmity.

The image presented by Rusk of a patient forbearing America searching "year after year" for some friendly sign from China places a substantial strain on the facts. After Mao came to power, the United States led the fight against Peking's admission to the UN, refused to extend diplomatic recognition, and sought to blockade China economically with a multi-lateral embargo—a venture which won the cooperation of few other nations.* American hostility intensified during the Korean war. The liberal Democrat Senator Estes Kefauver demanded that "we should classify the China Communists as outlaws, and cease to do business with them,"¹⁴—this already was our policy. Other voices in Congress advocated a full-scale invasion of the mainland, and the liberal Senator Paul Douglas called for a preventive nuclear war against China.† Washington poured arms and money into the Nationalist dictatorship on Taiwan, put the Seventh Fleet in control of the Western Pacific waters, and assisted in fortifying Nationalist-held coastal islands. For Secretary Dulles, whose policy objective in Asia as in Europe was "roll-back" and not "containment," the Peking government was not to be considered a permanent fixture. In 1955, Assistant Secretary of State Walter Robertson declared: "Our hope of solving the problem of China is . . . through action which will promote disintegration from within."¹⁵ By the 1960s we no longer anticipated the internal collapse of China, but our goal remained, in the words of Sovietologist and State Department

* Some fifty-six countries, including some of our allies, have diplomatic relations with Peking, and more than that number engage in active trade with China.

† Fifteen years later in 1965, Douglas was to give us the full benefit of his understanding of Sino-American relations: "The equation is simple: either they obliterate us or we obliterate them."

Quoted in *Atlantic Monthly*, September 1966, p. 36.

advisor Brzezinski, "the continued isolation and repulsion of China." ¹⁶ Or as described in 1965 by a *New York Times* Washington correspondent: "[Our] purpose is to contain and harass the Peking Government by limiting as much as possible its diplomatic and economic contacts with the rest of the world." ¹⁷

In diplomacy, words and actions often blend. Statements are taken as kinds of action, while actions are intended to convey signs and messages—the usual function of words. The charge that Chinese diplomatic words and actions have been singularly hostile and intransigent does not bear up under investigation. It was the Chinese who initiated a proposal at Bandung in 1955 for top-level meetings with the United States to negotiate the "elimination of tensions" between the two nations with specific reference to Taiwan. "In contrast, Washington was not then anxious to deal directly with a regime which it refused to recognize and wished to isolate," writes one observer.¹⁸ Refusing to meet at the ministerial level, the United States did agree, as mentioned earlier, to ambassadorial talks beginning in 1955 in Geneva and continuing in Warsaw.

During the first three years of the Warsaw talks, Peking's approach was to seek agreement on questions "comparatively easy to settle" without pressing for prior resolution of Taiwan's status. The US view was to discourage negotiations on these matters until the Chinese agreed to a renunciation of the use of force in respect to Taiwan. From 1958 on, as sometimes happens in East-West diplomacy, both sides reversed positions. In the heat of the September Taiwan crisis (Chiang's impending "liberation" attempt) Peking now insisted that the United States accept the principle of American withdrawal from the island before other questions could be negotiated, and the following year, Washington reversed its priorities and sought agreement on lesser matters (e.g., exchange of newsmen and travelers) without any prior commitments on Taiwan.¹⁹

POWER AND ACTION

As noted in an earlier chapter, one necessary way of judging a country is to look at its behavior. If China were an aggressive nation, then we might expect to find ample evidence of this in her actions. This was not a particularly easy task. Even Secretary Rusk admitted: "It is true that [the Chinese] have been more cautious in action than in words. . . . Undoubtedly they recognize that their power is limited."²⁰ The question was, did *we* recognize the limitations of Chinese power? As of 1968 the combined land, sea, and air forces of China were inferior in numbers and supplies to both the Soviet and American forces, and were handicapped by antiquated equipment, shortages of heavy armor, spare parts and fuel, by insufficient rail lines, and the absence of a modern highway system.* China's capacity to wage conventional war remains severely limited. Her capacity for nuclear war is even more circumscribed by power realities. At the time of this writing the Chinese have developed nuclear bombs and in a few years should have a medium-range missile system and beyond that an ICBM system. But even with its missiles, China, like France and Great Britain, remains a second-rate power. "It is in fact very doubtful whether the disparity between Chinese military power and that of its po-

* China's army consisted of 150 light infantry divisions along with a few horse cavalry and armored divisions. Her navy boasted the grand total of four pre-World War II light destroyers, a handful of submarines and about 700 patrol boats. The air force was comprised of about 1,600 jet fighters of Korean war vintage and some 300 obsolete Soviet bombers. Essentially a defensive force, the army has not shifted its strategic deployment in over a decade. The largest component of a million soldiers stand guard in the Southeast facing Taiwan; under half a million are gathered at the Vietnam border, and more than that number are deployed along the Soviet border.

For a summary of China's military capacity, see *Newsweek*, 7 March 1966, pp. 36-38.

tential opponents is not greater today than it was in 1900," Fitzgerald concludes.²¹ Alistair Buchan, director of London's Institute for Strategic Studies, observes: "The industrial bases of the US and Russia are so much more advanced and formidable than China's that they can individually, yet alone collectively, offset Chinese power almost indefinitely."²² Almost every advanced nation, nuclear or otherwise, has an industrial capacity far more extensive and more easily convertible to war production than China's.

At the time of the Cuban crisis, it was widely publicized that Peking branded Khrushchev's withdrawal as "capitulation." What is usually overlooked is Peking's equally severe criticism of Soviet "adventurism" in having sent missiles to Cuba in the first place. The Chinese leaders repeatedly rejected the view that nuclear weapons should be used for offensive purposes: "A socialist country," stated Mao, "absolutely must not be the first to use nuclear weapons, nor should it in any circumstances play with them or engage in nuclear blackmail and nuclear gambling." *²³ After her first atomic explosion in 1964, China pledged that she "will never at any time and under any circumstances be the first to use nuclear weapons." A year later, Peking proposed that the United States join in making it a mutual pledge, a proposal Washington rejected.† Instead, in 1967 Washington embarked upon a

* One Chinese official speaking to Staughton Lynd and Tom Hayden noted: "Cuba was a case of nuclear gambling by the Soviets. They were thinking more of the United States than of Cuba. They had no business putting nuclear weapons in Cuba. We were not even consulted, yet we are bound by treaty to aid them in war . . . We thought Khrushchev was wrong in saying he would use the weapons. Where? Havana? New York?" See Lynd and Hayden, *The Other Side*, pp. 135-136.

† *The New York Times*, 12 May 1968, reported: ". . . An underlying reason for the rejection, according to officials, is a reluctance to

multi-billion dollar anti-missile system which supposedly was designed to safeguard American cities against Chinese nuclear attack. According to one estimate our pre-1967 deterrence capability was so overwhelming that we would have more than enough missiles after a *Soviet* attack to demolish the major industrial and population centers of China.²⁴ Would China ever attack the United States? "It would be insane and suicidal for her to do so," Secretary McNamara admitted, "but one can conceive conditions under which China might miscalculate. We wish to reduce such possibilities to a minimum."²⁵ (McNamara himself did not explicitly tell us under what conceivable conditions China might commit suicide.) One observer writing in *Foreign Affairs* noted:

For the Chinese to attack, or to threaten to attack, American cities in the face of our strategic superiority would be the rashest of acts on the part of a people who have been noted for their caution and conservatism in the use of military power. Indeed, it is rather astonishing that the United States, which seems satisfied that its deterrent is effective against the Soviet Union, should be so concerned about its ineffectiveness against a power whose resources are miniscule, whose opportunities for significant gains through limited war are considerably less than those of the Soviet Union, and which, moreover, has shown no signs of undertaking such adventures.²⁶

While the Sovietologist Lowenthal talked of "Peking's willingness to engage in risky military adventures," China's actions in fact remained at least as limited as her power. In Tibet she occupied a vast underpopulated region which the Chinese had always considered a part of their territory,

get the United States into a position where it appears to foreclose on the use of a weapon that is viewed as a deterrent to Communist aggression."

a claim that was supported by the Taiwan government and was not without historical justification.*

The Chinese engaged in a border action against the Indians in 1962. After occupying the disputed Himalayan territories, thereby delivering a quick military humiliation to the Indians, China then withdrew to the line of her original claim. Whatever the justification of the respective claims, the border skirmishes cannot be represented as part of a world aggression.† As Zinn put it: "It is a fact that China . . . is fierce in its expressions of hatred for the United States, that it crushed opposition in Tibet, and fought for a strip of territory on the Indian border. But let's consider India briefly: it crushed an uprising in Hyderabad, took over the state of Kerala, initiated attacks on the China border, took Goa by force and is fierce in its insistence on Kashmir. Yet we do not accuse it of wanting to take over the world." 27

The Chinese have gone to some lengths to avoid direct confrontations with the United States. They have failed to move in Vietnam; they have not attacked Taiwan, or the offshore islands, and have even permitted American ship convoys to carry Chiang's troops to Quemoy under their very guns. Unlike the Americans, the Chinese have shown a marked reluctance to fight on other peoples' territories, and have no soldiers on foreign soil. (China withdrew all

* The Chinese Nationalist delegate to the UN pointed out in November 1950 that Tibet had been a part of China for 700 years and had participated in the Chinese National Assemblies of 1946 and 1948. See Tieh-Tseng Li, "The Historical Status of Tibet," cited in *Peace in Vietnam* (New York: American Friends Service Committee, 1966), p. 30.

† The exact border had long been admitted to be "unknown" by the Indians, and Indian maps made numerous changes; after New Delhi specified its claims in 1954 Peking became openly antagonistic. Chiang Kai-shek and the Taiwan government supported Peking's claims. In the United States almost everyone assumed India was right and China was wrong, and that a communist aggression had been perpetrated.

her troops from Korea and invited the United States to do likewise, with no result.) Unlike the Russians, the Chinese cannot incinerate American cities. Unlike both the Americans and Russians, they lack the massive industrial and technological base of a superpower.

Unlike both her rivals, as events beginning in the summer of 1966 indicate, China has known tremendous internal political instability. A "cultural revolution," better described as a civil war, raged between Maoist and anti-Maoist factions (and often between competing Maoist groups) engulfing all levels of the Communist Party apparatus along with millions of students, workers and peasants. Mass cadres of youths (the "Red Guard") demonstrated throughout China, frequently with violent effects. In some areas, armed cadres, led by competing local leaders, battled each other. Army units opened fire on each other and clashed with demonstrators. In important provinces military and Party officials ("reactionaries" and "capitalist revisionists") retained control in open defiance of Mao Tse-tung. There were widespread strikes by industrial workers in Shanghai and elsewhere against Mao's cultural revolution. Nanking was torn by tumultuous clashes involving hundreds of thousands. In Canton, law and order succumbed to street violence, and citizens began forming armed patrols for self-protection.²⁸ The Peking *People's Daily* admitted that the situation approached "utter chaos."

The cultural revolution may be a genuine populist revitalization movement that has led to unanticipated and unwholesome excesses. It may be little more than an ideological cloak for a crass power struggle. Or it may be a combination of these and other things. Any evaluation of meaning and motives remains the task of future historians. One conclusion can be drawn: the image of China as a monolith, a human "megamachine" or ant hill, moving as with one mind under the command of a totalitarian center, is

a fabrication. Conflict rather than unity seems the prevalent norm of Chinese political life. China, like the "world communist movement" itself, is a cacophony of competing groups, ideologies, ambitions, and political personalities.

We are left, then, with the following unanswered question: How can we continue to allege that Peking is masterminding world revolution and commanding or conducting a war in Vietnam when it has had difficulty maintaining political rule at home? If China's capabilities are limited, her actions moderate and cautious, and her domestic rule torn by civil conflict, how then does she qualify as the global devil who threatens world peace and American security?

NOTES

1. C. P. Fitzgerald, "Once More the Yellow Peril," *The Nation*, 23 May 1966, p. 606.
2. Benjamin Schwartz, "Chinese Vision and American Policy," *Commentary*, April 1966, p. 54.
3. Howard Zinn, "Vietnam: Setting the Moral Equation," *The Nation*, 17 January 1966.
4. Dean Rusk, quoted in *The New Republic*, 19 March 1966.
5. *New York Times*, 15 May 1951.
6. Quoted in Robert Sherrill, *The Accidental President*, pp. 223-224.
7. Kennan, *Realities of American Foreign Policy*, p. 67.
8. See, for instance, Rusk's testimony on China policy before the House Foreign Affairs Committee, released April 16, 1966.
9. C. P. Fitzgerald, *The Birth of Communist China* (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, Inc., 1964), p. 215.
10. Dean Rusk, testimony, April 16, 1966.
11. Williams, *The Tragedy of American Diplomacy*, p. 161.
12. Feis, *The China Tangle*, p. 415.
13. Fairbank, *The United States and China*, pp. 267-268.
14. *New York Times*, 15 January 1950.
15. Robertson's testimony is cited in Edgar Snow, *The Other Side of the River* (New York: Random House, 1961), p. 631.
16. Zbigniew Brzezinski, "Threat and Opportunity in the Communist Schism," *Foreign Affairs* (April 1963).

17. *New York Times*, 15 November 1965.
18. Kenneth T. Young, "American Dealings with Peking," *Foreign Affairs* 45 (October 1966), p. 79.
19. *Ibid.*
20. Dean Rusk, testimony, April 16, 1966.
21. Fitzgerald, "Once More the Yellow Peril."
22. Quoted in *Newsweek*, 29 November 1965, p. 45.
23. *Peking Review*, 23 November 1963, p. 12.
24. See J. I. Coffey, "The Anti-Ballistic Missile Debate," *Foreign Affairs* 45 (April 1967).
25. *New York Times*, 19 September 1967.
26. Coffey, "The Anti-Ballistic Missile Debate," p. 407.
27. Zinn, "Vietnam: Setting the Moral Equation."
28. *New York Times*, 29 September 1967. See also dispatches, *New York Times*, July 1966—October 1967.

The Yellow Demon II

POLONIUS: What do you read, my lord?

HAMLET: Words, words, words.

Hamlet, Act II, Scene 2

The assertion that China has been an aggressor rests on the following “evidence”: (a) Peking’s hostile pronouncements against the United States—words rather than actions; (b) her alleged intention to lead in a world revolution—more words; (c) her alleged aggression in Vietnam—an action.*

* A discussion of Vietnam is reserved for the following chapter.

WORDS VS. WORDS

"Some say," Dean Rusk observed critically, "we should ignore what the Chinese Communist leaders say and judge them only by what they do." That might have brought an improvement in policy, but actually most of us would have advised the former Secretary not to rely exclusively on words or deeds. But assuming that words do count as much as—or even more than—actions, we would have expected policymakers to give careful attention to what Peking has been saying.

For more than two decades, extending over four Presidential Administrations, it has been American policy to oppose, isolate and encircle the Chinese People's Republic, employing every diplomatic, economic and military means short of direct attack. Peking has reacted with a barrage of strident pronouncements branding the United States as "one-hundred percent imperialist aggressor" and "archenemy of the peace." Yet did we really expect the Chinese to remain unperturbed all these twenty years? Was it small wonder that Peking's leaders saw Washington as an avowed enemy in *word* and *deed*, and that by 1966—as ill-founded as it seemed to most of us—they feared an American invasion of the mainland?*

While making much of China's strident propaganda, Washington policymakers ignored Peking's more conciliatory and moderate policy statements. As early as 1946–48 the Chinese Communists argued among the fraternal parties that a third world war was not inevitable. Years later at the June 1960 Bucharest Conference the Chinese delegate Peng Cheng took the opportunity to answer Khrushchev's charge that China was pursuing a warlike path. He pointed out that: (a) The Chinese were in no way op-

* That year both Chou En-lai and Chen Yi spoke of Chinese preparations against an impending American attack. *New York Times*, 10 May 1966.

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posed to peaceful co-existence, indeed they practiced it; (b) they supported, rather than opposed, efforts at rapprochement, including the summit meetings and Khrushchev's visit to the United States; (c) however, they could not agree with the Russian view that the imperialists would not start another war. The Americans were not arming Japan and Germany just to join in the May Day Celebrations. As for war and peace, Peng contended, the Chinese had always supported the struggle for peace. But only by firmly defending themselves from American aggression when it arose could China hope to thwart the imperialist appetite and thereby avoid war.¹

The CCP constitution adopted in 1956 stated: "The Communist Party of China advocates a foreign policy directed to the safeguarding of world peace and the achievement of peaceful co-existence between countries of different systems." In December 1963 Chou En-lai, asserting that the risk of war remained because of the American policy of "war and aggression," added that China sought a peaceful solution to differences with the United States.² As late as 1966, Foreign Minister Chen Yi expressed Peking's desire to settle all differences with the United States through peaceful negotiation but "the United States does not reciprocate the Chinese attitude." Instead, he asserted, it seeks to "choke" China through military and economic encirclement, thereby destroying all chances for an early accommodation.³

It is wrong [Chen Yi said] to consider that China has no intention of having talks with the U.S. . . . A settlement of questions through talks is China's basic policy. If this were not true, the Warsaw talks would have been suspended long ago . . .

We believe in socialism but other countries should decide socialism, capitalism, or revisionism to their own liking. We do not like to have ideas forced on us, and also we do not like to force our ideas on others.⁴

Statements indicating that Peking seeks a peaceful accommodation in a self-determining pluralistic world went largely unreported in the American press. Yet Washington policymakers must have known of their existence.* To discount such conciliatory pronouncements as "mere communist words" is to ignore Secretary Rusk's instructions that we pay close attention to "what the Chinese Communist leaders say," advice which the Secretary himself has failed to heed.

PEKING'S "MEIN KAMPF"

In September 1965 China's Defense Minister Lin Piao issued a lengthy statement calling upon the peoples of the world to liberate themselves from Western imperialism.⁵ Likening the underdeveloped world to the "rural areas" and industrial Europe and North America to the "cities," Lin predicted that the final victory for oppressed peoples would come when the revolutionary countryside encircled the cities. His thesis was a rehash of proclamations about "wars of national liberation" that extended back to at least 1949. But with China now elevated to the role of world conspirator, Washington policymakers seized upon the 1965 statement as a *Mein Kampf*, a blueprint of "Peking's strategy of violence for achieving Communist domination of the world" (Rusk), and a "program of global conquest" (McNamara).

In a world of privilege, oppression, and nationalist longings, Lin Piao offered a breathtaking vision: cast off the exploiter, the landlord, and the foreign plutocrat, and

* Pro-Administration scholars like the Asian expert Robert Scalapino also must have known of their existence. Yet in 1967 Scalapino asserted: "No Asian Communist state or party is currently prepared to accept peaceful co-existence as a fundamental operative principle of its foreign policy." He thereby ignored statements made by Chinese, North Vietnamese, North Korean and Japanese Communist Party officials. *New York Times*, 18 October 1967.

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achieve independence, equality, prosperity and peace. But the doctrine was nothing more than what it was: a word to others, and not a program for Chinese action. While China now was accused of "fomenting" and even "carrying out" wars of liberation, in fact Lin explicitly removed his nation from any direct involvement in such ventures. "Revolution or people's war in any country," he wrote, "is the business of the masses in that country and should be carried out primarily by their own efforts; ~~there is no~~ other way." ⁶ In describing Mao's victory in China, he repeatedly stressed the necessity for "self-reliance" in "long and tortuous struggles," pointing out that national movements cannot expect outside aid to be of any importance. This was hardly a new position for the Chinese. Five years earlier, the official organ, *Peking Review*, had dealt explicitly with this question:

Socialist countries never permit themselves to send, never will send, their troops across their borders unless they are subjected to aggression from a foreign enemy . . .

People who believe that revolution can break out in a foreign country to order, by agreement are either mad or provocateurs. We know that revolutions cannot be made to order, or by agreement; they break out when tens of millions of people come to the conclusion that it is impossible to live in the old way any longer.⁷

Various scholars (and even the Rand Corporation) have concluded that Lin's statement served notice to aspiring revolutionaries throughout the world, and to the Vietcong in particular, that they would have to rely on their own resources.⁸

The Chinese, like the Russians and the Americans, are not above presenting themselves as an inspiration for all mankind. But the closest they came to making a substantive commitment to other people was Chou En-lai's

statement in 1966—and his remarks reflected not revolutionary aggrandizement but defensive fear:

If any country in Asia, Africa or elsewhere meets with aggression by the imperialists headed by the United States, the Chinese Government and people definitely will give it support and help. Should such action bring on United States aggression against China, we will unhesitatingly rise in resistance and fight to the end.⁹

PEKING'S "DOMINATION"

The proposition that Peking is seeking to dominate the world has been made by responsible American statesmen who give every indication of believing that the assertion might come true. But what is meant by "dominate"?¹⁰ How would China marshal enough power to dominate a world already burdened by the presence of two colossal superpowers and divided by a thousand parochial loyalties? Would Peking perhaps lash out with its new atomic weapons? The Chinese, as McNamara admitted, betray no intention of committing nuclear suicide. Did we fear military expansion by Peking throughout the Pacific, climaxed by an Asian-hordes amphibious assault upon Hawaii and San Francisco? The immense limitations of China's conventional forces, her cautious policy, and her commitment to noninvolvement in "wars of liberation" offer no evidence to support this conjecture.

But perhaps the Chinese seek world domination by subtler and therefore presumably more lethal means. If by "domination" we now mean that kind of ideological conquest which might lead the established governments, or the budding revolutionary movements of other nations to give their allegiance to Peking, then China has been either uninterested or strikingly unsuccessful in establishing such dominance. There is nothing in the writings and

pronouncements of Mao, Lin, or Chou indicating that the Chinese seek to control national liberation movements or that they expect leaders of such movements to act at the behest of Peking. In stressing the homegrown quality of revolution, the Chinese, if anything, seem to deny the possibility of international revolutionary leadership.

In the conflict-filled domain of "world communism" Peking has been one of the advocates of national independence. As early as 1956, they pointed to the obligation of the larger socialist nations "to avoid 'big power chauvinism,'" and criticized countries which "even when they happen to be communist . . . develop a superiority complex and would always like to put their own interests above those of other nations . . . It never occurs to them on their part to treat other countries as equals."¹¹

Chinese pretensions to ideological hegemony among the communist nations met with even less success than Russian efforts. By 1968 there was not a communist party or nation of any substance which recognized Peking's ideological leadership.* Nor did the situation differ among the Afro-Asian countries. On the African continent, where the dominant forces have been tribalism and nationalism, the Chinese have not won any special influence despite their best diplomatic efforts. In Zanzibar, Chinese influence was for a time discernible, but that nation merged with Tanganyika to form Tanzania, whose President, Nyerere "maintained a balancing role not only between the West and the Communists, but also between China and the Soviet Union."¹² Senegal offered a typical example of the extent to which "Maoism" penetrated Africa. After extensive contacts with the Senegalese faction-ridden left, the political scientist William Foltz estimated that in 1967 the "Peking-oriented" group numbered not more than twenty members.¹³ "In Africa," writes Zagoria, "Com-

* See Chapter Four for a fuller discussion of polycentrism in the communist world.

munist parties are for the most part nonexistent . . ." ¹⁴

In the Middle East one would have to search hard and long for a Chinese presence. The few miniscule Arab communist parties have not responded to any call from the Far East. In general, Arabs have been as ready to serve Peking as to serve Tel Aviv. In Latin America, the only communist state, Cuba, has been at odds with Peking, and has sided with Moscow—when not at odds with Moscow.*

Throughout Asia, Chinese pretensions to leadership have been, at best, coolly received. The Communist Party of India, rather than benefiting from Chinese revolutionary leadership, found its ranks split and its position severely compromised after the Sino-Indian border war. In Indonesia, Peking spent many years backing Sukarno, then supported the earlier abortive attempt to unseat him, then offered nothing but silence while an estimated 300,000 to 400,000 Indonesian "communists" (many of them apolitical Indonesian-Chinese) were slaughtered in the greatest postwar disaster to befall any group and the greatest single act of mass murder since World War II. Even the one Southeast Asian country which supposedly had fallen under Peking's sway, Prince Sihanouk's Cambodia, quite decisively denounced China for "interference" in its internal affairs in 1967. Chinese-Cambodian friendship associations were dissolved and pro-Peking newspapers suppressed.

It is a striking fact that not one emerging nation and not one revolutionary movement in the world swears any kind of political, military, or ideological allegiance to Peking. But why should this seem astonishing? It is one thing to unite the poor within a nation—a difficult enough

* Che Guevara, when still a member of Castro's government made a trip to Peking and reportedly returned "empty-handed" and "bitterly disappointed" over Chinese unwillingness to extend the kind of economic aid Cuba requested. *New York Times*, 11 October 1967.

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task—and quite another to unite the poor nations in a world movement—an impossible feat. The Chinese face a vast cacophony of third-world interests, loyalties, traditions, and ambitions. Most scholars agree that the “third world” consists of a diverse conglomeration of nations having nothing in common except their poverty and their all-abiding passion to remain, or become, masters of their own destinies. Some of the emerging nations have been receptive to one-party socialism, but when doctrine has been identified with Soviet or Chinese power, they have resisted it as a threat to their independence.¹⁵ No matter how resentful toward the West, the new nations have shown no inclination to close ranks behind Peking. “The broad movement of opinion in the underdeveloped countries is certainly toward socialist solutions, but these take local forms and seem only to succeed insofar as they are identified with national characteristics. That, after all, is what happened to communism in China itself.”¹⁶

CHINESE NATIONALISM

Among the many reasons why the emerging peoples have been unwilling to dedicate themselves to Peking was their realization that Peking was not especially dedicated to them. While urging the oppressed peoples to read Mao, the Chinese leaders pursued a policy of national self-interest strikingly at odds with the rhetoric of world revolution. China long has accused the Soviets of being selfish nationalists, and of lacking a true communist dedication to the oppressed peoples of the world. But since 1960, Moscow, in turn, has complained of China’s “great nation chauvinism.” In Khrushchev’s words, Mao was “oblivious of any interests other than his own.”¹⁷ Both the Russians and the Chinese were correct about each other.

Like the Soviet Union, the Chinese People’s Republic

found itself to be a revolutionary state in theory but a nation-state in reality, and as such it could not ignore its own interests for the sake of overseas revolutionary movements; it could not develop profitable relations with the existing governments of Europe, Africa, Asia, and Latin America while simultaneously calling for their overthrow.¹⁸ The Chinese castigated the Russians for failing to distinguish between "communist" and "imperialist" countries, but themselves courted conservative regimes in Africa, the Middle East, and Southeast Asia none of which qualified as an example of what people's liberation wars were supposed to produce. The Chinese pursued close relations with Burma even as the Burmese government was at war with its own native communist insurgents. They began shifting their sources of modern machinery from the communist nations to the capitalist countries of the West, and greatly increased their trade with such capitalist citadels as West Germany, Canada, Australia, France, Great Britain and Argentina.

National opportunism and nationalistic pride were evident causes of the Sino-Soviet split.* Even the French Communist leader Maurice Thorez once complained that too much of the Moscow-Peking dispute resembled a traditional great-nation conflict that had little meaning for the other communist parties.¹⁹ Peking accused Moscow of kowtowing to the United States, the one nation intent upon depriving China of the security, respect, and prestige normally accorded a great power. "They are very proud," noted one Soviet historian departing from Peking. "They want equality in the world. We have won it; they are still struggling for it."²⁰

Peking's nonrevolutionary, nonideological approach was revealed in its willingness to apply the "wars of liberation" label to almost any anti-colonial, nationalistic coup or rebellion, including struggles in Algeria, Angola, the

* See Chapter One for details.

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Congo, and the Dominican Republic which were conducted in the absence of any effective Marxist-Leninist parties. Chairman Mao pointed out that China sided not only "with all socialist countries" but with "the Asian and African countries and all the peace-loving countries and peoples."²¹ The Chinese presumption is that almost any emerging third-world nationalism weakens the United States and makes the world that much more of a secure place for China. "It is one of the great triumphs of Peking's propaganda," writes Benjamin Schwartz, "that Washington has come to agree with this view."²²

THE GRAND FABRICATION

Summarizing the evidence of the last two chapters we are obliged to conclude that the image of China as a world aggrandizer is an anti-communist fabrication. Washington policymakers publicize Peking's more bellicose propaganda utterances while ignoring those conciliatory policy statements which urge negotiation of disputes and peaceful co-existence. They portray China as a demonic monolithic force even as her entire political and social order has been shaken by internal strife. They bedevil us with visions of Chinese power that bear no resemblance to her actual resources, and they entertain anticipations of Chinese expansionism that are strikingly at odds with China's past and present behavior. Arriving at the belated insight that the Soviet Union pursues a limited traditional policy of national self-interest, American policymakers now propagate the image of a China dedicated to world domination. At no time have they seen fit to specify *how* the Chinese would be capable of creating a worldwide ideological movement subservient to Peking. To support their demonology they make irresponsible and misleading references to Peking's "openly proclaimed blueprint for global conquest" but a careful reading of Chinese state-

ments reveals no intention to export or control liberation movements and much stress on the indigenous nature of revolution.

When the Chinese argue that any failure to oppose "US aggression" would only feed the aggressor's appetite and eventually invite war, one is struck by the extent to which their view of the United States as an insatiable aggrandizer resembles the American view of China, but the two positions are not exactly mirror images. Given the military actualities, Chinese fears have a basis in reality. It would be sheer paranoia for Peking to claim that the United States is occupying countries on its border, waging war within miles of Chinese territory, openly arming and defending its mortal enemy on Taiwan, repeatedly violating its air space, maintaining massive naval, air, and land forces within short striking distance—were it not largely true.²³ American military threats along China's coast from Thailand to Korea are real and enormous. Chinese military threats along America's coast—or anywhere in the Pacific Ocean—are nonexistent.

From their perspective, the Chinese see American protestations of peaceful intention as crass lies designed to cloak imperialism. China's policy has been directed more *against* the massive military presence of the United States in Asia than *for* any program of world revolution. Peking holds that any Asian government permitting itself to become a base for American military activity poses a threat to peace in Asia and to the security of China. Thus as Thailand invited greater numbers of US troops and arms into its territory, it increasingly became the target of Chinese denunciations. Peking is less sensitive to an American military presence in noncontiguous nations such as the Philippines.²⁴ Their entire history has convinced the Chinese that Western nations show no respect for the rights of China unless confronted with the militant determination of a strong and self-reliant Chinese people,

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and relations predicated on any other basis leads to national degradation and subservience.

American decisionmakers have chosen to overlook the extent to which Peking is motivated by considerations of national pride and by the conviction arising from twenty years of experience, that the United States is an implacable threat to Chinese national security. Refusing to recognize the legitimacy of China's fears, our policymakers have been able to conclude that China's resentment and antagonism is a manifestation of aggression rather than a response to American initiatives. "I am convinced," then-Secretary Rusk said, without further explanation, "that [Peking's] desire to expel our influence and activity from the Western Pacific and Southeast Asia is not motivated by fears that we are threatening them."²⁵ Not only do *we* know that China has nothing to fear from us, but we presume the *Chinese* also know it. Therefore their denunciations of the United States could only extend from belligerent intent. This fits comfortably with the long-standing American conviction that no nation could harbor a justifiable fear or antagonism toward the United States. At no time did Rusk or Johnson recognize the possibility that our own actions might have been an important cause of China's feelings toward us. "Apparently," noted a *New Republic* editorial, "manufacturing self-fulfilling prophecies has become a habit. By isolating and humiliating China we encourage Chinese hostility, then we cite her rudeness and bellicosity to justify our attitude."²⁶

While greeting China's apprehension with a facile, almost patronizing skepticism, we treat our own phobias about Peking—regardless of the sparsity of evidence—with the utmost gravity, the very intensity of our fear being taken as sufficient validation of its accuracy. Even though there is no evidence that China is a threat to the world or to us it is enough to conjecture that she might possibly become a menace in the unforeseeable future. At this point

policymakers are no longer dealing with political probabilities. Responding not to reality but to a chain of imagined horrors that emerge from the wildest pictures in their heads, they believe it is enough to conjure an image of what *might* happen based on the conjecture that *anything* could happen. The results can be tragic.

NOTES

1. The debate is summarized in Crankshaw, *The New Cold War: Moscow v. Peking*, pp. 105 ff.
2. See Tang Tsou, *Orbis*, Spring 1964.
3. *New York Times*, 27 September 1966.
4. Quoted in *Mainichi* (Tokyo), 7 September 1966.
5. Lin Piao, "Long Live the Victory of the People's War," mimeographed (Peking: NCNA International Service in English, 2 September 1965).
6. *Ibid.*, p. 17.
7. "Long Live Leninism," *Peking Review*, 26 April 1960. This article quotes Lenin in support of this view.
8. Schlesinger quotes the RAND study in his "Middle Way Out of Vietnam," *New York Times Magazine*, 18 September 1966. See also Donald Zagoria, "China's Crisis in Foreign Policy," *New York Times Magazine*, 1 May 1966, and Lucien Pye, "China in Context," *Foreign Affairs* 45 (January 1967).
9. *New York Times*, 10 May 1966.
10. See Fitzgerald, "Once More the Yellow Peril."
11. (Peking) *People's Daily*, 21 November 1956.
12. J. D. B. Miller, *The Politics of the Third World* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1967), pp. 57-58.
13. Foltz's observations were made in a talk given at Yale University, October 1967.
14. Zagoria, "China's Crisis in Foreign Policy."
15. Ronald Steel, "The American Empire," *Commonweal*, 9 June 1967, p. 337.
16. Fitzgerald, "Once More the Yellow Peril."
17. Quoted in Crankshaw, *The New Cold War: Moscow v. Peking*, pp. 106-107.
18. See George Lichtheim, "Pax Russo-Americana," *Commentary*, April 1966, pp. 60-65.
19. See Crankshaw, *op. cit.*, Chapter 14.

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20. Quoted in Snow, *The Other Side of the River*, p. 662.
21. Mao Tse-tung, *On the Correct Handling of Contradictions Among the People*, English ed. (Peking: 1957), p. 70.
22. Schwartz, "Chinese Vision and American Policy."
23. See Zinn, "Vietnam: Setting the Moral Equation."
24. See *Peace in Vietnam* (American Friends Service Committee, 1966), p. 27 f.
25. Testimony before the House Foreign Affairs Committee, April 16, 1966.
26. *New Republic*, 27 November 1965, p. 6.

Vietnam: Who? Why?

What began as errors of analysis or assumption becomes—through stubbornness, and human and moral investments—something close to a delusion system of national perception and action.

WILLIAM PFAFF

“I’ll be judge, I’ll be jury,” said cunning old Fury; “I’ll try the whole cause and condemn you to death.”

LEWIS CARROLL, *Alice in Wonderland*

No sooner had the East-West confrontation reached a settled stalemate on the European continent in the early 1960s than American policymakers proclaimed the “third world” as the new battleground.¹ Attempts by Moscow and Peking to cultivate diplomatic and economic relations with newly established Afro-Asian governments were treated as prima facie evidence of “growing communist penetration” among the have-not nations. By 1964, South-

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east Asia, and Vietnam in particular, had become the focus of our anti-communist efforts.

A MATTER OF SOME HISTORY

Too often the debate on Vietnam centers exclusively on latter-day events. A review of that country's long history of oppression and struggle might give us a deeper appreciation of the issues.² Vietnam was a country with a rich and highly civilized culture. From pre-colonial days to the time of Diem, villages were ruled by democratically elected local leaders; some 20,000 one-teacher private village schools had given the population an unusually high literacy rate never again to be attained once the French moved in and abolished the schools. (By the eve of World War II, there were more prisons in French Indochina than hospitals or schools.) Under French rule, the Vietnamese peasantry was increasingly victimized by high taxation, absentee landlordism, extortionate land rents and usurious interest rates, creating a vicious system of chronic rural indebtedness and poverty.

Native uprisings were common occurrences since the first colonialist incursions during the latter half of the nineteenth century. In 1930 an insurrection led by the Vietnamese Nationalist Party was crushed and the Party decimated. That same year saw the emergence of the Indochinese Communist Party under the leadership of Nguyen Ai Quoc (Nguyen the Patriot) better known to the world as Ho Chi Minh.* The Communist Party soon met with swift and brutal treatment; by 1932 an estimated 10,000 Communists had been executed. Ho's cadres were driven underground or into exile.³

* The historian Marvin Gettleman once pointed out that the adoption of a name like "the Patriot" would have been an unthinkable act of bourgeois chauvinism for European Marxists in the 1930s, and was indicative of the strong nationalistic element in Vietnamese Marxism.

It may be said of Ho Chi Minh that he was a Vietnamese patriot first, and a communist afterward. In a revealing document published in 1960, he relates: "At first patriotism, not yet communism, led me to have confidence in Lenin." While in Paris in the early 1920s he became convinced that only the Marxist-Leninists were interested in Vietnamese independence. Bourgeois leaders, including Woodrow Wilson whose world campaign for "self-determination" did not extend to Southeast Asia, demonstrated every desire to retain control of their overseas interests. Upon reading Lenin's "Thesis on the National and Colonial Questions," Ho experienced his conversion: "I was overjoyed to tears. Though sitting alone in my room, I shouted aloud as if addressing large crowds: 'Dear Martyrs, compatriots! This is what we need, this is the path to our liberation!'"⁴ After an interview with him in 1946, Harold Isaacs reported that Ho still spoke in a nationalistic rather than a class-struggle idiom: "My party is my country; my program is independence."⁵

In the early years of the Second World War, the Vietnamese Independence League (Viet Minh) was formed under Ho's leadership to fight both the Japanese and the Vichy French. By the end of the war, it had won control of most of the countryside and a Viet Minh congress representing both North and South elected a provisional government for the entire country. There were huge demonstrations in support of Ho's government in Saigon and other cities, and thousands of political prisoners incarcerated by the French and Japanese were set free. Throughout the country Ho Chi Minh was hailed as the liberator and "uncle" of the Vietnamese people. The new Democratic Republic of Vietnam promulgated a Declaration of Independence in September 1945 which began as follows:

"All men are created equal. They are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights, among these are Life, Liberty, and the pursuit of Happiness."

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This immortal statement was made in the Declaration of Independence of the United States of America in 1776. In a broader sense, this means: All the peoples have a right to live, to be happy and free.⁶

Thousands of Frenchmen watched these events, helplessly but unmolested. The accession to power had been peaceful and popular, the Japanese having done little to interfere with the new political arrangements. Ho and his colleagues, optimistic about the future, sent telegrams to all major capitals, requesting recognition for the Vietnamese Republic, admission to the United Nations and authorization to disarm the Japanese troops. The major powers however had other plans; at Potsdam, they (including the Soviet Union) agreed that France still owned Vietnam. They assigned the Chinese Nationalists the job of disarming the Japanese troops in Indochina north of the 16th parallel, while in the southern half, the British were to perform the same task. The Allies made no announcement to the Vietnamese that the French were eventually returning.

In Saigon, after one month of peaceful rule, Ho's officials welcomed the arriving British forces as their "anti-fascist allies." But rather than treating with the new Vietnamese government, the British rearmed some 5,000 French Foreign Legion troops, declared martial law and began forcefully driving the new government from Saigon. French contingents armed and supplied by the United States soon landed in full force, and British, French, and Japanese forces began the brutal job of driving the Vietnamese forces from the South.*

* Instead of abiding by their Potsdam mandate and disarming the Japanese troops, the British put them on a war footing and used them against the Vietnamese. In the North, the Chinese, preferring an independent Vietnam to one under French control, disarmed the Japanese, and allowed the Vietnamese to develop their political and administrative strength around Hanoi. Snow reports that when he discussed these ironic developments with General

Once the Chinese withdrew from the North, the Vietnamese were left without the support of any major power. Ho moved for a political settlement and in 1946 an armistice was signed with Paris establishing the Republic of Vietnam "A Free State having its government, its parliament its armies and its finances" but remaining within the French Union. Elections were held in 1946 with Ho's party emerging triumphant. In Paris, leaders hailed the agreement as a final solution. But as events in Algeria were later to make clear, the colonial army was capable of operating independently toward goals of its own, in this instance, issuing secret orders to sabotage the "Free State" and take over all Vietnam. Thus began the protracted struggle resulting in the death of an estimated million Vietnamese and 25,000 Frenchmen, and ending with the French defeat at Dienbienphu.

Even after the war against the French had resumed, Ho Chi Minh maintained that his goal was an independent Vietnam dedicated to neutrality in the cold war.⁷ This fact should not be overlooked by those who contend that Ho was a tool of "international communism." It was only as he became increasingly aware of American support for the French that he began to show hostility toward Washington. (By 1954, the US was paying 80 percent of the war cost and had provided \$2.5 billion to the French army in Vietnam. Dulles was urging that American forces join the battle, a move opposed by the British and eventually rejected by Eisenhower.)

The nine-power Geneva Agreements of 1954 established a temporary armistice line at the Seventeenth paral-

Douglas MacArthur in 1945 in Tokyo, MacArthur reacted with surprising passion, exclaiming: "If there is anything that makes my blood boil it is to see our allies in Indochina and Java deploying Japanese troops to reconquer these little people we promised to liberate. It is the most ignoble kind of betrayal." *The Other Side of the River*, p. 686.

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led with Ho's forces regrouping to the North and the French to the South, and with free elections to unify Vietnam to come no later than July 1956. Both the Soviet and Chinese delegations at Geneva, not sharing the Vietnamese's intensive dedication to their own cause, and interested in reaching an accommodation with the West, prevailed upon Ho and his colleagues to accept a compromise that was unexpectedly favorable to the French. (It was not the first time that Ho Chi Minh's interests were compromised by a larger communist power.)

The rest of the story is probably more familiar to American readers. As the French departed, the United States moved into the South to create, finance and arm the new Diem government. ~~On six separate occasions from 1955 to 1957 Hanoi's inquiries and requests for national elections were either ignored or explicitly rejected by Diem.~~ President Eisenhower, who earlier had admitted that Ho would win 80 percent of the vote in any election against Bao Dai, supported Saigon's refusal to cooperate. Diem meanwhile embarked upon his vigorous and seemingly single-minded campaign to alienate the South Vietnamese populace. He abolished the age-old locally elected village councils, a move not even the French had attempted, and replaced them with government appointees (including many newly-arrived Northern Catholics). He issued an executive order calling for the imprisonment of "individuals considered dangerous to national defense and common security." Land distributed to the peasants by the Viet Minh was now reclaimed by Diem on behalf of the landlords. Benefits which tenant farmers had won during the war were replaced by the old system of absentee landlordism and land rents as high as 50 percent of the crop. Diem's police terror gathered its own insane momentum of search, raid, plunder, arbitrary arrest, interrogation, torture, and execution.⁸ By 1961 Diem's prisons held some 30,000 victims.

Finding themselves hunted down, the resisters decided to fight back. Open fighting began in 1957, passing from the stage of widely scattered guerilla operations into full partisan warfare by 1959. For two years Hanoi remained apart from, and indeed suspicious of the conflict in the South, holding to a policy of coexistence and peaceful reunification, and going so far as to urge the Southern guerrillas to desist! In 1960, the "Southern Veterans of the Resistance" issued a long proclamation, intended as much for Hanoi as for anyone, describing Diem's prolonged terrorism, and declaring that Saigon had "driven the people of South Vietnam to take up arms in self-defense." The proclamation called for the overthrow of the Diem family and the establishment of "a democratic government of National Union in South Vietnam . . ." ⁹ It was not until September 1960, two-and-a-half years after the fighting began, that Hanoi yielded to pressures from the Southern fighters and publicly sanctioned the war—at the same time reducing North Vietnam's own defense budget to allow for greater economical development.*

That same year the Southern partisans formed the National Liberation Front (NLF) which in the succeeding years grew into a fighting force of some 200,000 men. The South Vietnamese army, despite the best American equipment and the best training and leadership that 20,000 American military "advisors" could provide, showed little taste for combat. (Saigon officials admitted the following desertion rates: 113,000 in 1965; 117,000 in 1966.) ¹⁰ By 1965 the United States was bombing the North, and American forces were doing the major portion of the fighting;

* Lacouture points out in *Vietnam: Between Two Truces*, that the Party Congress in Hanoi did not issue its statement "except at the specific demand and under the moral pressure of the militants in the South, who criticized their Northern comrades' relative passivity in the face of the repression exercised against them by the Saigon authorities . . ."

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their monthly casualties were soon numbering higher than the Saigon army's monthly recruitments. By 1968, along with the NLF forces, the war engaged 30,000 to 40,000 North Vietnamese regulars, a half-million American troops and major US air and naval forces. Hundreds of thousands of Vietnamese were dead, many more were maimed and wounded; more than 300 American soldiers were dying every week, and US forces had suffered over 250,000 battle casualties. Why were we there?

For President Johnson, the reason was clear: if we departed from Vietnam "how many nations might fall before the aggressor? . . . If we allow the Communists to win in Vietnam, it will become easier and more appetizing for them to take over other countries in other parts of the world. We will have to fight again someplace else . . ."¹¹ And in his Johns Hopkins speech of 1965, he noted: "The appetite for aggression is never satisfied. To withdraw from one battlefield means only to prepare for the next." The equation had a compelling simplicity: better to resist the enemy in Vietnam lest we find ourselves fighting in Hawaii or California. (This image of Asian aggressors leapfrogging the entire Pacific and attacking our homeland was described by Walter Lippmann as "a frivolous insult to the United States Navy.") But assuming we were fighting a relentless aggression in Vietnam—itsself an enormous assumption—we still needed to ask, whom did Johnson consider to be the "aggressor"? A reasonable question, for it would be unimaginable that we were waging a war of such scope and savagery without knowing why or whom we were fighting. Yet defining the aggressor has proven to be almost as difficult as defeating him.

DEFINING THE AGGRESSOR

In 1950, Secretary Acheson stated that our objective was to prevent Southeast Asia from being "dominated by

Soviet Imperialism.”¹² By 1954, another expert, Richard Nixon, offered this novel analysis: “The main target of the Communists in Indochina . . . is Japan. Conquest of areas so vital to Japan’s economy would reduce Japan to an economic satellite of the Soviet Union . . .”¹³ Ten years later, W. W. Rostow, a top advisor to President Johnson, stated with all apparent seriousness that the Indochina insurgency against the French in 1946 resulted from a decision by Stalin to launch an offensive in the East.¹⁴ Conclusion: *Moscow was the aggressor, and Ho Chi Minh was Moscow’s puppet.*

Confronted with an insurgency against the Diem regime a few years after Geneva, Washington policymakers now declared that the aggressors were native South Vietnamese “Communists” employing classic guerrilla tactics. Moscow no longer seemed to be the guilty party. As late as 1964 David Halberstam could report with no contradiction from Washington:

The war is largely a conflict of Southerners fought on Southern land. No capture of North Vietnamese in the South has come to light, and it is generally believed that most Vietcong weapons have been seized from the South Vietnamese forces.¹⁵

The State Department White Paper of 1961 was quite emphatic on this point:

The basic pattern of Viet-Cong (Vietnamese Communist) activity is not new, of course. It operated, with minor variations, in China, and Mao Tse-tung’s theories on the conduct of guerrilla warfare are known to every Viet-Cong agent and cadre. *Most of the same methods were used in Malaya, in Greece, in the Philippines, in Cuba, and in Laos.*¹⁶ [Italics added]

Conclusion: *The NLF guerrillas were the aggressors.*

But as America embarked upon a massive escalation in early 1965 to rescue what had become a nearly hopeless

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military situation, the Johnson Administration—by unilateral declaration—redefined the war from a South Vietnamese guerrilla insurgency to an invasion from the North.¹⁷ To propagate the new line the State Department issued another White Paper in 1965 that declared:

The war in Viet-Nam is a new kind of war, a fact as yet poorly understood in most parts of the world . . . In Viet-Nam a totally new brand of aggression had been loosed . . .

Viet-Nam is *not* another Greece, where indigenous guerrilla forces used friendly neighboring territory as a sanctuary.

Viet-Nam is *not* another Malaya, where Communist guerrillas were, for the most part, physically distinguishable from the peaceful majority they sought to control.

Viet-Nam is *not* another Philippines . . .

Above all, the war in Viet-Nam is not a spontaneous and local rebellion against the established government. . . . In Viet-Nam a Communist government has set out deliberately to conquer a sovereign people in a neighboring state. And to achieve its end, it has used every resource of its own government to carry out its carefully planned program of concealed aggression.¹⁸

Conclusion: *Hanoi was the aggressor, and the NLF was Hanoi's puppet.** Intent upon establishing that fact, the State Department's 1965 White Paper spoke of the "massive evidence of North Vietnamese aggression," asserting that the bulk of the Viet Cong forces were from the North,

* Caught in a futile ground war in the South, the United States sought to extend the war to the North, thereby engaging the full force of its air power. By denying the civil aspects of the conflict and insisting that it was external aggression, no limit would be placed on the degree of escalation in either the South or the North. By the Pentagon's own estimates we started bombing the North when there were not more than 400 North Vietnamese regulars in South Vietnam.

and vast amounts of weapons and munitions were from China and other communist states. But a reading of the White Paper's own evidence tends to refute rather than confirm this thesis. Almost all the NLF weapons captured were of American origin and the Vietcong prisoners were overwhelmingly South Vietnamese.¹⁹ In February 1966, Rusk admitted that "80 percent of those who are called Vietcong are or have been Southerners." * In 1967, former Assistant Secretary of State for Far Eastern Affairs Roger Hilsman testified: "Of the 300,000 total enemy force in the South now, 250,000 were recruited in the South."²⁰ Nevertheless, it was now charged that war began in 1958 because Hanoi had committed aggression against the South—albeit with such finesse as to have escaped the attention of the State Department until some seven years later.

Assuming Hanoi *had* invaded the South, it would be difficult to convince the American public and the world that tiny North Vietnam was a fatal threat to American security. There loomed, however, the larger shadow of Communist China. The imagery of diabolic puppetry was conjured once more. In Korea we had declared the North Koreans and the Chinese to be Moscow's puppets. Years later when China became our number one demon, she was promoted from puppet to aggressor in Korea, and from bystander to grand puppeteer in Vietnam. Ho Chi Minh, who throughout the 1950s had been designated a tool of "Mos-

* The following October, however, with characteristic consistency, he said that the indigenous element of Southerners fighting in the Vietcong ranks was "relatively . . . even smaller than was the indigenous element in the case of Greece." This might be true since the Greek revolutionaries of 1945-47 were indeed all Greeks. But to leave no doubt, Rusk added ". . . We shall leave when these invaders and arms from the North go home." The February quotation is from his testimony before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee; the October quotation from a speech in Washington, October 12, 1966.

cow aggression in Southeast Asia," was now a tool of "Peking aggression in Southeast Asia." * Conclusion: *China was the aggressor, and Hanoi was China's puppet.*

To my knowledge there exists no statement by any Chinese spokesman which reveals any intention to dominate Southeast Asia. The only power in the world that has proclaimed such an intention is the United States. Witness this exchange between a high-ranking State Department official and a congressman at a House committee hearing in 1954:

Representative Coudert: "Did I correctly understand you to say that the heart of the present policy toward China and Formosa is that there be kept alive a constant threat of military action vis-à-vis Red China in the hope that at some point there will be an internal breakdown?"

Assistant Secretary of State Robertson: "Yes, sir, that is my conception."

Coudert: "In other words, a cold war waged under the leadership of the United States, with constant threat of attack against Red China, led by Formosa and other Far Eastern groups, and militarily backed by the United States?"

Robertson: "Yes . . ."

Coudert: "Fundamentally, does that mean that the United States is undertaking to maintain for an indefinite period of years American dominance in the Far East?"

Robertson: "Yes. Exactly." ²¹

~~By this view, our intervention was not, and never has been, a mistake. It was part of our grand strategy to counter what we imagined to be communism's grand strategy, as now masterminded by China. In July 1965, Lyndon Johnson asserted, without submitting a shred of supporting evidence: "[The war] is spurred by Communist China. Its~~

* It is not clear when Ho could have become a creation or servant of Chinese Communism. He had been leading the fight for Vietnamese independence since 1930, almost two decades before Mao won power in China.

goal is to conquer the South, to defeat American power and extend the Asiatic dominion of Communism." ²² Secretary McNamara noted: "For Peiping . . . Hanoi's victory would be only a first step toward eventual Chinese hegemony over the two Viet-Nams and Southeast Asia, and towards exploitation of the new strategy in other parts of the world." ²³

To compound the difficult task of defining the aggressor, some State Department officials such as William Bundy stated that despite China's influence, Hanoi "can still make its own decisions." ²⁴ And Secretary Rusk, himself, while considering Peking the grand strategist of world revolution, said "I think Hanoi could stop the war if they decided to do so." In 1965, he wondered why Hanoi had little interest in peace since "they, too, fear the ambitions of Communist China in Southeast Asia." ²⁵ Thus Rusk seemed to think that North Vietnam had conflicting interests with China and was capable of making independent decisions. Perhaps, then, Hanoi was not Peking's puppet? If not, what was the threat to American security in Vietnam? At a press conference in 1967, the question was put to Secretary Rusk with this interesting result:

Q: Why do you think our security is at stake in Vietnam?

Rusk: Within the next decade or two, there will be a billion Chinese on the mainland, armed with nuclear weapons, with no certainty about what their attitude toward the rest of Asia will be.

Now the free nations of Asia will make up at least a billion people. They don't want China to overrun them on the basis of a doctrine of the world revolution.²⁶

Without pondering that last sentence, we now discover that a projected image of China with a billion missile-toting citizens in 1977 or 1987 was the reason for our killing

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large numbers of Vietnamese in 1967. *China* was our enemy. A moment later another reporter asked:

Q: Mr. Secretary, would you describe the net objective in Vietnam then as the containment of Chinese Communist militancy?

Rusk: No, the central objective is an organized and reliable peace. Now if China pushes out against those with whom we have alliances, then we have a problem, but so does China . . .

We are not picking out ourselves—we are not picking out Peking as some sort of special enemy. Peking has nominated itself by proclaiming a militant doctrine of the world revolution and doing something about it. This is not a theoretical debate; they are doing something about it.

The conference ended before he could be asked what it was they were doing. The following day, with even more certainty, Vice President Humphrey declared that we were fighting in Vietnam to defeat “militant aggressive Asian Communism, with its headquarters in Peking, China.”

(Parenthetically we might note that references to China as the enemy had been common for several years. There was, however, one period from the summer of 1966 to the early autumn of 1967 when not one Administrative spokesman referred to Peking as the aggressor, in fact, few referred to Peking at all. During this time, the aggressor was “Hanoi” or less specifically “the Communists,” “the enemy,” “the other side.” Rusk’s press conference in October 1967 and Humphrey’s remarks the following day were, to my knowledge, the first specific reference to “Peking aggression” in more than a year. One explanation is that during that 1966–67 period China was torn by “cultural revolution.” It was impossible to talk of Peking’s ruling “Asian Communism” when it was clear that Peking could not even control much of its own countryside. By October 1967, the uproar within China had quieted down

enough for Rusk to resuscitate the image of a Chinese Menace.)

The war in Vietnam, it seemed, was ultimately a struggle against Communist China. But it must be admitted that the Chinese aggression was of an extraordinary nature. There were no Chinese troops in Vietnam. Rusk's explanation for this was: "The Chinese are willing to fight to the last Vietnamese." Very clever of the Chinese. Yet the stubborn fact remained that if anyone showed a determination to fight to the last Vietnamese it was the United States. And as of 1968 the Chinese had yet to make their first kill.

Furthermore, there was no evidence that China partook of Hanoi's 1960 decision to support the South Vietnam insurgency. There was no evidence to suggest that China exercised control over those doing the fighting, or that China controlled Hanoi's foreign policy.²⁷ In February 1967 when Hanoi announced that a permanent bombing halt could lead to negotiations, the Chinese protested vigorously but this did not cause North Vietnam to alter its position.* North Vietnam consistently "refused to take advice from either Moscow or Peking on political or military tactics" and seemed "more the master of its own war strategy than ever before," reported *The New York Times* in 1967.²⁸ To make matters worse, the North Vietnamese refused to side with Peking in its dispute with Moscow. "Peking," wrote a *Times* correspondent, "is not concealing its annoyances at the praise lavished on the Kremlin hierarchy by the North Vietnamese delegation to the 23rd Congress . . . in Moscow last month,"²⁹ a conference which North Vietnam attended despite the fact that China

* The following May, Chou En-lai once more openly protested Hanoi's willingness to negotiate, warning that North Vietnam would fall into an American trap because the US had not relinquished its belief in a complete military victory. *New York Times*, 21 February 1967, 6 May 1967.

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boycotted it. In 1967, the Peking press called on Hanoi to choose between Russia and China. "It is imperative to oppose the counterrevolutionary line of the Soviet revisionist ruling group. There is no middle road in the struggle between the two lines."³⁰ Hanoi refused to choose.

For all their militant urgings, the Chinese themselves seemed to evince no eagerness to fight in Vietnam. Washington policymakers recognized this much; they continually assured us that China would not enter the war regardless of our escalation, an assurance that did not square with the image of a war-like China which the same policymakers propagated on other occasions. A British correspondent visiting China in 1966 reported:

People in China seem to be surprisingly lukewarm about the war in Vietnam . . . Nowhere in China have I seen a picture of President Ho Chi Minh of North Vietnam, and every one is extremely cautious on the question of support. I feel that the Chinese believe that the Vietcong are composed of South Vietnamese who are heroically liberating their country. The Chinese compare the situation to their own in 1945-49.

Secretary of State Dean Rusk has said that China is seeking to establish a hegemony in Asia under the pretext of supporting wars of liberation. The Chinese answer, which is acceptable when you have seen the country itself, is that they have much too much to do within their own frontiers to harbor such ambitions. The cautious sympathy they profess for the Vietnamese would seem to support this.³¹

The only evidence of Chinese involvement in Vietnam was the material aid Peking began sending to Hanoi—in discernible quantities some time after US bombing of the North had begun. Chinese supplies were hardly a crucial factor, amounting to far less than what the Soviets gave. A report based on American intelligence information noted that, as of 1966, Soviet military assistance totaled about \$200 million annually, Chinese aid \$60 million.³²

(In comparison our military effort was costing us over \$2 billion *monthly*.)

While appreciative of all outside assistance, North Vietnamese leaders emphasized that they made their own decisions, and that they would continue the struggle against American intervention even if no outside succor were forthcoming.³³ Most revolutions receive some outside help, as Howard Zinn has noted. The American revolutionaries of 1776 benefited from French assistance, and in modern times the Algerian rebels were aided by sympathetic Arab nations, but the recipients did not end up as satellites of their benefactors. Even if we were to accept the dubious proposition that outside assistance reduced Hanoi and the NLF to helpless dependency, then Ho should have been considered *Moscow's* puppet since the bulk of the aid was Soviet. Yet in 1967 Secretary Rusk categorically absolved the Russians, saying: "They cannot tell Hanoi what to do." *³⁴ Then by what evidence did we arrive at the conclusion that we were fighting a *Chinese*-directed, Asian-communist imperialism in Vietnam? Ap-

* There remained the question of whether Hanoi could tell the NLF what to do. Rusk refused to consider the NLF or "Vietcong" as a political entity independent of Hanoi. But *Life* magazine correspondent Lee Lockwood, after speaking to both NLF and North Vietnamese spokesmen in Hanoi, reported very considerable differences between them on the questions of future reunification, political control, and foreign policy. The NLF leader Nguyen Van Tien explicitly asserted that the NLF was an autonomous organization that would formulate its own policy. He envisioned a neutralized non-communist independent South Vietnam which would eventually enter a "light kind of federation" with the North but would retain control of its own domestic and foreign affairs. *The New York Times* reported much of the same differences between Hanoi and the NLF. The NLF has been "in existence as a separate quasi-governmental organization for six years. In that period of time its leaders have acquired vested interests."

See Lee Lockwood, "Recollections of Four Weeks with the Enemy," *Life*, 7 April 1967; and *New York Times*, 16 January 1967.

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parently, it was enough to merely make the assertion, pointing out that the Chinese were communists and that they were situated in Asia. By that logic the more Vietnamese "communists" we killed, the sooner we would defeat Chinese communism.

It was a fact that China gave verbal support to revolutions, aided Hanoi, and protested "American aggression" in Vietnam. But let us also consider the Soviet Union: it gave verbal support to social revolutions, furnished far greater quantities of aid to Hanoi and protested "American aggression" in Vietnam. Yet we no longer accused Moscow of wanting to take over Southeast Asia. Moscow's material and diplomatic involvement with North Vietnam was much less during the 1950s, when we branded Russia the aggressor in Vietnam, than in 1967-68 when we absolved her of guilt. The likelihood of our accusing any nation of aggression seemed to have less to do with its actual activities than with our particular anti-communist phobia of the time. There seemed to be an *inverse* or *negative* correlation between one's actual military involvement and one's likelihood of being branded the "aggressor." The NLF, while doing most of the fighting and dying, were not the aggressors, in fact, they were not even recognized as a political entity. The North Vietnamese, who did much less fighting, were given a great share of the guilt. And the Chinese, having made no appearance whatever in the conflict, were considered the most culpable of all.

FINDING THE OBJECTIVE

No doubt China would be pleased to see Vietnam and Southeast Asia free of American troops, and independent of US influence. But that which pleases China is not necessarily a threat to our national security, nor proof of Chinese imperialist conspiracy. An independent, federated

Vietnam* dedicated to its own interests, well-being and eventual reunification, free of all foreign troops, receiving aid from a variety of communist and non-communist sources, would be a threat to neither China nor the United States.

Nor should we assume that such a country would fall under the domination of Peking. Diplomatically the Chinese have been unable to dominate a besieged and divided Vietnam, and there is less reason to think the Vietnamese would become beholden to Peking in peacetime. Militarily, the Chinese would find it neither plausible nor profitable to attempt to conquer Vietnam. (Our own enormous effort in trying to subdue the South is ample demonstration that attempted conquests of large national populations can be horrendous, fruitless, costly, and endless.) The Vietnamese have resisted Chinese interference for a thousand years. There is no evidence that they are any less nationalistic today than previously. (Hanoi still honors heroes of past Vietnamese struggles against China.)

Even if we presume that China had the intention and capability of "dominating" Vietnam and all of Southeast Asia, would this have given the United States the right and interest to wage total war in Vietnam? And even if we did have a right to resist a real or imagined Peking hegemony in Southeast Asia, was this not a basic aim shared by the North Vietnamese who were at least as eager for their own independence as we? It was General de Gaulle who understood that the American war in Vietnam did little to hurt China and little to help build an independent region. If anything, it threatened to draw Chinese power into

* Hanoi most recently seems to have agreed with the NLF that the South should remain a separate entity with a neutral, non-socialist regime, as advocated in the NLF's political program of 1967, with reunification a very long-range, step-by-step process. See William Burchett's dispatch from Hanoi, *New York Times*, 21 October 1967.

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Southeast Asia rather than keep it out. Paris supported a Southeast Asia neutralized by an international agreement having the backing of a wide range of nations—an agreement that would win the reluctant acquiescence, or more likely, the willing accord of Peking.

Why we were fighting in Vietnam seemed almost as difficult to determine as whom. For victory? For peace? In the summer of 1966, Secretary Rusk told U Thant that “the United States wanted to de-escalate the Vietnam war” but that there was a lack of interest on the part of Hanoi. A negotiated peace was our goal. That same day Rusk told an American audience that “any withdrawal before complete victory over communist aggression would be . . . fatal.” To all this Senator Fulbright rejoined: “So one can take a choice of US policy—de-escalation or complete victory. Except that I had always presumed that these were mutually exclusive.”³⁵

Was our purpose to maintain indefinitely our presence in Vietnam or, as we had pledged in Manila, to withdraw within six months after a negotiated settlement? But if we withdrew, what protection would Southeast Asia have against the billion missile-toting Chinese that Rusk envisioned? The Secretary argued it both ways, sometimes insisting that Vietnam was a vital security base to be held at all costs against a present and future Chinese menace, and sometimes insisting that our goal was to achieve an honorable settlement that would take us out of Vietnam. But the available record indicated that our interest in peace seemed to diminish sharply whenever peace threatened to break out.

Through 1964–67 the same dismal pattern emerged. First, assertions by Washington that the other side had shown no interest in negotiations, followed by unexpected revelations from various foreign sources that Hanoi had demonstrated a positive interest in talks, followed by statements from Washington that the offers could not be

considered "serious" or "meaningful," although it was never revealed how such a determination of Hanoi's sincerity could have been made without actually testing the offer.* In nine critical periods attempts by North Vietnam or various third parties to initiate negotiations were greeted by acts of American military escalation.

It remained for General Earle Wheeler, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, to give the clearest statement on American intentions: "Negotiation is not a face-saving device for abandoning the objectives we have been fighting for. It is a method for achieving our objectives. It is a means which I would prefer to military action," he said, adding that the "communists" could end the war any time they desired to and "if negotiations would make it easier for them to cease their aggression, we would be happy to oblige." This summed up the Johnson position. The United States was prepared to negotiate the terms of a communist defeat any time the communists were ready to admit defeat, but Washington evinced no intention of negotiating anything less for itself than "achieving our objectives." Just as Truman was always ready to deal with the Russians if and when they accepted American terms, so throughout 1965-68 Johnson was ready to deal with the NLF and Hanoi. Once again, unwillingness to accede to conditions tantamount to surrender was presented to the American public as evidence of aggression.

Who, then, was the aggressor in Vietnam? According to our leaders, first Soviet imperialism, then native South Vietnamese insurgents, then North Vietnam, then China, then finally transcending all historical actualities—a reified metaphysical entity called "communism" or more recently

* For more detailed accounts of the prevarications centering around negotiation see F. Schurman, *et al.*, *The Politics of Escalation in Vietnam* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1966); and E. S. Herman and R. B. DuBoff, *America's Vietnam Policy: The Strategy of Deception* (Washington, D.C.: Public Affairs Press, 1966).

“Asian communism” with its headquarters in Peking. But communism in Asia, is, in James P. Brown’s words, “a many-splintered thing.” Nationalism not communism seems to be the dominant ideology in Asia. As Lionel Abel concluded:

I would not call myself an anti-Communist, one good reason being that I do not know whom to call Communists. The Russians? The Chinese? The former seem to be closer to the Communist goal, the latter more interested in reaching it. Thus, I could hardly support a policy of containing the spread of Communism, since I do not know what the words ‘Communism’ and ‘spread’ in this usage signify . . . I do not now have to make an exception of Vietnam: I do not know what is being contained there by American arms.³⁶

Why did the United States become involved in the twenty-five-year-long Vietnam war? According to our leaders, first to thwart Soviet imperialism in Southeast Asia, then to save Japan from Moscow’s domination, then to salvage Diem from native insurgents, then to rescue South Vietnam from an invasion from the North, and also to protect Southeast Asia from Chinese Asian Communism, to protect a non-existent political freedom in Saigon, to free South Vietnam of foreign troops, to maintain a permanent military presence in South Vietnam, to withdraw immediately after a negotiated settlement, to win total victory, to establish an American dominance in that region, to establish a neutralized Southeast Asia, to defend our own security, to safeguard the freedom of the entire world—all these varied and sometimes contradictory things, and perhaps still others not yet fabricated.

In Vietnam, as in any other place of our choosing, the aggressor was anyone we so designated, the objective any we cared to imagine, the uncertainty of our course being matched only by the certainty of our presumption.

NOTES

1. President John F. Kennedy and his special assistant Arthur Schlesinger, Jr. quite explicitly saw an emerging contest between the US and the USSR for the "minds and hearts" of the third world. See Schlesinger's *A Thousand Days* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1965), pp. 507-508.
2. To pursue the subject in more detail see the many selections, pro and con, in Marvin Gettleman's expertly edited reader *Vietnam: History, Documents and Opinions on a Major World Crisis* (Baltimore: Penguin, 1965); also Bernard Fall, *The Two Viet-Nams* (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, Inc., 1965); Bernard Fall and Marvin Raskin, eds., *The Viet-Nam Reader* (New York: Random House, 1965); Jean Lacouture, *Vietnam: Between Two Truces* (New York: Random House, 1966). The periodical *Viet-Report* has a wealth of up-to-date material. For a totally pro-Administration, anti-communist polemic, see Frank Trager, *Why Vietnam?* (New York: 1966). A brief, excellent, lucid, and well-documented critique of US policy is Edwin S. Herman and Richard DuBoff, *America's Vietnam Policy: The Strategy of Deception* (Washington, D.C.: Public Affairs Press, 1966). An earlier account of Vietnam developments can be found in Edgar Snow, *The Other Side of the River*, chapter 85. A succinct and effective statement is Howard Zinn, *Vietnam: The Logic of Withdrawal* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1967).
3. See R. Jumper and M. W. Normand, "Vietnam: The Historical Background," Gettleman, *op. cit.*, pp. 10-28.
4. Ho Chi Minh, "The Path Which Led Me to Leninism," Gettleman, *op. cit.*, pp. 30-32.
5. Harold Isaacs, selections from *No Peace for Asia*, Gettleman, *op. cit.*
6. Declaration of Independence of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam, September 2, 1945, Gettleman, *op. cit.*, pp. 57-59.
7. See Ellen J. Hammer, "Genesis of the First Indochina War: 1946-1950," in Gettleman, *op. cit.*, p. 85.
8. See Philippe Devillers, "The Struggle for Unification of Vietnam," *The China Quarterly*, no. 9 (January/March 1962), pp. 2-23.
9. Devillers, *op. cit.*
10. See Bernard Fall, "The American Commitment in Vietnam," *Saturday Review*, 4 February 1967, p. 40.
11. *New York Times*, 7 February 1966.

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12. Dean Acheson's statement of May 8, 1950, Gettleman, *op. cit.*, p. 89.
13. Gettleman, *op. cit.*, pp. 90-92.
14. A view Rostow voiced in 1964. See Theodore Draper, *The Abuse of Power* (New York: Viking Press, 1967), p. 23; also Rostow, *View From the Seventh Floor* (New York: Harper & Row, 1964), p. 149.
15. *New York Times*, 6 March 1964.
16. Department of State Publication 7308, December 1961; selections in Fall and Raskin, *op. cit.*, pp. 123-125.
17. See Hans J. Morgenthau, *Vietnam and the United States*, p. 71.
18. Department of State Publication 7839, February 1965, Gettleman, *op. cit.*, pp. 284-285.
19. See I. F. Stone's devastating critique of the 1965 White Paper, Gettleman, *op. cit.*, pp. 317-323.
20. *New York Post*, 14 October 1967.
21. Hearings before the House Committee on Appropriations, 26 January 1954, pp. 125, 127.
22. *New York Times*, 29 July 1965.
23. Address of March 26, 1964, Fall and Raskin, *op. cit.*
24. *New York Times*, 9 February 1966.
25. *New York Times*, 23 June 1965.
26. *New York Times*, 13 October 1967.
27. See Herman and DuBoff, *America's Vietnam Strategy*, p. 96 ff.
28. *New York Times*, 5 November 1967.
29. *New York Times*, 30 April 1966. See also Herman and Duboff, *op. cit.*, p. 91.
30. The official Chinese newspaper *Jenmin Jih Pao*, quoted in *Time*, 28 July 1967.
31. Frank Tuohy, AP dispatch, *New York Times*, 29 April 1966.
32. Frederick Taylor, *Wall Street Journal*, 14 February 1967.
33. See the interviews with officials in Hanoi, Lynd and Hayden, *The Other Side*, *passim*.
34. *New York Times*, 13 March 1967.
35. See Tom Wicker, *New York Times*, 2 September 1966.
36. Lionel Abel, *Commentary*, September 1967, p. 32.

Revolution and Counterrevolution

Among precautions against ambition it may not be amiss to take one precaution against our own. I must fairly say, I dread our own ambition. I dread our being too much dreaded.

EDMUND BURKE

. . . Rome, in her present exalted situation, had much less to hope than to fear from the chance of arms; and . . . in the prosecution of remote wars, the undertaking became every day more difficult, the event more doubtful, and the possession more precarious and lest beneficial.

EDWARD GIBBON,

The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire

FOR the anti-communist true believer what is important is not whether Moscow, Peking, Hanoi, and the NLF work in monolithic unison or independently of each other, it is whether they are or are not communists. For those opposed to "the horrors of communism" it is small consolation to discover that a communist insurgency is indigenous rather than foreign controlled. Once more we are confronted with the view that ten devils—even ten who contest each other—are at least as bad as one. And whether

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or not Satan takes on new appearances and becomes things other than what we supposed him to be, he is still Satan. Frequently an object long-feared remains terrifying even after the threatening conditions associated with it have been removed. There was a time when communism was feared because it was a monolithic globalistic conspiracy; that image having been shattered by widely evident polycentric conflicts, communism is now feared because it is communism.

No matter that the revolutionaries in some country enjoy popular support and represent nationalistic sentiment; or that they are willing and eager to pursue a neutralist course in East-West relations, thereby posing no threat to the security of the United States; no matter that neither Moscow nor Peking can control them or profit from their revolution, at least no more than we—what matters is that they have been labeled “communists,” and even if we need not save them from the Russians or the Chinese, it appears that we must still save them from themselves.

Yet the contention that we are prepared to do battle with communism in all its appearance is itself not quite accurate, for, in fact, Washington policymakers do not consider all communists equally abhorrent. Yugoslavs and Poles have tasted the advantages of American subsidies and trade, and Washington signs treaties and enjoys cultural exchanges with Moscow. It would seem that some communists are not such devils after all, at least not to the extent that we need be chronically antagonistic toward them. Why do some communists arouse American hostility while others are deserving of aid and ballet? As far as I can tell, the acceptable communists are those who, in the American view, are reconciled to the ongoing world, while the unacceptable ones are those presumed to be antagonistic toward this world, the propagators of violence and revolution. “Revolution,” rather than “communism” *per se*,

seems to be the crucial factor. Consider the opinion of General Maxwell Taylor, written at a time when he was a close advisor to Lyndon Johnson. Taylor sees a world beset by actual and potential "troublemakers," whom he defines as follows: "Most of them are presently Communist, but *this is not an essential characteristic.*" (Italics mine.)¹ The essential characteristic is that they attempt to disrupt "world stability."

That the actual presence of communism is not a necessary factor in our counterrevolutionary policy is nowhere better seen than in the events surrounding the Dominican rebellion. In 1962, in the Dominican Republic's first genuinely democratic post-Trujillo election, Juan Bosch, a leader of the non-communist left, won an overwhelming victory. Less than a year later, a military coup swept Bosch from office. The new military government, denounced by President Kennedy, was accorded diplomatic recognition by Lyndon Johnson soon after his accession to the White House. In April 1965, led by pro-Constitutionalist army officers, a popular force of some 6,000 civilians consisting of industrial workers, urban unemployed, Catholic trade unionists, artisans, students and professionals, supporters of Juan Bosch, delivered a swift and nearly fatal blow to the pro-US junta. It was at that point Lyndon Johnson hastened to intervene with 23,000 US Marines who forthwith established a noose around the Constitutionalist forces, pulverized the popular army with artillery and mounted machine guns for two days and three nights, and, after cutting the rebel zone in two, permitted the re-grouped junta troops to wipe out the isolated northern sector. The total number of Dominicans killed in the fighting, according to Bosch, was from three to four thousand.

After saving the military junta, the United States set to work composing a list of Dominican "communists" thereby to justify our intervention. The fifty-three names

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gathered by the CIA and submitted by the State Department for public disposal included very few who were active communists, few who were actually associated with the civil war, some who were not even in the country, and a number who had been liberal student leaders. When the reliability of this list was widely challenged, US officials gave assurances that the actual number of communists was not important; the essential point was that the country had been saved before any pro-Castro elements could emerge to take advantage of things;² it being well understood that communists work best when invisible.*

From opposing communists because they might be revolutionaries, it was a short step to opposing revolutionaries because they might be communists. The logic of this devolution might be summarized as follows: to contain communism we must bolster the "stability" of various conservative and even reactionary regimes; social revolutions threaten these regimes; ergo, we must actively discourage social revolutions. Evidence of an actual communist presence is not a prerequisite for intervention. For all our talk of a better future for mankind, we have become increasingly apprehensive about the world to be and dedicated to the world as it is. Thus have we surrendered to "communism" the sponsorship of revolution everywhere.³

PEACEFUL REVOLUTIONS?

American policymakers contend that they accept and even encourage peaceful change; their opposition is to *violent* change. World politics is viewed as a contest be-

* The numbers game went from 3 to 8 to 53 to 58 and then down to 54 and finally to 77, but the theory remained that numbers did not really count. Rusk noted: "There was a time when Hitler sat in a beer hall in Munich with seven people." Ambassador Bennett and Under Secretary Thomas Mann both noted that Castro began with only twelve men.

tween the forces of orderly evolution and the forces of subversion and aggression. The criterion for evaluating other nations' behavior becomes a simple one: those leaders standing for stability and peaceful development, joining what both Johnson and Rostow described as the "tide of good sense and moderation," win our support; the others are likely to incur our enmity. This position assumes (a) that the US has the right to define the limits and methods of change within other nations, (b) that our own security necessitates an American counterrevolutionary role, (c) that revolutions are a greater evil than the violent oppression employed by the ruling groups to maintain their privileged positions, or a greater evil than the cumulative ongoing deprivations suffered by the people, and (d) that social revolutions can be peacefully accomplished within the established order of most third world nations.

Let us start with the last assumption. It is contended by many liberal policymakers that they are not so much opposed to the *objectives* of social revolutions as to the *methods*, and that they too favor land reform and mass education and the elimination of the myriad wants and abuses extant in poorer countries. But these transformations must be effected slowly and peacefully, a qualification which sounds reasonable enough to affluent Americans who, experiencing none of the miseries that afflict the masses in other lands, are capable of an admirable forbearance. No one is more inclined to counsel patience and moderation to the ill-fed, exploited, and oppressed than those who are well-fed, self-sufficient, and powerful.

But the appeal to nonviolent gradualism bears little relation to the reality faced by severely deprived peoples. The simple fact is that in most countries social revolutions cannot be peaceably accomplished. "Revolution by peaceful means is an historical rarity," Senator Fulbright reminds us.⁴ Even in the West the monumental political

transformations often came as violent upheavals, there being hardly a nation in the world whose origins cannot be found in violence, including our own.

Perhaps in very prosperous nations where the poverty is relatively limited compared to the available resources, and where reallocations can be made without jeopardizing the essential interests of the ruling classes, peaceful changes of piecemeal and limited scope might be achieved by political means. But in the poor nations the situation is qualitatively different. As Conor Cruise O'Brien reminds us, the oppressed are not minorities but masses; the resources are not bountiful but scarce. It is the landowners, large merchants, military chieftains, usurers, sweatshop owners, bosses, and top bureaucrats whose existence depends on maintaining a tight control on the limited wealth, whose *raison d'être* is threatened by social revolution, either peaceful or violent.⁵ The admonition, "If you don't carry out reform then the communists will," makes little sense to the native rulers. For them, the voluntary implementation of basic structural reforms would be nothing less than an act of class suicide, as fatal to their privileged existence as any violent change. Why fight to keep the rabble from grabbing the land only to hand it to them on a platter? Thus no effective agrarian reform program has materialized in Vietnam and other places.

The failure of peaceful reform is usually ascribed to the "corruption" and "mismanagement" of the ruling government functionaries. While native elites are certainly guilty of these shortcomings, the truth is they are not as shortsighted as we sometimes believe. Agrarian reform programs are technically simple affairs, certainly when compared to the herculean feats performed on behalf of war and military build-up, and even rulers of the caliber found in Saigon, with minimal American assistance, could implement a realistic land-reform program in a short time. Not innocent ineptitude but deliberate in-

tent has been behind their inertia. If anyone is shortsighted it is those Americans who seem unable to understand that oligarchs have no interest in jeopardizing their positions by introducing substantive innovations, and feel no compulsion to "mend their ways" as long as we remain willing to expend American wealth and American blood in their defense.

Instead of reform, the ruling class manages to get others to defend its interests.

Such defense [O'Brien notes] need not always be as obvious as the employment of white mercenaries by the government of the Congo. Rulers of most poor countries . . . can recruit mercenaries from among their own people. This method is . . . less reliable because the danger of defection and mutiny is inescapable when national forces are used in a revolutionary situation.⁶

The poor performance of a national army having no compulsion to die for the preservation of class privileges which few of its enlisted men enjoy, gives rise to the need for extra-national counterrevolutionary troops. Ruling classes about to be overwhelmed, seek outside assistance or receive such assistance without looking for it, from nations having direct interests in the country (thus Belgian troops in the Congo and French troops in Gabon) or from nations that consider their interests threatened by social revolution anywhere (thus US troops in Santo Domingo and Vietnam). If the initial intervention fails to restore some semblance of the status quo, repeated appeals to US anti-communist ideology are usually sufficient to induce escalated efforts, and native elites soon learn to speak in the idiom of American anti-communism, producing the kind of testimony that best feeds Washington's own demonological view of the world.

Here we have reached a curious state of affairs: what began as an American commitment to peaceful nonviolent

change ends as an American commitment to violent defense of the status quo. Violence can be employed for change only when the change favors reactionism as in Guatemala, Iran, Indonesia, and the Dominican Republic. Throughout such ventures, the anti-communist double standard is rigorously maintained: the Soviets or Chinese cannot send troops to support revolutions but the United States can send or support forces to suppress revolutions or overthrow governments.

THE AMERICAN EMPIRE

The professed desire of American policymakers to see poorer nations avoid the extremes of reaction and revolution and seek the middle road of reform would carry more conviction were it not that American efforts almost always support the reactionary rather than the reformist elements. In those few instances when our aid has been intended for reform, it has been of such limited amounts that—even had it enjoyed the unlikely fate of being seriously administered by the ruling classes—it would have done little to alleviate the gross inequities and mass deprivations suffered by the common people.

In most instances funds have found uses that by no stretch of the imagination can be said to serve the cause of reform. A substantial portion of American aid to Vietnam has made its way into the Swiss and French bank accounts of the ruling clique or in other ways has been shamefully misused for elite profit. In Laos American aid per capita is higher than in any other country. Some of this actually has been used for irrigation. "Unfortunately, irrigated areas then tend to be claimed as personal property by wealthy landlords who promptly turn the peasants into serfs." ⁷ Unaccompanied by any *political* program of social reform, American funds fall into the hands of those

who have the power to command and distribute monies, those least interested in change. The attempt to work for reform within the existing system becomes a self-contradictory policy since the system's first principle is to maintain itself against the claims of the deprived. The alternative approach calls for large infusions of American aid only *after* a major revamping of social goals and a turnover of ruling personnel, that is, only after a social revolution.

The present world trend is toward neither reform nor revolution, but toward military rule, and the United States has played its part in such developments. In Iran, Greece, and in at least seven Latin American republics in recent years, American-supported governments have been overthrown by American-equipped armies. In each instance the ensuing military regimes became the beneficiary of further US aid.

In Portugal, 50 percent of the American subsidized national budget is for military expenditures (used to maintain 100,000 troops in Mozambique and Angola). Eighty percent of the American-subsidized Taiwan budget goes to support Chiang's army. Sixty percent of the subsidized South Korean budget is for military purposes (while about 20 percent of the South Korean population was unemployed as of 1965). The Thailand autocracy has been strengthened daily by a large-scale build-up of American and native forces. In the last reasonably free election in Laos, in 1958, the Neo Lao Naksat (political arm of the Pathet Lao) and an allied left-neutralist party won 62 percent of the National Assembly's contested seats; the United States responded by cutting off the Laotian government's large monthly subsidy, and stepping up the flow of arms and money to right-wing generals. The government was soon forced to resign.⁸

One might say that much of the world today has been transformed into an American armed camp. As of 1968,

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the United States was maintaining far more than a million of its fighting men abroad,* along with military advisory teams in at least 38 countries, major military bases in 20 countries and more than 3,000 "minor bases" scattered throughout the world. The United States was arming and subsidizing almost 2,000,000 native troops, largely under the command of military dictators, and was supplying some form of assistance—most of it military—to 76 countries, about three-fifths of all the nations on earth.† Also the United States was a member of five regional defense alliances, 42 bilateral defense pacts and had committed itself, in the words of President Johnson, to provide "throughout the world . . . the resources needed to combat aggression . . ." a pledge made with the explicit understanding that it was not confined to the countries with whom we had signed treaties. In the history of mankind no nation has done more to propagate the instruments of violence and increase the potential occasions for violence.

The "Free World" might be described statistically. In Venezuela, two percent of the population owns 75 percent of the land. In Brazil, five percent owns 95 percent of the land. In Peru thirty families own 80 percent of the native (as opposed to foreign) wealth.⁹ In Argentina 1,000 individuals control 78 percent of the native capital.‡ After receiving almost \$3 billion in economic and military

* Europe (365,000), Latin America (40,000), Africa and the Middle East (10,000), Japan (40,000), Korea (50,000), Thailand (35,000), and the rest in Vietnam.

† The smaller portion of nonmilitary aid often indirectly subsidized the military by freeing native government monies for military expenditures.

‡ The Argentine military dictatorship passed a decree in 1967 defining a communist as anyone "who carries out activities that are proved to be undoubtedly motivated by Communist ideology." The law is retroactive and those arrested have no recourse to bail; the secret police alone determine who is a communist. *New York Times*, 10 October 1967.

aid over a twenty-year period, Greece remains a country in which four hundred families control most of the wealth and the land. (The military junta that seized power in 1967 has done little to change the socio-economic structure but much to destroy whatever political freedom Greek citizens enjoyed, abolishing elections, suppressing newspapers and imprisoning thousands.) In Guatemala, fifty men control 69 percent of the native capital valued at 66 percent of the gross national product. In Honduras, twelve men alone own 90 percent of the native capital which returns to them 90 percent of the national income.¹⁰ Per capita food consumption in Latin America is less today than twenty-five years ago.

According to Lleras Camargo, former president of Colombia, not one of the governments in Latin America has ever prosecuted a single politician or industrialist for tax evasion, a widespread practice among the rich. The tax burden in most free-world countries falls most heavily on the poor. In South Vietnam, according to one *New York Post* report, "there is still a staggering degree of tax evasion and cheating, particularly among those who are profiting most from the war."¹¹ In those areas controlled by the United States, Vietnamese tenant farmers composing the bulk of the agrarian population "are forced to pay up to 50 percent and more of their rice crop to absentee landlords."¹² In most Southeast Asian countries, a tiny faction owns and controls the great bulk of arable land.

Usually Washington neither supports nor is indifferent to reform, rather it actively opposes it. By taking strong measures to buttress "stability" in various countries, the United States frequently helps to destroy whatever conditions exist for peaceful change. The pattern is something like this: reactionary oligarchs resisting all significant change rely first on terror, then on American military support. Small numbers of social reformers—usually urban intellectuals, trade unionists, and professional politicians—

seek to break the hold of reactionary forces but remain unwilling to base themselves in a revolutionary movement of workers and peasants. Lacking real mass support, yet soon becoming the objects of government repression, these reformers must either turn toward revolution or retreat into quietism.* "While American Peace Corpsmen and aid officials ply their Sisyphean labors in the villages, other Americans work among the oligarchs and generals to prevent a radical force from emerging. The reformer falls." ¹⁸

Now and then a popular reform-minded leader manages to get elected to the presidency of a Latin American country. But once in office he finds that any moves toward land and tax reforms and nationalization of foreign investments, encounters the opposition of industrialists, landowners, the military, and the United States. If he accommodates himself to the powers that be, he may achieve political survival at the cost of his reform program. If he pursues his program he is ousted by the military—with or without a hand from the CIA. Soon many of his supporters arrive at the correct conclusion that no populist leader can survive without the benefit of a social revolutionary army at his command. The lesson was made clear in Guatemala and the Dominican Republic.

In Guatemala the nine years of left-wing reformism under *democratically elected* Presidents Arevalo and Arbenz achieved the highest annual increase in per capita income, 8.5 percent as compared to an average of 3 percent in eleven other Latin American countries. The Arevalo and Arbenz governments instituted educational reforms (only 10 percent of the population had been attending school), legalized unions, encouraged a free press, and then proclaimed an agrarian reform program. That last measure was their undoing. (Some 400,000 fallow acres belonged

* One such middle-class intellectual who advocated reform was Fidel Castro; his dedication to peaceful parliamentary change led to his imprisonment by Batista.

to the United Fruit Company.) When Arbenz distributed 180,000 acres to the peasants, the United States condemned him as a communist,¹⁴ found an American-trained right-wing colonel, Carlos Castillo Armas, fed him guns and money to set up a rebel force (including six F-47s piloted by US "volunteers") in Honduras and Nicaragua, and helped him overthrow Arbenz.

Once in power Armas arrested and murdered scores of opponents, disfranchised some 70 percent of the people—mostly peasants, passed a "liberation tax" on the populace, restored all lands expropriated from United Fruit, allowed plantation owners to cut wages by 30 percent, abolished the tax on all interest, dividends and profits to investors living outside the country, awarded easy-term oil concessions equivalent to more than half the area of Guatemala to American companies.¹⁵ For all this within two years he received from American taxpayers some \$90 million in arms and cash subsidies.*

Today with an American-equipped army and paramilitary squads trained by the CIA and Special Forces, the right-wing forces in Guatemala have undertaken a protracted campaign of terror. In the month of April 1967 alone, thirty-five persons were murdered. *The New York Times* in January 1968 estimated the total number of assassinations as being anywhere from two to four thousand. The Guatemalan bishops were moved to issue a pastoral letter in protest: "Men are torn violently from their homes by unidentified kidnappers, or they are brutally murdered, their bodies appearing later with signs of torture and mutilation."¹⁶ Father Bonpane, one of the group of Maryknoll

* Much of this largesse was distributed to various friends and relatives. Some of it found its way back to America, e.g., Thomas J. Dodd as representative of the Guatemala sugar lobby reaped \$50,000 a year. When later elected Senator from Connecticut, Dodd found himself "too busy" to lead the Senate investigation of sugar lobbies. See Gerassi, *op. cit.*

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priests who helped organize credit unions and resettlement programs for landless Guatemalan peasants, and who supported the Guatemalan leftists, summed up the US role in Guatemala:

No one wants violence, but when you have American power thrown behind the two percent of the people who own 80 percent of the land, and supporting a right-wing army that shoots reformers on the spot as "Communists," violence is already institutionalized.¹⁷

In the Dominican Republic American interventionism reaped another grim harvest. After the Marines took an active part in crushing the popular revolution of 1965, an election was staged between the junta-backed and American-supported Balaguer and the reformist Bosch with US troops remaining to see the outcome.* In the United States the election was widely hailed as an example of democracy, American-style, but Bosch issued repeated protests against the incidents of right-wing terror and spent the entire campaign in his home for fear of assassination. Bosch's party was effectively cut off from the countryside by the US Marines, and access to the rural population in effect was confined to Balaguer's party. The US-Balaguer group spent an estimated \$13 million on the election.

Once in office Balaguer reversed his campaign pledge for lower prices and higher salaries; prices increased, salaries were frozen (in some cases lowered), and strikes were prohibited for at least a year. No limits were placed on profits.¹⁸ The reforms advocated by the defeated constitu-

* After the Santo Domingo cease-fire, there was some question as to whether American Marines would leave even after elections were held. "It depends," an assistant to U.S. official Ellsworth Bunker, said, "on what the new government wants." Observers took this to be sufficiently vague as to raise doubts. The new government was the American-supported one and we evacuated our troops.

See Sidney Lens, "The Unfinished Revolution," *The Nation*, 2 May 1966, p. 523.

tionalists, viz., giving workers a right to profit sharing, prohibiting landholdings over a certain maximum, restricting the right of foreigners to acquire land—all opposed by the United States—were now dreams of the past.¹⁹

James Petras concluded in 1966:

With illiteracy still over 60 percent, with at least one-third of the labor force of Santo Domingo unemployed . . . with 400,000 peasants lacking sufficient land to live on, with 200,000 school-age children out of school, and with drinkable water available for only 5 out of every 300 peasants, the need for profound structural changes is obvious.²⁰

During the period of the provisional government, over 280 Constitutionalist leaders and activists were killed in the Dominican Republic; not one of the murderers was apprehended by the American troops who were keeping the peace. The rate of attrition did not diminish noticeably in the post-election period. Prominent Constitutionlists were being selectively and systematically assassinated in what the *Christian Science Monitor* described as "mounting terrorism."²¹ Several thousand militant workers were dismissed from their jobs, and officers with constitutionalist sympathies were ousted from the army. "All efforts have been directed toward purging any possible dissident political force and creating a military completely loyal to the United States and to Balaguer."²²

In Guatemala and the Dominican Republic we were against fundamental peaceful reform and supported violent reactionism.

WHY REVOLUTIONS?

As advantaged groups would have it, rebellion is always the mischief of a few chronic malcontents, agitators, and outsiders. For the business community in China, the anti-foreigner uprisings of 1925 were "a Soviet plot."²³

Throughout much of the history of European and American industrialism, propertied classes blamed labor unrest on handfuls of radical conspirators and outside trouble-makers. For years the white Southerner insisted that the civil rights protests in his region were the product of Northern agitators. Sometime later, the racial uprisings in the Northern ghettos were viewed by some as the work of "black nationalist extremists." And so today, the ruling classes in the third world and in Washington see revolution as an infection spread by a few Peking-inspired communists.

To be sure, in every rebellion there are leaders who articulate and mobilize sentiment. But revolutionaries, at least in their less rhetorical moments, know what counter-revolutionaries care not to admit, that no amount of sacrifice by a coterie of agitators will, of itself, produce successful results. If revolutionaries are any guide to their own strategy then the writings of Mao and Lin Piao tell us that revolutions are not fashioned to order nor instigated in push-button fashion but evolve only if there exists a reservoir of sentiment that can be galvanized into popular action. Revolutions are made when large segments of the population see fit to respond to the revolutionary appeals; revolutionary potential emerges when people reach what William Sloane Coffin, Jr. described as "that state of unrest which is hope."

While it is fashionable to say that ours is "a revolutionary world," the truth is that revolution is not a commonplace but a most extraordinary human action. As John Locke pointed out almost three centuries ago, men are inclined to suffer greatly before risking their lives for the correction of abuses. There is no such thing as a frivolous revolution, or one contrived at the will of a demagogic cabal. For Locke, the fact that the populace is driven to the extraordinary act of violence against their own rulers

clearly indicates that the rulers have been insufferable tyrants.

Men who fight in revolutions welcome pain and death no more than anyone else. The image of revolutionaries as wild-eyed zealots, devoid of personal fears and dedicated to the destruction of all existing values, finds little confirmation in reality. After their trip to North Vietnam, two observers reported:

The revolutionaries we met, including guerrilla fighters, were people whose commitment to the future stemmed from their commitment to the present lives they lead and the longings that grow from those lives. When the guerrillas told us that despite "the bombing and strafing . . . life is developing" in the liberated areas, that "there are no very rich or very poor," that they help "each other with production," we began to understand the deep personal stakes that people have in the Resistance War. Men do not simply revolt out of utopian ambitions; they revolt because of anger at crimes beyond correction and because the seeds of their chosen life cannot grow in the society they encounter.²⁴

Excerpts from the captured diaries of Vietcong soldiers provided further testimony, if any is needed, that revolutionaries are human beings motivated by human concerns:

From the diary of Nguyen Dinh Kieu: It has taken us two and a half days of walking to reach here. This friendly country is really beautiful and rich. Why are its people so poor? . . . We arrive at Muong Xuan. This place has been burned down by the French. Now it is again burned down . . . How much devastation! How many losses!

From the diary of Do Luc: I joined the ranks of the liberation army in answer to the call of the front for liberation of the South.

Now my life is full of hardship—not enough rice to eat nor salt to give a taste to my tongue, not enough clothing

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to keep myself warm! But in my heart I keep loyal to the Party and to the people. I am proud and happy.

From the diary of Mai Xuan Phong: The most precious thing for a man is his life, because one has only one life. One must, then, live in such a way that one does not have to regret the wasted years and months, that one does not have to be ashamed of a pitiful past, that one is able to say before passing away: my whole life, my whole strength have been devoted to the most beautiful cause—the struggle for the liberation of mankind.²⁵

Fought by men who see hope for the future in the sufferings and struggles of the present, revolutions are severe measures taken against extreme evils. The United States has reversed this proposition to read: revolutions are extreme evils that require severe countermeasures. But the very measures taken in the name of "security," often accelerate the revolutionary movement by alienating still larger portions of the population. The more the United States has destroyed the conditions which made life supportable, the more the Vietnamese have been driven to fight the hated foreigner. A South Vietnamese peasant explaining why he joined the NLF testified as follows:

An American plane attacked my village six months ago. My wife and three young children were burned to death by flaming oil, and I can still hear them screaming. Everything I had was destroyed: even my field was poisoned by a white powder dropped by planes. My neighbors and I held a meeting and decided it would be better for us to die fighting these invaders than to sit and beg for mercy.²⁶

Thus, despite enormous casualties, the NLF forces were somewhat stronger in 1968 than in 1964. This is not to imply that counterrevolutionary actions inevitably sow the seeds of their own defeat: the oppressive power may become so massive as to break the back of the revolution. This happened in Greece in 1948, in Guatemala in 1954, in the Dominican Republic in 1965, and was the US goal

in Vietnam where we attempted to claim our victory by reducing the country to ashes.*

Whether we succeeded in crushing the Vietnam revolution or not, certain questions would remain to haunt us. Why did hundreds of thousands of South Vietnamese peasants choose the revolutionary struggle, living in stinking swamps, often deprived of even the minimal amenities of life, seeing comrades mangled and slaughtered by vastly superior firepower, knowing every full measure of misery and grief? Why did the Vietcong fight so valiantly, and the Saigon troops so rarely? If it is really just a matter of "communist indoctrination," then ours would be the simple task of copying the well-known communist propaganda and organizational techniques, something, in fact, we have been doing with little positive result; because, despite the best gimmicks of psychological warfare, we represent the absentee landlord, the venal official, and the violent foreigner. That Americans who consider themselves "the best salesmen in the world" are being outsold by the communists is largely due to the fact that they have little to sell. To employ revolutionary techniques divorced from revolutionary goals makes the techniques worthless.†

In the demonological view, widespread revolutions are caused by the fiendish ploys of subversives, by the superhuman fanaticism of guerrillas, by outside aggression, by insufficiencies in counterrevolutionary techniques—by

* Explaining why the U.S. forces obliterated the municipality of Bentre with great loss to civilian life, an army major said: "It became necessary to destroy the town to save it." *New York Times*, 8 February, 1968. See Chapter Fourteen, "Moral Imperialism."

† The worthlessness of such technique was nowhere better illustrated than on the occasion the United States dropped leaflets over a North Vietnamese town informing the populace that China was their real and historic enemy. This was followed a few hours later with a murderous bombing raid on the same area. Nothing could have been better designed to convince the North Vietnamese who their real enemy was.

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everything except the moral and political bankruptcy of the social order under attack.

THE MORAL EQUATION

It is said that we cannot renege on our commitments to other peoples, but to my knowledge our commitments are not to other peoples but to governments that represent some special faction of the populace. When we support a government, we must ask ourselves what faction, what particular interests are we helping? The question leads to some dismaying discoveries about those to whom we have pledged ourselves. But whatever their grave shortcomings, do not these rulers represent something better than the kind of tyranny that "revolutionary communism" would impose?

Understandably American sensibilities are offended by certain features of social revolutionary governments such as one-party rule, zealous propaganda, and the use of coercion to implement revolutionary changes—including the forceful suppression of elements that openly challenge the legitimacy of revolutionary goals. But what is significant is not that *we* find these practices undesirable, but that the people who live under these new social systems find much that is preferable to the old regimes, much that they seem prepared to defend. The Bay of Pigs invasion of Cuba was a fiasco not because of "insufficient air coverage" but because the Cuban people, instead of rising to join the counterrevolutionary liberating forces, as anticipated by the CIA, closed ranks behind Castro. Another "captive people," the North Vietnamese, acted equally strange. Instead of treating the severe social and material dislocations caused by the American aerial war as a golden opportunity to overthrow Hanoi's yoke, they rallied to the support of their beleaguered government.*

* Revolutions frequently occur during or in the immediate after-

In the South the picture was even more puzzling. Instead of opening their arms to the vastly superior American and Saigon liberating forces, peasants continued to give support to the NLF or in any case remained hostile toward Saigon. The Vietcong enjoyed all the tactical guerrilla advantages of concealment, supply, inaccessibility, and surprise, largely because they had the active support of most of the people in the countryside—something they could not get by intimidation alone.²⁷ (If coercion and intimidation brought support, then we should have easily won the populace to our side by 1966.)

Why would any people choose "communist tyranny"? * Revealing explanations come from some rather unexpected sources: "For years now in Southeast Asia," Ambassador Lodge admitted, "the only people who have been

math of a war that damages the old system. Thus the Vietnamese began their full-scale revolution in 1941 during World War II and they used the 1945 defeat of the Japanese to seize complete control. The North Vietnamese should by now be rebelling from the "yoke of communist tyranny."

* There are those who do not. Seven hundred thousand North Vietnamese Catholics were urged by their leaders to leave the North at the time of the 1954 partition. Hanoi did not drive them out but actually requested that they stay and hundreds of thousands did remain in the North. Western observers report that North Vietnamese Catholics suffer no persecution, are loyal to the regime and are free to worship as they choose. (The only Catholic Church in North Vietnam Harrison Salisbury saw desecrated was the one hit by American bombs.) The Vatican has established close and firm relations with the North Vietnamese hierarchy.

Three hundred thousand Cubans, mostly Caucasians from the higher strata, have departed from the island, taking full advantage of the US commitment to accommodate all "refugees from Castroism" who wish to migrate to America—an unrestricted immigration policy which, were it extended to postwar democratic Italy, would have brought many millions. The question is not why did thousands depart from North Vietnam and Cuba when given the chance but why, if communism is the horror it is, do so many millions choose to stay.

doing anything for the little man—to lift him up—have been the Communists.”²⁸ In a similar vein, James Reston wrote, “Even Premier Ky told this reporter today that the Communists were closer to the people’s yearnings for social justice and an independent life than his own government.”²⁹ More specifically: (a) the peasants wanted land; the Vietcong distributed the land to them, the Saigon government frequently took it away from them; (b) the Saigon authorities and the American forces with their massive and indiscriminate fire power alienated far more of the populace than did the Vietcong; (c) Vietnamese nationalism, mobilized for many decades, responded more favorably to the liberation fighters than to a French-supported or American-created government in Saigon.³⁰ During the earlier war against the French, Joseph Alsop (later to become one of the more vehement “hawks”) made a tour of the Viet Minh controlled areas and observed that the communist government was “genuinely serving the people,” and while it was difficult for him to conceive of a communist state in such terms, he concluded that Ho’s regime was “a popular government” and “almost a democratic government.” Nowhere could he find the signs of communist oppression he had been expecting to see. He further concluded that the Viet Minh could not have carried on their protracted resistance against the French were it not for “the people’s strong united support.”³¹

Returning from another revolutionary country, Cuba, after almost a month’s stay in 1965, one American editor reported:

The basic reason Fidel and his revolution continue to be popular despite Cuba’s many difficulties is that the people now have something of overriding value that they previously lacked—dignity. Part of the Cuban resentment stems from the feeling that Cuban dignity had been affronted by US economic domination . . . Negroes, some 30 percent of the population, are particularly pro-Fidel

. . . Formerly landless farm workers . . . are another source of total support . . . Before Castro, Cuban agriculture was dominated by immense sugar plantations owned mostly by foreigners, particularly Americans. Much of the expropriated land was given to landless peasants . . .³²

Two years later Reston reported after a visit to Cuba: "The Cubans have their problems, but they are making progress . . . From one end of this long and beautiful island to the other, there is a sense of common life and purpose." And in 1968 Juan de Onis reported in *The New York Times* that Cuba was developing "faster than most other Latin American countries. In mass education, public health, rural modernization, land use, economic diversification, labor training, administrative reforms and management of foreign exchange, Cuba has made important gains under Prime Minister Fidel Castro."³³

There are anti-communist liberals who conclude that anyone who utters a good word for leftist-authoritarian revolutions must himself harbor anti-democratic or "Maoist" sentiments. But to applaud social revolutions is not to oppose political freedom. In Cuba, for instance, there is a great deal of political and artistic freedom and open discourse. Citizens do criticize the qualities and directions of government programs and the performances of administrators. What is not tolerated are challenges to the fundamentals of the system itself or attacks on the legitimacy of the revolution.

Second, to the extent that social revolutionary governments construct substantive alternatives for their people, they increase human options and human freedom. There is no such thing as freedom in the abstract; there is freedom to speak as one chooses, freedom of opportunity and choice in getting an education and pursuing a calling, freedom from want, freedom to worship or not worship, freedom to enjoy certain social benefits, etc. Social revolutionary governments extend a number of these freedoms

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without destroying those which never existed, thereby fostering the preservation of health and human life, economic development and the end of foreign exploitation and perhaps eventually the further expansion of political freedoms which an educated populace begins to demand.³⁴

The official anti-communist axiom is: "any leftist revolutionary victory anywhere represents a diminution of freedom in the world." The concern for freedom is admirable but the assertion is false. The Chinese revolution did not crush democracy; there was none to crush. The Cuban revolution did not destroy freedom; it destroyed a hateful police state. The Algerian Revolution did not abolish national liberties; none existed under the French. Neither the Viet Minh nor the NLF abrogated individual rights; there was precious little of that for the peasant masses under Bao Dai, Diem, or Ky. As I recall no one in America fretted much about the absence of political freedom in French Indochina or Kuomintang China; no one today worries excessively about the political oppressions suffered in South Korea, Thailand, Taiwan, Paraguay, Peru, etc. The heartfelt American desire to bring the forms of political democracy to Chinese, Cuban, and Vietnamese peasants ("Are they able to hear more than one opinion? Do they have a realistic choice when they vote?") rarely extends to the non-revolutionary regimes, including the United States, itself.

Is the pain of revolution worth the gain? Cost-benefit accounting is a complicated business when applied to social transitions. But have we ever bothered to measure the violence of revolution against the violence that preceded it? "I do not know how one measures the price of historical victories," Robert Heilbroner said, "or how one can ever decide that a diffuse gain is worth a sharp and particular loss. I only know that the way in which we ordinarily keep the books of history is wrong."³⁵ Somehow we always manage a detailed if not always accurate count of those who fall

under the guillotine, or flee to London, Miami, or Taiwan. But we make no tally of the generations claimed by that combination of neglect, exploitation, and brutalization so characteristic of the old regimes, the hapless victims of flood and famine in the Yangtze valley of yesterday, the child prostitutes found dead in the back alleys of old Shanghai, the nameless muzhiks stupefied by cold and starvation. And what of today?

No one is now totaling up the balance of the wretches who starve in India, or the peasants of Northeastern Brazil who live in swamps on crabs, or the undernourished and permanently stunted children of Hong Kong or Honduras. Their sufferings go unrecorded and are not present to counterbalance the scales when the furies of revolution strike . . .³⁶

Let us mourn those who fall in the whirl of revolution yet keep in mind the millions elsewhere who are slowly obliterated by reactionism without drama, glory, or purpose. Even were we successful in repressing all revolts today and forever, the violence against humanity which is the common condition of status quo reactionism would still be with us. If our concern is for the freedom and well-being of mankind, then we should consider supporting, rather than opposing, social revolutions.

NOTES

1. Maxwell Taylor, *Responsibility and Response* (New York: Harper & Row, 1967).
2. See Tad Szulc, *Dominican Diary* (New York: Dial Press, 1965), pp. 44-45; also Theodore Draper, "The Dominican Crisis," p. 59.
3. See Hans J. Morgenthau, "To Intervene or Not to Intervene," *Foreign Affairs* 45 (April 1967), p. 433.
4. Fulbright, *The Arrogance of Power*, pp. 70-71.
5. Conor Cruise O'Brien, "The Counter-Revolutionary Reflex," *Commonweal*, 3 March 1967, p. 619.
6. *Ibid.*

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7. Alex Campbell, *New Republic*, 13 January 1968, p. 21.
8. See David Welsh, *Ramparts*, July 1967, p. 26.
9. See John Gerassi, *The Great Fear in Latin America*, pp. 19-23.
10. Statistics cited in William Appleman Williams, *The Great Evasion* (Chicago: Quadrangle Books, 1964), p. 68.
11. *New York Post*, 10 October 1967.
12. "Vietnam—A Hopeless War?," *U.S. News and World Report*, 5 December 1966.
13. Lynd and Hayden, *The Other Side*, pp. 186-187.
14. Gerassi, *op. cit.*, pp. 181-182.
15. *Ibid.*; also Horowitz, *The Free World Colossus*, pp. 163-186.
16. *New York Times*, 11 May 1967.
17. *Ibid.*, 22 January 1968.
18. See James Petras, "Dominican Republic: Revolution and Restoration," Marvin E. Gettleman and David Marmelstein, eds., *The Great Society Reader* (New York: Vintage Books, 1967), pp. 390-411.
19. See Dan Kurtzman's report from Santo Domingo, *Washington Post*, 25 May 1965.
20. Petras, *op. cit.*
21. *Christian Science Monitor*, 13 May 1967.
22. Petras, *op. cit.*, p. 394.
23. Fairbank, *The United States and China*, p. 259.
24. Lynd and Hayden, *The Other Side*, p. 165.
25. Excerpted from Department of State Publication 7308, December 1961; see Fall and Raskin, *op. cit.*, p. 221 ff.
26. Quoted in *New Politics*, Spring 1965.
27. See Ralph K. White's excellent article, "Misperception of Aggression in Vietnam," *Journal of International Affairs* 21, no. 1 (1967), pp. 123-140.
28. Lodge quoted in *New York Times*, 27 February 1966.
29. *New York Times*, 1 September 1965.
30. White, *op. cit.*
31. *New Yorker*, 25 June 1955.
32. C. K. McClatchy, *Washington Post*, 26 September 1965.
33. James Reston, *New York Times*, 31 August 1967; Juan de Onis, *New York Times*, 11 February 1968.
34. Zinn, "Vietnam: Setting the Moral Equation," *op. cit.*
35. Robert Heilbroner, "Counterrevolutionary America," *Commentary*, April 1967, p. 34.
36. *Ibid.*

Profit, Prestige, and Self-Preservation

Delusions may be of all kinds, but there are two types which call for special mention on account of their great frequency, *grandiose* and *persecutory* . . . The two types are frequently combined: for example, a patient may maintain that he is the king but that an organized conspiracy exists to deprive him of his birthright.

BERNARD HART, *The Psychology of Insanity*

Read through the many public statements made by our political leaders one is struck by the frequent references to "America's vital interests in the world" and the almost total absence of any specific description of these interests. We are repeatedly reminded that our survival depends upon "maintaining our commitments," "providing for our needs," and "safeguarding our interests." Now no one has suggested that we ignore our obligations and interests in the world, only that we begin to define them.

A MATTER OF DOLLARS AND SENSE

Intervention, some policymakers maintain, is necessary for our economic survival. America depends upon economic relations with other lands. A tide of leftist revolutionary regimes would, to quote Dean Rusk, put "the enemies of freedom in a position to destroy us or at least to sap our strength by economic strangulation."¹ Here, at last, is a specific reference to a "vital interest."

Investigating this "economic strangulation" thesis we find that the imagery is drastic but the evidence is wanting. Ever since the day Lenin himself first announced to the capitalist world that Soviet Russia would provide profitable trading and investment opportunities, communist governments have shown an almost shameless eagerness to do business with the Western capitalist nations. Even China, as noted earlier, maintains a growing commerce with the West and in the first years of the Warsaw talks sought unsuccessfully to initiate trade with the United States. Washington, not Moscow, thwarted the development of American-Soviet economic relations. Washington, not Havana, abolished the Cuban sugar quota—in effect inviting Castro to ply his wares in Moscow. Years ago, Hanoi spoke positively of trade prospects with the United States, and even while American bombs were raining down upon them, North Vietnamese leaders still imagined a time when economic relations between both countries would be possible.

"Of course, the communists are eager for trade," it has been argued, "they produce little we need, but we produce much they need." In most instances this is not true. The Soviets would not be sending us "caviar and furs" for US machinery and technical know-how, rather they have offered such items as manganese, ferrous alloys, platinum, chromium, potassium salts, and industrial equipment in return for US air conditioners, vending machines, television sets, medicines, and single-use consumer goods. We

have declined such exchanges, preferring to keep our virtue while leaving the Russian market to our European allies.² The newer revolutionary nations, might have little to offer in exchange for our goods and services. But how then would the loss of their relatively worthless resources and markets bring the "economic strangulation" prophesied by Rusk? While willfully denying ourselves the important Soviet and Chinese markets we continue to contend that the loss of minor third-world markets would lead us to doom.

In any case, there is no reason to presume that leftist revolutionary governments would be intent upon depriving us and themselves of economic relations. More likely, if the behavior of present communist states offers any guide, a host of revolutionary governments dedicated to national development would be in sharp competition with each other for scarce technological resources, Western market opportunities and American dollars. The United States would probably be in a better position than most other countries to win trade opportunities and exercise a friendly influence on them.

The present economic importance of the third world has been vastly overrated; as Heilbroner notes, the total energy consumption (in terms of coal equivalents) for Afghanistan, Bolivia, Brazil, Burma, Ceylon, Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Ethiopia, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, India, Indonesia, Iran, Iraq, Korea, Lebanon, Nicaragua, Pakistan, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, UAR, Uruguay, and Venezuela is less than that annually consumed by West Germany alone.³ (One could add the annual industrial energy consumption of newly independent African states to that list without greatly altering the balance.)

It is well known that the greatest customer for an industrial nation is its own population. Where there is production, there are jobs, income, consumption, and mar-

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kets. Most of America's wealth is produced and consumed in America; this is how we manage to enjoy such affluence. In the area of foreign trade, for much the same reason, the advanced industrial nations are each other's best customers and the bulk of American overseas trading is with Western Europe, Canada, and Japan.* The total loss of our \$14.9 billion investments in the third world would hardly cause a grave dislocation to an American economy with a gross national product in 1968 approaching \$850 billion, and corporate assets of almost \$1.5 trillion.

Furthermore, the profits gleaned from investments in Asia, Africa and Latin America hardly represent a net gain for our nation. Aside from the grave moral questions concerning the exploitative sweatshop quality of third-world profits,† the American empire costs us, in monetary terms alone, more than it is worth. ~~Our entire third-world investments are about equivalent to what we have expended in six months of Vietnam fighting.~~ In the Phillipines we have spent almost \$2 billion in military aid ostensibly protecting less than a half billion dollars in commercial investments. Every year our military budgets are three to four times the amount of our total third-world assets.

The economist Kenneth Boulding reminds us that in this age of scientific invention "one can extract ten dollars from nature for every dollar one can exploit out of man." Science decreases the profitability of human exploitation by increasing the productivity of machines, and also by in-

* US direct overseas investments amount to almost \$50 billion but only about \$14.9 billion of this is in the third world—most of that in Latin American oil, mining, and utilities. U.S. Department of Commerce, *Survey of Current Business*, August 1964, September 1966.

† American holdings in underdeveloped nations, while relatively small in total amount, are unusually exploitative. Investment earnings in 1964-65 averaged 23 percent in Africa, 36 percent in Asia, and 13 percent in Latin America as opposed to slightly more than 9 percent in Europe and Canada.

creasing the overhead military costs of empire. "In the last century, empire has turned out to be a burden rather than an asset,"⁴ Boulding concludes.

Private corporate interests have successfully identified themselves with patriotism so that today we speak of "our" oil and "our" raw materials. But we millions of Americans who carry the burden of empire share few of its compensations. One might question whether that minor fraction of "our" wealth, as represented by the overseas profits of a few select corporations, is worth the neglect of domestic social services, the disruption of national well-being, the continued growth of militarism and the enormous price in blood, sweat, and taxes that the rest of us pay.

The propertied class in America always has been among the most active propagators of militant anti-communism. But over the years a number of conservative voices have questioned military interventionism—from Andrew Carnegie, who considered elaborate military expenditures to be a waste of good money and who argued that international trade multiplied ties among nations and rendered war unthinkable, to Senator Robert A. Taft, the late Republican leader, who contended that overseas ventures led to a larger, more coercive federal government, excessive taxation, economic strain and a loss of domestic political freedom.⁵ At the height of the Vietnam struggle the prominent Wall Street brokerage firm of Paine, Webber, Jackson and Curtis placed this full page ad in the *New York Times*:

What would peace in Vietnam mean to you as an investor?

Peace in Vietnam would be the greatest imaginable blessing. In addition to the obvious benefits resulting from an end to any war, we believe there would be substantial economic benefits . . .

Pressure for a tax surcharge would be lessened and perhaps replaced by pressure for tax reduction.

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War-time spending which is non-productive would be replaced by productive spending on such things as education, housing, highways and the war on poverty.

The cut in defense spending would reduce the Federal budget deficit, thus reducing Federal borrowing. With pressure removed, the upward climb of interest rates could be reversed.

Thus it is not possible for us to see *any* negative factors resulting from an end of the hostilities in Southeast Asia. The blessing of peace would afford each of us the opportunity for a reemphasis on peacetime pursuits and the satisfaction of increased demand for all things and services to which we aspire in our affluent society.

. . . Peace in Vietnam would be the most constructive—and the most bullish thing that could happen to the stock market.⁶

But most corporate leaders enjoying the bounty of military-industrial spending, and convinced that social revolution is the mortal enemy of the American Way of Life and of the profit system in particular, give their support to the anti-communist ideology. They would do well to heed two prominent socialist scholars:

There is much reason to suppose that the essential structure of world capitalism will survive even if resolutions spread in the third world. It is easy to conceive of a profitable trade being carried on with a Communist China, as well as a Communist Russia, Vietnam, Cuba or Dominican Republic . . . [This belief] . . . not only accords with the simple human instincts for survival; it contains strong elements of self-interest for capitalist powers.⁷*

* "The only thing that can resolve the problems of hunger and misery in the underdeveloped countries is revolution . . . revolution that allows the people of underdeveloped nations to devote themselves to planned and peaceful work. A time will come when the United States will understand that only those countries in which a revolution has taken place are in a position to fulfill their international financial obligations." Thus spoke Fidel Castro in 1966.

It is conceivable but not imminent that corporate leaders, developing a more enlightened and flexible definition of America's "vital interests," will renounce their part in official jingoistic interventionism and move toward a policy of close, peaceful ties with friends and foes alike.

SAVING THE EMPIRE

A global empire is terribly costly and difficult to maintain but, many have said, America is a great power; it cannot lightly discard its responsibilities to the world. But what are the responsibilities of a great power—to proceed with arrogance and presumption, to impose with violent determination its image upon smaller nations, to live and die for power, pride, and prestige, to act as great powers have so often acted? Such behavior, while very much our inclination, is hardly something we owe the world.

Much has been said about "maintaining our commitments" but very little about the substance of such dedications. There is nothing inherently good about a "commitment"; its worth depends on the particular values and interests to which we are pledged and not on the commitment for its own sake. Yet commitment has a tendency to become self-justifying. Too often our overseas military presence is not for the purpose of defending our interests—whatever they may be, but is, itself, an interest to be defended. Thus State Department official, William Bundy, could cite "our vital military bases, our sustained military assistance" to the Philippines as an essential part of "US interests" in the islands.* And no less a critic than Arthur

* Speaking to an audience in Manila, Bundy found more important US interests than trade and military bases: ". . . the Philippines mean so much to the United States because the Filipino people have so often demonstrated that across barriers of oceans and of cultures, this is a country where Americans are always, as Filipinos so often say, made to feel 'at home.'" Our "more important" in-

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Schlesinger, Jr. could argue: "Our national security may not have compelled us to draw a line across Southeast Asia where we did, but having drawn it, we cannot lightly abandon it. Our stake in South Vietnam may have been self-created, but it had nonetheless become real."⁸ Real in what sense? Our "stake" in Vietnam was real only if we believed that commitment itself created a vital interest. "Whether or not the initial decision was a mistake is now moot," reasoned Senator Russell. "The United States does have a commitment in South Vietnam. The flag is there. United States honor and prestige are there. And, most important of all, United States soldiers are there."⁹ For Russell, the loss of South Vietnam would hardly be fatal "from either a strategic or a tactical or an economic standpoint" but it would be a serious "blow to our world prestige." So that is it; we were worried about our image and were prepared to wage an endless, mindless, filthy war for the sake of our pride and prestige, unaware that the spectacle of a giant industrial nation trying to pulverize a tiny underdeveloped country into submission was hardly the most self-elevating image to present to the world.[†] "There is more respect to be won in the opinion of this world," George F. Kennan once noted, "by a resolute and courageous liquidation of unsound positions than by the most stubborn pursuit of extravagant or unpromising objectives."

The American anxiety about being "soft," our fear that others will see us as irresolute and vulnerable, compels us

terest in the Philippines, it seemed, was the preservation of Filipino hospitality. There was not a dry eye in the audience. William Bundy, "Elements of the Philippine-American Partnership," *Department of State Bulletin*, 21 March 1966, p. 445.

† Even the Vatican Weekly *L'Osservatore della Domenica* denounces US involvement in Vietnam, reminding us that the war was undermining America's "moral and political" position even among its friends. *New York Times*, 4 January 1968.

to remind them of our power and our "determination to stand firm." It seems never to have occurred to us that the only people in the world who fear that America may not be sufficiently strong are the Americans. We exercise our power in order to maintain our prestige, and we begin to define our prestige exclusively in terms of our power. Yet other people make a distinction: they are painfully aware of our immense strength and it is this very strength which detracts from our popularity and prestige by becoming an object of fear and distrust. A nation, William Foote Whyte reminds us, can be judged as weak or strong, but it is also judged along other dimensions: cruel or humane, reckless or responsible, warlike or peaceable, arrogant or respectful of others, imperialistic or anti-imperialistic, intelligent or stupid. Suppose our actions in Vietnam and elsewhere "convince the opinion leaders of a given nation that we are strong—but that we are also cruel, reckless, warlike, arrogant, imperialistic, and stupid. Have we improved our 'image' in that nation?"¹⁰ Have we gained popularity, respect and support and shown ourselves worthy of that role of "world leader" to which we so strenuously aspire?

Perhaps, as Heilbroner suggests, the European nations have made their peace with communism more easily than we because they know they can no longer lead the world. Can we accept a similar scaling-down of our place in history or must we continue to see every violent upheaval in every jungle and mountain village as a potentially mortal challenge to "our status as a great nation"? A deep deficiency is betrayed in our preoccupation with power and prestige, our necessity to be Number One, to always come out on top, to lead the pack. Senator J. William Fulbright offers this diagnosis:

In America's case the evidence of a lack of self-confidence is our apparent need for constant proof and reassurance, our nagging desire for popularity, our bitterness and confusion when foreigners fail to appreciate our generosity

and good intentions. Lacking an appreciation of the dimensions of our own power, we fail to understand that no matter how good our intentions . . . other nations are alarmed by the very existence of such great power, which, whatever its benevolence, cannot help but remind them of their own helplessness before it . . .

When a nation is very powerful but lacking in self-confidence, it is likely to behave in a manner dangerous to itself and to others. Feeling the need to prove what is obvious to everyone else, it begins to confuse great power with unlimited power and great responsibility with total responsibility; it can admit of no error; it must win every argument no matter how trivial.¹¹

Magnanimity, empathy, restraint, and modesty have seldom been our redeeming features. In its behavior toward others America has displayed a curious but compatible mixture of chronic insecurity, and unspeakable arrogance. Our messianic self-sacrifice hides our limitless self-indulgence, and the disdain and fear we feel for others are best expressed by our desire to control or throttle them.

Our method is not defensive but expansionist. ~~We are not so much defending "vital interests" in such places as Southeast Asia as trying to establish new ones.~~* If it is true, as the globalists argue, that we need to expand in order to protect what is already "ours" we might at least acknowledge that when the Chinese and others accuse us of expansionism, they speak with some accuracy. And we might wonder why unlimited expansion for the sake of self-defense is a privilege which other nations should not exercise, and which should not be opposed when exercised by us. This brings us to the question of moral imperialism.

* As the British withdraw from bases in Singapore and the Persian Gulf area we are, according to former State Department spokesman Eugene Rostow, actively considering measures to build up an American presence and extend our commitments into that region. *New York Times*, 20 January 1968.

NOTES

1. Statement by Rusk before the House Foreign Affairs Committee, 3 August 1965.
2. See Jay H. Cerf, "We Should Do More Business With the Communists," *New York Times Magazine*, 5 December 1968.
3. Heilbroner, "Counterrevolutionary America."
4. Kenneth Boulding, "The Learning and Reality-Testing Process in the International Systems," *International Affairs* 21, no. 1 (1967), p. 7.
5. See Huntington, *The Soldier and the State*, pp. 222-226, for an account of early "business pacifism." See also Henry W. Berger, "A Conservative Critique of Containment: Senator Taft on the Early Cold War Program," in Horowitz, *Containment and Revolution*, pp. 125-139.
6. *New York Times*, 8 January 1968.
7. Gettleman and Marmelstein, *The Great Society Reader*, pp. 343-344.
8. Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr., "A Middle Way Out of Vietnam."
9. Quoted in Draper, *Abuse of Power*, p. 154.
10. William Foote Whyte, "Thoughtways of Foreign Policy," *The Nation*, 30 May 1966, p. 642.
11. Fulbright, *The Arrogance of Power*, pp. 21-22.

Moral Imperialism

Only the absolute might still absolve them in their own eyes and sustain their desperate energy.

GUGLIELMO FERRERO

He who would act the angel, acts the brute.

BLAISE PASCAL

Devotion to the nation-state is the religion of the modern age to which all lesser faiths must make some kind of accommodation. The institutional arrangements of the secular religion of nationalism are too well known to be elaborated upon. The nation, like the church, has its visible symbols and insignia, its parchments engrossed with the revealed word, its dogmas, hymns, liturgy, holy day celebrations, its early Fathers, prophets and martyrs, its priesthood and its lay sodality, its myths of sacred genesis

and apocalyptic crises, its world-saving mission and its missionaries. Although there probably exists no people on earth who are without some sense of their own cultural virtues, nations endowed with unusual strengths, as measured by size, population, or wealth are probably more tempted to see wondrous peculiarities in their own emergence, and more prone to write the chapters of their history in accordance with the self-serving myths of the past and the illusions of the future.*

The nation-state is something more than a communal instrument for other social values. The nation has become an end unto itself, a powerfully abstracted symbol that claims our ultimate loyalty, a moral object whose existence and growth are taken as self-justifying. (It was for this reason that Hans Kohn chose to treat fascism as an "exaggerated nationalism" rather than as a unique and aberrant phenomenon.)

Although we take as many pains justifying our country's behavior as we do our own personal behavior, the moral code we apply to national activity does not operate quite the same as the one applied to individuals. The premises governing individual morality usually lead to self-restraint or even self-sacrifice, but these same premises are inverted when applied to a nation's behavior and often lead to untrammelled excesses.¹ Individual morality is predicated on the realization that sin, i.e., unjust and harmful behavior toward others, is always within the human potential. To err is human and to sin is all too human. But the nation-state is something more than human—therein lies the power of its appeal. At the heart of the secular religion of nationalism is the belief that the nation's existence

* Severely oppressed peoples may also develop myths of superiority, godly virtues and deliverance. It may be that unusual endowments and unusual deprivations both foster exaggerated expectations and evaluations of the collective self. See Vittorio Lanternari, *The Religions of the Oppressed* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1963).

and its actions are so endowed with virtue as to place it above the commonplace rules of life. Ordinary human restraints are not easily applied to the nation, and ordinary vices not readily ascribed to it, at least not by its own populace. Once convinced of its dedication to some higher collective good, be it "national well-being," "freedom," "world order," etc., the Virtuous Nation knows no restraint other than the limitations of its own desires and power.

The distinction between individual and international morality, of course, deserves qualification, for there are individuals who in their mad egoism seem to be performing more closely in accordance with the inverted logic of patriotic morality, and there are nations which have acted in rare fits of pure altruism and sacrifice as when giving emergency aid to a neighboring land during a natural disaster. But the essential difference between personal and collective ethics is a real one. When the aggrandizing individual commits an evil, he is punished, or if not, there is at least some sense that he has violated proper standards of conduct, and that justice should be done. But the most ruthless violence—outrageous to individual morality and unsupportable in civil life—is applauded as heroism when performed in the name of the nation.*

Patriotic morality is not simply that hypocrisy which is the tribute vice pays to virtue; the national ego honestly believes in its own claims of rightness and goodness. Deliberate deception frequently plays a prominent role in the manipulation of policy, especially at the operational level (as we shall see in the pages following), but who

* As Mulford Q. Sibley once noted: "Patriotism for most Americans, as for most professional patriots, seems to be inseparably connected with military violence and war." And it does seem that those who are most vehemently patriotic are also most eagerly homicidal, most ready to drop the Bomb. Mulford Q. Sibley, "Ethics and the Professional Patriots," *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, vol. 363 (January 1966), p. 135.

would argue that the fervent commitments of the world-saving nationalist are never expressions of real sentiment?

WORLD LEADER

American moral imperialism is predicated on the belief that this nation has a unique responsibility to direct the destinies of less fortunate peoples. A few years ago J. Edgar Hoover proclaimed that God had chosen the American people as His special instrument to overcome world communism. According to Dean Rusk "the United States has committed itself to trying to build a decent world order . . . a peaceful world order that is safe for freedom." Our goal is nothing less than "Victory for all mankind . . . a worldwide victory for freedom."² But while we repeatedly assert that the "world looks to us," to defend freedom everywhere and build something called "a world order," we might wonder specifically which other peoples delegated us this awesome task. Aside from that coterie of military oligarchs whose unpopular regimes depend on us for their survival, it is difficult to discover where in the world there exists popular acclaim for the present level of American influence and intervention.

Returning from a State Department sponsored tour of the Far East, one scholar reported:

In Japan, criticism of US policy in Vietnam, especially our bombing there, is nearly universal. It is to be found in the mass media and other channels through which intellectuals communicate. An occasional defense of US policy is so rare as to be newsworthy.³

Gunnar Myrdal observed:

Sweden is one of the very few countries in the world where there is not a trace of legacy of basic anti-Americanism . . . But, as a public opinion poll on the Vietnam issue reveals, the overwhelming majority of articulate Swedish

opinion is sharply critical of the American government's policy. Only eight percent of the sample polled supports American actions in Vietnam—not much more than the stray appeal that, as we know, any aberrant extremist cause will register in any poll— and the situation is similar in the other Scandinavian countries.⁴

Even President Johnson, in an unguarded moment, lamented the growing disenchantment with American policies evinced by our allies: "It is difficult to understand the response of nations who a few years ago, with their own security involved, wanted American troops and military support."⁵ But the unwillingness of so many other people to share our particular view of the communist menace is taken as proof that others are all the more needful of America's discerning leadership, and the challenges they raise about our policies lead us to question *their* judgments, not our own.

A nation that has spent the better portion of its history captivated by its own Chosen People mythology will have little difficulty in believing it is preeminently qualified to uplift mankind. The salvation impulse is compounded when national virtue is wedded to national power, for Americans begin to see proof of their divine calling in the very power which enables them to thrust themselves upon others. The contention that "we must mobilize our power in order to lead," soon becomes "we must lead because we are so powerful." Our NATO representative Harlan Cleveland urged that we "get accustomed to our own power, and to the implications of its global availability." He believed that the United States must be involved "in so many ugly grudge fights, in so many places" simply because it is so large and powerful.⁶

GUARDIANS OF LAW AND ORDER

Power tends to define its own standards of operation. Considering ourselves the keepers rather than the subjects

of international law and order, we demand of others an observance to rules which we do not consider binding on ourselves. At no time have we called ourselves to account for our violation of international law in the Bay of Pigs invasion, or in the landing of troops in Santo Domingo, or in our intervention in Vietnam. In 1964 when asked by Senator Ervin if the United States had intervened in Vietnam "under an obligation assumed by us under the SEATO treaty," Rusk answered that "we are not acting specifically under the SEATO treaty." In 1966 when Senator Fulbright asked him whether the SEATO treaty committed us to the Vietnam war, Rusk now replied "Yes sir I have no doubt that it does."⁷ We apply international law with enviable flexibility, sometimes with unique results:

Rusk: Well, Senator . . . whatever you call it, there is aggression from North Vietnam against South Vietnam across that demarcation line *contrary to the military clauses of that 1954 [Geneva] commitment.*

Church: Have all the provisions of the 1954 agreement been adhered to by either side?

Rusk: No, they have not.

Church: Were the elections which were called for and generally anticipated at the time the agreement was made, were they held?

Rusk: Neither in North or South Vietnam . . .

Fulbright: May I ask what is the explanation of why in 1956, contrary to the terms of the Geneva accords, elections were not held . . . I am informed that in 1955, in accordance with the treaty provisions, [Diem] was requested by the North to consult about elections, and that he refused to do so. Is that correct?

Rusk: Well, *neither his government nor the government of the United States signed that agreement.*⁸ (Emphasis added)

The Senator did not follow up this response. But if I understand Rusk correctly, the United States and South Vietnam could ignore the 1954 Geneva treaty because they

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were not formal signatories; however, North Vietnam, as a signatory, was obliged to abide by the international law set down at Geneva. Not only should North Vietnam be punished for its alleged violations, but we—who could violate the treaty at will—were duty-bound to do the punishing. We were above the law but not indifferent to it.

Actually Rusk was misleading his audience when he contended that Washington had no commitment to the Geneva treaty. Although not a formal signatory, the United States did pledge to “refrain from any threat or use of force to disturb” the agreements and would view any violation of the agreements “with grave concern and as seriously threatening international peace and security,”⁹ thereby giving support to the four basic commitments made at Geneva: (1) not to give military aid to Vietnam, (2) to intervene only in the case of an appeal by the International Control Commission, (3) to respect all efforts by North and South Vietnam to hold national elections in 1956, (4) to consider the Seventeenth parallel demarcation line as temporary.¹⁰

Within two years the United States had broken its word on each of these commitments. It had sent thousands of military personnel and weapons to South Vietnam, refused to admit the presence of such personnel to the ICC, recognized only the government of South Vietnam, redefined the temporary Seventeenth parallel demarcation as a permanent inviolate boundary between two separate nations, and pledged to continue aiding and supporting the Saigon government against the influences of a “foreign ideology.”¹¹ From 1954 on, as the ICC documents show, the North Vietnam government despite minor infringements generally cooperated with the Commission’s inspection efforts, while South Vietnam refused to cooperate.¹² The ICC at no time felt any necessity to call for outside US assistance to enforce the accords. South Vietnam, therefore,

had no right under the international law written at Geneva to invite any military power into the country. In intervening as it did, the United States assumed the privileged position of negating the decisions of eight other nations in order to pursue its own course.

INVERTED EFFECTS

Patriotic morality leads to effects directly antithetical to the visionary goal. While our professed intention is to maintain the independence of other nations, the greater our efforts in that direction, the greater is the dependency we create.

In South Vietnam, the American presence became so overwhelming as to preempt any kind of independent South Vietnamese social growth and political self-direction. Few people have been more thoroughly denied control over their own destiny than the South Vietnamese. The first independent opinion survey conducted in March 1967 by Princeton University's Opinion Research Corporation on behalf of CBS reported that of the people in areas controlled by the allies—usually representing the urbanized and more favored stratum—81 percent wanted peace above all, against 4 percent who wanted victory over communism above all. Had anyone polled the millions of peasants living in the direct wake of the war or in squalid refugee camps the results might have been even closer to unanimity. Even among the Catholic populace, long identified as supporters of the war, there is much of the same kind of evidence. In 1968, the South Vietnamese Catholic hierarchy issued a statement calling for the cessation of bombings and immediate negotiations, thus putting themselves in opposition to the unyielding policy being pursued by Washington and Saigon.

What if the Vietnamese were to venture a choice that

violated our own plans? What if they were to rally behind a leader who requested our departure? Ambassador Henry Cabot Lodge answered that question before a Congressional committee: the United States would not depart from South Vietnam even if requested to do so by the government of that country; our responsibility in Vietnam was to the entire world. (The "independent" government of South Vietnam did not utter a whimper of protest at this.) Lodge's statement was later amplified by an anonymous "high official" who said the ambassador meant that the United States would not withdraw if asked to do so "by a left-wing or even neutralist government that, in the US view, did not reflect the true feelings of the South Vietnamese people or *military leaders*." ¹³ Our concern for the Vietnamese had no limits, not even those which the Vietnamese might wish to set. "Special love gives special privileges."

Faced with the prospect of an election that might have brought in a civilian government in 1967, the South Vietnamese generals began forming a "military affairs committee" whose express purpose was to continue ruling the country in the same manner after the election. Marshal Ky who earlier had observed that "if the people elect a neutralist or Communist government, we will fight," now declared that he would overthrow *any* elected president "who doesn't live up to the aspirations of the South Vietnamese people." ¹⁴ While US aides were reported displeased with these proclamations, it was in fact difficult to distinguish Ky's remarks from Lodge's: neither of them would depart even if requested to do so by a democratically elected government.

The two-week election campaign for a Constituent Assembly in South Vietnam in 1966, according to the *Philadelphia Inquirer*, offered "542 carefully screened anti-communist candidates for 108 seats." ¹⁵ The same newspaper, the same day, also reported that Vice-President

Humphrey "again predicted that the communists will lose the elections." One American newsman observed that the military and the police had orders "to take opponents of the elections into custody" and "spread the word that non-voters could find themselves in trouble."¹⁶ Several correspondents also reported that candidates complained of heavy press censorship and of the impossibility of conducting a free election without a free press.¹⁷ Nevertheless, Johnson declared that the election "gave us a lasting lesson in democracy."¹⁸ No one mentioned that candidates suspected of "communist" or even "neutralist" leanings had not been allowed to participate, and that in South Vietnam the crime of "neutralism," defined inclusively as "all moves which weaken the national anti-communist effort and are harmful to the anti-communist struggle of the people and the armed forces," was a capital offense.¹⁹

The 1967 South Vietnamese presidential elections, hailed by a Johnson-picked observation team of American notables as "an honest practice in democracy," brought with it the pre-election jailing of a number of dissident government officials and the suppression of several newspapers for their mildly critical remarks during the campaign, stringent press censorship throughout the campaign, and repeated voting frauds as reported by those foreign correspondents who bothered to investigate.²⁰ Popular leaders (such as Minh and Au Throng Thanh) were not allowed to return to the country to enter the contest. The winning team of Thieu and Ky ran in violation of the constitutional stipulation barring the military from office. Despite a near-monopoly of financial and communications resources, and control of most voting booths, Thieu and Ky were able to poll only about one-third of the vote.* In Saigon where the spotlight was brightest and the elec-

* In the multi-party election this represented a plurality and meant victory for the military ticket. Nevertheless two-thirds of the people voted against the military.

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tion most honest, the military ticket was badly trounced by Dzu, a civilian peace candidate. Soon after the elections Dzu was placed under house arrest by the Saigon government. He remained a prisoner in his own home until July 1968 when he was sentenced by a military court to five years in prison on charges of (1) having advocated talks with the NLF, and (2) having advocated a coalition government as a step toward peace. Such actions were crimes against the state in South Vietnam; the verdict could not be appealed.²¹

CREDIBILITY AND INCREDIBILITY

When moral values are treated as secondary to the "higher" patriotic morality, truth itself becomes a dispensable commodity.* The position of the policymaker may be likened to that of Machiavelli who once confessed: "For a long time, I have not said what I believed nor do I even believe what I say, and, if indeed sometimes I do happen to tell the truth, I hide it among so many lies that it is hard to find." But if Machiavelli could no longer distinguish truth from falsehood, he at least was aware of that fact. The same cannot always be said of our leaders who, while quite capable of deliberate lies, often seem much closer to Lebedyev, the character in Dostoyevsky's *The Idiot* who said: "Words and deeds and lies and truth are all mixed up in me and are perfectly sincere."

What is most alarming is that policymakers not only lie to others but to themselves. We noted how individuals often define their experiences in ways which confirm their

* Secretary-General U Thant put it in this extraordinary way: "I am sure the great American people, if only they knew the true facts and the background to the developments in South Vietnam, will agree with me that further bloodshed is unnecessary . . . As you know in times of war and of hostilities, the first casualty is truth." *New York Times*, 25 February 1965.

preconceived notions. For someone like the paranoiac, any experience that fails to confirm the image of a "world against me" is either overlooked or dismissed as a false inference. In governmental hierarchies, Kenneth Boulding remarks, there is an inevitable tendency toward pleasing the superior and confirming the official sense of reality by producing data which support ongoing policy, and manipulating ideas so as to preserve unchallengeable images, thereby creating "a condition akin to paranoia in individuals. The information-gathering apparatus always tends to confirm the existing image of the top decision-makers, no matter what it is."²² John Mecklin, chief of US information activities in Vietnam, describes the self-deluding tendency this way:

. . . The case against us was more complex than the sin of falsehood . . . The root of the problem was the fact that much of what the newsmen took to be lies was exactly what the mission genuinely believed, and was reporting to Washington. Events were to prove that the mission itself was unaware of how badly the war was going, operating in a world of illusion.²³

Surveying the world of advertising, Jules Henry once noted that proof is never offered for the hyperbolic claims made on behalf of most consumer items. The proof of the advertisement "is that it sells the merchandise; if it does not it is false."²⁴ The truth in Washington similarly became anything that sells policy, and falsehood anything that weakens the cause. Claims that embellished policy with an aura of success and righteousness were treated as facts, and facts which contradicted these claims were denied or treated as falsehood. A complete collection of official lies and evasions about the progress, legal nature, conduct, and intent of the war in Vietnam would occupy many volumes.* Here we might point to a few illustrative instances.

* See Schurmann, Scott and Zelnik, *The Politics of Escalation in Vietnam*, and Herman and DuBoff, *America's Vietnam Policy*.

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The monumental political deception was the one perpetrated by Lyndon Johnson who, in the 1964 Presidential campaign, posing as America's peace candidate, a man of moderation and restraint, uttered such reassurances as: "I have had advice to load our planes with bombs and drop them on certain areas that would enlarge the war and escalate the war, and result in committing a good many American boys to fighting a war that I think ought to be fought by the boys of Asia to protect their own land."²⁵ And: "The loss of 190 American lives in Vietnam is bad but it's not like the 190 million we might lose the first month if we escalated the war."²⁶ His ensuing actions, many of them planned during or before the 1964 campaign, speak for themselves.*

In attempting to establish the legality of American intervention, Johnson observed in 1964: ". . . We have had one consistent aim—observance of the 1954 Geneva Agreements." He went on to say that the "agreements guaranteed the independence of South Vietnam."²⁷ That assertion, as we have already noted, is false. The Geneva Agreements called for reunification of Vietnam in a 1956 national election stating that "the demarcation line is provisional and should not in any way be interpreted as constituting a political or territorial boundary."²⁸

The omnipresent enterprises of the CIA have played a role in widening the "credibility gap." The CIA lied about its role in the overthrow of the Arbenz government in Guatemala, lied about its role in the overthrow of Mossadegh in Iran, lied about its part in the abortive military revolt against Sukarno in 1958, lied about its involvement in the Portuguese colonial war in Africa, lied about the

* After a visit to Vietnam while still Vice-President, Johnson privately recommended to President Kennedy that "we proceed with a clear-cut and strong program of action," and "meet the challenge of Communist expansion now in Southeast Asia by a major effort." Cited in Rowland Evans and Robert Novak, *Lyndon B. Johnson: The Exercise of Power* (New York: 1966).

American involvement in the Bay of Pigs. Today the Agency still denies any role in the bloody Indonesian "anti-communist" coup of 1965, a denial which like all the past ones may yet prove false.

Truth yields to mendacity, and mendacity sometimes gives way to pathological fantasy as when President Johnson sought to justify the Dominican intervention at a press conference:

There has been almost constant firing on our American Embassy. As we talked to Ambassador Bennett, he said to apparently one of the girls who brought him a cable, he said, please get away from the window that glass is going to cut your head, because the glass had been shattered, and we heard the bullets coming through the office where he was sitting while talking to us.²⁹

A month later at another press conference Johnson went further:

. . . Some 1,500 innocent people were murdered and shot, and their heads cut off, and . . . as we talked to our Ambassador to confirm the horror and tragedy and the unbelievable fact that they were firing on Americans and the American Embassy, he was talking to us from under a desk while bullets were going through his windows and he had a thousand men, women and children assembled in the hotel who were pleading with their President for help to preserve their lives.³⁰

None of this happened. No official, or newsman, or military officer ever reported any of this as either fact or rumor. Ambassador Bennett later said he could not recall any bullets coming into his office; he did not take cover under his desk. No American citizen was harmed except for two newsmen shot by US Marines; none was threatened. No one could be found who had ever seen a beheaded corpse in Santo Domingo, let alone 1,500. The beheadings were imagined.³¹

In the war against truth, words themselves are regularly abused and definitions take on opposite meanings. For instance, "dependent," "puppet" countries are exclusively those in the communist bloc, while countries which are non-communist but economically, militarily, or diplomatically influenced and controlled by the United States earn the title of "independent." Thus North Korea with no Chinese or Russian troops on its soil, with a small standing army and a population which seems unified around the task of national reconstruction, and with a leadership that openly declared its independence of both Moscow and Peking is still a communist "satellite." Conversely, South Korea with 50,000 American troops within its borders and a standing army of 600,000 equipped and financed by the United States and a dictatorship which is economically dependent on American aid is designated an "independent" nation.³² (The same comparison might be drawn between North and South Vietnam.)

Truth in all its literalness and complexity succumbs to simplistic imagery and metaphor. There is a "tide" to be stemmed, a "citadel" whose "foundation" needs to be buttressed, "outposts" to be kept open. There are "puppets" and "tools" and those who foolishly would have us be "soft" when in fact we should be "firm" ("hard" having been discarded as too "rigid" in its imagery). In Vietnam, Johnson observed, there is a "disease" that has to be "quarantined." He justified our intervention by reminding us: ". . . if you saw a little child in this room that was trying to waddle across the floor and some big bully came along and grabbed it by the hair and started stomping it, I think you'd do something about it."³³ (The big bully was the NLF.) Humphrey defended our enormous military budget by noting that "if you had illness in the family" you would have to spend a great deal "of your budget taking care of the ill . . . The fact is that there has been 'sickness' in this world [i.e., communism] in these post-World War II years

which we have not had the luxury of ignoring." He described any attempts at coalition government in Vietnam as comparable to putting "a fox in a chicken coop or an arsonist in the fire department." In 1964 Dean Rusk dismissed coalition because it was based on the notion that "the burglar or robber is entitled to something."

It was Rusk who once remarked: "The major lines of United States policy are simple and easily understandable; I am pretty certain that the majority of high school seniors could describe them accurately." At about that time he also made a point of criticizing college professors for their inability to comprehend our Vietnam policy. "We have here a paradox," noted William Foote Whyte, "a foreign policy simple enough to be understood and accepted by high school seniors and yet somehow beyond the comprehension and sympathy of many professors who take a professional interest in these matters."³⁴ Being a college professor himself, Whyte admittedly could not claim impartiality in this contest with high school seniors, but he ventured an explanation: the lines of policy were indeed simple, so much so that professors—along with those informed members of the Congress, the press, the clergy, the arts and the professions, etc. who appreciated the multifaceted dimensions of political reality—could not reconcile the world they studied with the simplistic picture drawn by Rusk. Nor would all the references to "tides," "fires," "foxes," "bullies," and "burglars" serve as a satisfying substitute for thoughtful, self-searching discourse.

NOBLE ENDS AND IGNOBLE MEANS

Delivering the special benefits of freedom and security to other peoples can lead to actions which bring only unspeakable misery, wreckage and death. The end result is not to ennoble others but to destroy them and barbarize ourselves. Let us bear witness:

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I don't like to hit a village. You know you're hitting woman and children, too. But you've got to decide that your cause is noble and that the work has to be done.

AN AMERICAN PILOT after one hundred missions,
The New York Times, 7 July 1965.

We usually kill more women and kids than we do Vietcong but the government troops just aren't available to clean out the villages so this is the only answer.

US AIR FORCE OFFICER,
Cleveland Plain Dealer, 19 July 1965

As the communists withdrew from Quangnai last Monday, US jet bombers pounded the hills into which they were headed. Many Vietnamese—one estimate was as high as 500—were killed by the strikes. The American contention is that they were Vietcong soldiers. But three out of four patients seeking treatment in a Vietnamese hospital afterwards for burns from napalm were village women.

The New York Times, 6 June 1965

Surely you don't believe that our "pilots fly to bomb children," that we send bombs and heavy equipment against innocent civilians? . . . You know as well as I do, Geyna, that we are bombing oil storage, transport and the heavy and sophisticated weapons they carry to kill our sons.

JOHN STEINBECK, letter to Yevgeny Yevtushenko,
Philadelphia Inquirer, 12 July 1966

The dominating figures of the air war in the Delta are the forward air controllers . . . They cruise over the Delta like a vigilante posse, holding the power of life and death over the Vietnamese villagers living beneath their daily patrol . . . A FAC can kill a lot of innocent people if he makes a mistake, which sometimes happens. I met a FAC who had been directing gunfire from Navy destroyers against hootches [native huts] and VC concentrations for several months. The destroyers were many

miles offshore in a rolling ocean. This young man had been relieved of duty because he had openly declared himself guilty of assisting in the killing of many civilians because the long-range guns had fired wild so often, hitting houses and people in the vicinity of the target coordinates. It was impossible not to feel the agony this boy was suffering. "I just want to go home and forget it forever," he said.

FRANK HARVEY,
Flying Magazine, November 1966

In the American press the Vietcong are almost always presented as indiscriminate terrorists. The reality is not always so simple. At certain times and in certain villages the Vietcong are in fact terrorists. But often they are trying to win the hearts and minds of the general population . . . Frequently the Vietcong carry out the public execution of a government official and this is reported as a "terrorist attack." But the truth sometimes seems to be that the official was oppressive, his execution a welcome event . . . Their savagery is personal—and primitive. Ours is impersonal and sophisticated. We and the South Vietnamese use artillery to shell villages; we don't see what happens at the other end . . . The Vietcong do not use napalm; we do . . . I have been an orthopedic surgeon for a good number of years . . . But nothing could have prepared me for my encounters with Vietnamese women and children burned by napalm. It was sickening, even for a physician, to see and smell the blackened flesh . . . And one never forgets the bewildered eyes of the silent, suffering napalm-burned child.

RICHARD E. PERRY, M.D.,
Redbook, January 1967

Napalm, and its more horrible companion, white phosphorus, liquidizes young flesh and carves it into grotesque forms. The little figures are afterward often scarcely human in appearance, and one cannot be confronted with the monstrous effect of the burning without being totally

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shaken . . . The initial urge to reach out and soothe the hurt was restrained by the fear that the ash-like skin would crumble in my fingers . . .

American soldiers in Vietnam who accidentally suffer serious burn injuries from napalm are rushed aboard special hospital planes—equipped to give immediate first aid treatment—and flown directly to Brook Army Hospital in Texas, one of the world's leading centers for burn treatment and for the extensive plastic surgery that must follow. Burnt Vietnamese children must fare for themselves.

WILLIAM F. PEPPER,
Ramparts, January 1967

We should be proud of what we are doing out there for the people of South Vietnam.

SECRETARY OF DEFENSE ROBERT MC NAMARA, 1967

Civilian hospitals there are desparately overcrowded and understaffed, particularly in the areas of heaviest fighting . . . Of these, most are victims of burns or orthopedic injuries. At present, there are approximately 3,000 amputees in Quan Ngai province . . .

Philadelphia Inquirer, 16 July 1967

The Pentagon released a letter from Assistant Secretary of Defense John T. McNaughton to Chairman Fulbright claiming that only 109 civilians had been killed and 170 injured in the seven months from last August 1, 1965 to March 1, 1966.

I. F. Stone's Weekly, 28 March 1966

. . . Last night two dark-colored delta-wing jets, unidentified but believed to be American or South Vietnamese, killed an estimated 105 people and wounded 175 in a 25-minute bombing and strafing attack. The villagers scrambled into bunkers underneath their homes but many died, some suffocated.

The London Times, 4 March 1967

There were sometimes two in a bed; now and then, three. They were peasants of all ages, badly battered . . . A Vietnamese hospital doctor told me, "Those you see here are those who were able to come. For every one who can reach a town, there are 10 who die in the village or the fields or wherever they are struck. This is true above all of the badly burned."

ROBERT GUILLIAN,
Le Monde, 12 March 1966

. . . What years of terror have done to South Vietnam's once-rich wild life . . . Wild elephants, which once roamed in herds through the now bomb-pitted jungles of Central Vietnam have altered their breeding habits. "It appears in many cases that they have stopped mating," said Dr. Vu Ngoc Tan, director of Saigon's zoo. "They have been terrorized by the bombing and the artillery attacks and armored vehicles crashing through the forests." Recently Tan spotted three injured young elephants while driving through the countryside . . . "They had very bad wounds, probably the result of shelling, and there was nothing I could do for them," Tan said. "They had obviously been abandoned by the herd and had come to that spot to die" . . . Tigers and panthers also have suffered . . . Chemical sprays have played havoc with bird life, destroying vegetation and the insects on which the birds feed. Monkeys and deer have also been affected. The one breed of animal which has thrived on the war is rats. Rats the size of cats can be seen any night in the more squalid streets of Saigon. These rodents carry a flea which transmits the bubonic plague, the "black death" that scourged Europe in the Middle Ages.

The Baltimore Sun, 15 January 1967

The French didn't kill enough. If you kill enough you win the war.

A US ARMY GENERAL in Saigon,
The New York Times, 15 May 1966

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Dear Senator Fulbright: Much had been written about the terror tactics used by the Viet Cong. The real terrorists in Vietnam are the Americans and their allies. I don't deny that some of the accusations against the VC are true but from my own experience the terror and havoc that we spread makes the VC look like a Girl Scout picnic.

Can you imagine what an isolated village looks like after it has been hit by over 500 750-pound bombs in a matter of seconds? Women, children, old men, cattle and every living thing is struck down without ever knowing from where their destruction originated. This particular village ceased to exist because it was in a VC-dominated area . . . We never found any dead soldiers but as it is the custom in VC-controlled areas all the dead were listed as VC killed in action.

I also saw thousands of pounds of rice dumped in rivers and otherwise destroyed because some small unit commander decided there was too much rice in this particular village for the number of people living there and therefore the surplus must be going to the VC . . . These people had worked for months to bring in a rice harvest and their "defenders" had come along and destroyed it in a matter of minutes. This scene was repeated dozens of times during my tour.

A letter to Senator J. William Fulbright from a
MARINE SECOND LIEUTENANT in Vietnam

We will continue as best we can to help the good people of South Vietnam enrich the condition of their life.

PRESIDENT LYNDON B. JOHNSON, 28 July 1965

After the announcement in Saigon of the scorched earth operation a broadcast dispatch from Hanoi reported the guerrillas accused the United States of carrying out a policy of "burn all, destroy all, kill all" in South Vietnam.

Col. Marvin Fuller, commander of a brigade in the operation, said anyone living in the operational area is presumed to be an enemy.

Fuller said water buffalo, ducks, chickens, and pigs were

being slaughtered to deny fresh meat to the enemy battalions. Dogs were killed because in a pinch the guerrillas slaughter them for food, he said . . . Hundreds of tons of rice have been destroyed or removed. Some GIs snatched up ducks for their own meals.

(AP) *Gazette and Daily*
(York, Pennsylvania), 14 March 1967

Dompe was asked about the VC who had been shot the previous afternoon. "It wasn't a VC," he said. "It was an old man. He had a stick with a bundle tied to one end over his shoulder. It looked like a rifle. We shouted at him to halt and he began running."

TOM BUCKLEY,
New York Times Magazine, 5 November 1967

We kill "ten civilians for every VC" according to Special Forces officers.

Newsweek, 14 March 1966

Today we went on a mission and I'm not very proud of myself, my friends, or my country. We burned every hut in sight. It was a small rural network of villages and the people were incredibly poor . . .

We burn these huts and take all men old enough to carry a weapon and the "choppers" come and get them (they take them to a collection point a few miles away for interrogation) . . .

Everyone is crying, begging and praying that we don't separate them . . . The women wail and moan. Then they watch in terror as we burn their homes, personal possessions and food. Yes, we burn all rice and shoot all livestock.

. . . A buddy of mine called "La dai" ("Come here") into a hut and an old man came out. My buddy told the old man to get away from the hut . . . and just threw a hand grenade. As he pulled the pin the old man got excited and started jabbering and running toward my buddy and the hut. A GI, not understanding, stopped the old

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man with a football tackle just as my buddy threw the grenade into the shelter . . . We all heard a baby crying from inside the shelter . . .

After the explosion we found the mother, two children (ages about six and twelve, boy and girl) and a baby. That is what the old man was trying to tell us. It was horrible! My last look was: an old, old man in ragged torn dirty clothes on his knees outside the burning hut, praying to Buddha. His white hair was blowing in the wind and tears were rollin' down . . .

There was a hut at a distance and my squad leader told me to go over and destroy it. An oldish man came out of the hut. I checked and made sure no one was in it, then got out my matches. The man came up to me then, and bowed with his hands in a praying motion over and over. He looked so sad. He didn't say anything, just kept bowing, begging me not to burn his home . . . With a heavy heart, I hesitatingly put the matches to the straw and started to walk away.

Dad, it was so hard for me to turn and look at him in the eyes but I did . . . I threw down my rifle and ran into the now blazing hut and took out everything I could save—food, clothes, etc. Afterward, he took my hand, still saying nothing and bowed down touching the back of my hand to his forehead . . .

A SOLDIER'S LETTER to his father,
Beacon Journal (Akron, Ohio), 27 March 1967

We are going to meet our commitments in South Vietnam and if there are those who don't like it, it's too bad.

Secretary of State DEAN RUSK,
17 July 1966

It's just one tawdry incident followed by another followed by another. We medivaced a woman yesterday who had been burned by a white phosphorus grenade perhaps five days earlier. She could not move because grenade frags were imbedded in her body from head to toe along her

left side . . . She was about three months pregnant and we were able to find the clearing by listening to the sounds of her mother weeping over her . . .

A 27-year old Buck Sergeant who loves to read Dennis the Menace comic books (after pistol whipping an elderly man, breaking his neck and leaving him to die): "If that s_____ interpreter hadn't come along, I could have finished the m_____ f_____ off with my 45!"

Our platoon medic: "I don't want to treat any gooks for wounds—everybody understand?"

My fire team leader: "Remember back in November when we raided that village at night and found that family with that Schwinn bicycle? They looked so goddamned funny crying after we kicked the spokes in I liked to bust a gut laughing." . . . The villages that I have seen raided in the last six months may or may not have harbored VC before we raided them; they all did by the time we had finished.

FROM A GI'S LETTER published in the Contra Costa,
California Citizens Against the War in Vietnam,
Newsletter, February 1967

In March 1966, Tuck said, he himself shot a Vietnamese woman who had not lined up with others after US forces surrounded a village near the Cambodian border. "The woman looked suspicious, an officer told me, and ordered me to shoot her." Tuck said, "I'm sorry I did it but it was an order." He said it was general practice not to take prisoners except North Vietnamese officers. "We shot them. The only good Vietnamese is a dead one, we were told."

New York Post, 24 November 1967

A new breed of Americans . . . The eighteen- and nineteen-year-olds, fashionably referred to as high school dropouts, have . . . maybe too much of what prize-fighters call killer instinct . . . [From our helicopter] they have killed a lot of Vietnamese, all of their victims listed as

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Viet Cong, of course, whether they are women or children or not . . . These kids seemed to enjoy killing . . .

WARREN ROGERS,
New York Journal-American, 16 September 1965

[Entering a village we had bombed we were greeted by] the wailing of women and the stench of burned bodies. [Nearby] was a destroyed school house which villagers said had been only recently built, presumably with American aid money. "The Americans have given and the Americans have taken away," one US Army adviser said later.

JOHN WHEELER,
Cleveland Plain Dealer, 19 July 1965

One American helicopter crewman returned to his base . . . last week without a fierce young prisoner entrusted to him. He told friends that he had become infuriated by the youth and had pushed him out of the helicopter at about 1,000 feet.

The New York Times, 7 July 1965

The dissenting minority has the right to speak without penalty . . . But they are unwittingly—I hope unwittingly—destroying that privilege. They have a right to object, but we deplore their ignorance and their violence.

PRESIDENT LYNDON B. JOHNSON,
30 May 1967

The only violence I saw was that practiced against the demonstrators by Federal marshals and troops . . . Some persons—frequently girls—were kicked and clubbed repeatedly and very severely.

ALLAN BRICK, eyewitness testimony
on the 21 October 1967 Peace Demonstration
in Washington, D.C., a paid advertisement
by private citizens in *The New York Times*
3 December 1967. (No reports of brutality
were reported in the American press.)

I saw young men lying on the ground defenseless, mercilessly clubbed by US Marshals. I was gassed. I was kicked and struck on the back with a rifle butt as I sat quietly, in civil disobedience, in front of the "fortress." I watched a Catholic priest—Father Connor—beg the marshals not to be brutal.

MITCHELL GOODMAN, *Ibid.*

At least four times that soldier hit her with all his force, then as she lay covering her head with her arms, thrust his club swordlike between her hands into her face. Two more troops came up and began dragging the girl toward the Pentagon . . . She twisted her body so we could see her face. But there was no face there: all we saw were some raw skin and blood. We couldn't even see if she was crying—her eyes had filled with the blood pouring down her head. She vomited, and that too was blood. Then they rushed her away.

HARVEY MAYES, *Ibid.*

[By mid-1967, more than 500,000 acres of jungle and brush and about 220,000 acres of crop land were destroyed. Lately, rice has been dumped in rivers. Vegetable and cane sugar fields have been added as targets of destruction.]

See *Science*, 20 January 1967; and
Congressional Record, 6 February 1967, p. S1609

Consider the crop and stores destruction program in South Vietnam. The aim of the program is to starve the Vietcong by destroying those fields that provide the rice for their rations . . . As a nutritionist who has seen famines on three continents, one of them Asia, and as a historian of public health with an interest in famines, I can say flatly that there has never been a famine or food shortage—whether created by . . . droughts, by plant disease, by large-scale natural disturbances (such as floods and earthquakes), by disruption of farming operations due to wars

and civil disorders, or by blockade or other war measures directly aimed at the food supply—which has not first and overwhelmingly affected the small children.

In fact, it is very clear that death from starvation occurs first of all in young children and in the elderly, with adults and adolescents surviving better (pregnant women often abort; lactating mothers cease to have milk and the babies die). Children under five, who in many parts of the world—including Vietnam—are often on the verge of kwashi-orkor (a protein-deficiency syndrome which often hits children after weaning and until they are old enough to eat “adult” food) and of marasmus (a combination of deficiency of calories and of protein), are the most vulnerable . . .

Adults, and particularly adult men, survive usually much better than the rest of the population. Bands of armed men do not starve and—particularly if not indigenous to the population and therefore unhampered by direct family ties with their victims—find themselves entirely justified in seizing what little food is available so as to be able to continue to fight. Destruction of food thus never seems to hamper enemy military operations but always victimizes large numbers of children. During World War I, the blockade had no effect on the nutrition and fighting performance of the German and Austrian armies, but—for the first time since the eighteenth century—starvation, vitamin-A deficiency, and protein deficiency destroyed the health, the sight, and even the lives of thousands of children in Western Europe.

DR. JEAN MAYER,
School of Public Health, Harvard University,
Science, 15 April 1966

[The Pentagon dropped an estimated 638,000 tons of bombs on Vietnam in 1966. This represents five tons for every square mile. In the month of February, 1967 American planes dropped 68,000 tons on North and South Vietnam. This compares to a 29,000 ton monthly peak on Japan and an 80,000 ton peak on all of Europe during the

most intense action of World War II. Vietnam is a country approximately the size of Michigan.]

Based on SECRETARY MC NAMARA'S testimony
before the Senate Foreign Relations and Senate
Armed Forces Committees, 1966 and 1967

There are also a lot of nice buildings in Haiphong. What their contributions are to the war effort I don't know, but the desire to bomb a virgin building is terrific.

NAVY PILOT in
The New York Times, 20 January 1968

We've never bombed the North Vietnamese embassies. We have never bombed their population. Sure, we try to hit a military target, a petroleum target, or an electric plant.

PRESIDENT LYNDON B. JOHNSON, 4 July 1966

Much of the outrage [in North Vietnam] against US bombing is directed at the use of antipersonnel bombs—particularly the CBUs (Cluster Bomb Units), canisters which burst in the air, each scattering 300 baseball-sized explosives which detonate on impact, each spraying hundreds of pea-sized steel pellets at high velocity over a wide area. The pellets are coated with napalm and stick when they hit . . . One 18-year-old girl had taken a pellet through her left arm, one in her intestine, one through her finger and lower lip and one, which I could feel with my fingers, embedded in the heel of her hand.

LEE LOCKWOOD
reporting on his trip to North Vietnam,
Life, 7 April 1967

. . . There is plenty of testimony and photographic evidence of the destruction of populated centers. The administration insists that we are bombing military targets only, though it has finally conceded, after too many had been found, that we are using anti-personnel bombs in the

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North, without specifying how these inventions, designed to fragment a soft human body, were effective against bridges, power plants, and railway yards.

MARY MC CARTHY,

The New York Review of Books, 9 November 1967

Now that I've seen what the bombs and the napalm did to the people on our ship, I'm not so sure that I want to drop any more of that stuff on North Vietnam.

A NAVY PILOT referring to the accidental explosions on the aircraft carrier "Forrestal," quoted in *The New York Times*, 28 October 1967

There is more to this story than even the above excerpts could reveal. Prisoners of war and large numbers of civilians including wives and relatives of men suspected of being in the NLF, were subjected to torture. The water torture, electric-shock torture, wire-cage torture, suspension torture, protracted and fatal beatings, mutilations and less-known but well documented techniques are widely used.³⁵ Most of the victims were handed over to South Vietnamese security forces. But cruel mistreatment and murder of prisoners by American troops became so frequent by 1966 as to require a high-command order to cease such practices, an order that was far from being observed in the combat zones.

By 1965 the war was no longer against the Viet Cong but against the populace that supported it, and American forces began the systematic destruction of whole villages, and the large-scale forced deracination of the peasantry. By 1968, over three million Vietnamese were refugees; nearly a million of these, according to official estimates, had been forcefully removed from their homes to live in the squalor and desolation of internment camps without provision for the most elementary sanitation needs, and with insufficient—or more often, nonexistent—medical facilities. "Many of the children appeared pale and prob-

ably undernourished," reported one *New York Times* observer.³⁶ Dr. Eric Wulf who had visited the camps commented:

The strength that the Vietnamese peasant draws from his familiar surroundings, his home, his fields, his coconut trees, most of all, perhaps the graves of his ancestors can give him the strength he needs to carry on in the face of great difficulties and hardships. Take him away from these things and you soon see the beginnings of apathy and even disorientation.

Another observer, Dr. Gerald C. Hickey said, "You would be better off retaining the stability and tradition of village life under any circumstances. There are some things that just cannot be done in terms of military expediency."³⁷ Edward Kennedy, chairman of the Senate Subcommittee on Refugees and Escapees, and also a first-hand observer of the camps, noted that the US refugee policy had led to "the almost total disruption and, in many cases, destruction of the fabric of life and society in that nation."³⁸

The Nobel Prize winner Max Born once noted that during the First World War, 5 percent of all fatal combat casualties were civilians; 95 percent were military. In World War II, with intensive bombings of civilian centers, 48 percent of the dead were non-combatants. In the Korean War when American planes had unchallenged reign of the skies, and armies raged back and forth over the peninsula, 84 percent of the dead were civilians. Born was writing before figures were available on Vietnam, but it is unlikely that the trend has been reversed.³⁹ In Vietnam, civilians often were not the incidental but the exclusive target of attack. If, as Mao Tse-tung said, the guerilla lives among the people like a fish in water, then, "We're going to dry up the water," according to one American military officer.

"But what about the Vietcong, don't they kill people?"

is the rhetorical question that seeks to equate NLF terror with American genocide. The implication is that by pointing to the Vietcong killings somehow we were absolved from moral responsibility for our own actions. In truth, the NLF fighters had no need to engage in the wanton decimation of civilians. Unlike their opponents, they did not resort to the tactics of "scorched earth" and "open-area targets" in some grand "strategy of denial"; they recognized the self-defeating repercussions of such actions, and were not prepared to kill off the very population which supported their existence.

Supposedly it was the very deliberateness of their assassinations of village chiefs which was so much more "cold-blooded" and "immoral" than our "unintended" slaughter of civilians. Two things should be said about this; first, as one expert of revolutionary warfare, Egbal Ahmad noted: "Guerrilla use of terror . . . is sociologically and psychologically selective. It strikes those who are popularly identified as the 'enemy of the people'—officials, landlords, and the like." * Its purpose is to maximize popular support.

As to the argument that *our* civilian killings were not deliberate—and therefore more forgivable—it should be

* However, Ahmad adds, killing a village chief is a more complicated affair, "since most chiefs are local farmers who command legitimacy and loyalty through tradition and kinship." Usually the revolutionary movement wants to enlist the chief's support rather than kill him. In Algeria the FLN often incurred the wrath of villagers by assassinating chiefs. Yet in Vietnam, chiefs in many villages were executed often in public ceremony with the approval of the peasants. This was possible because the chiefs were Saigon appointees, commanding none of the legitimacy, trust and respect enjoyed by the guerrilla cadres that were liberating the country from the foreigner; also the chiefs were engaged in the sordid business of restoring the interests of the landlords who returned like locusts after 1954 to claim back rents and crops. The guerrillas had no problem preparing the peasants to accept the killing of an official devoted to that work. Egbal Ahmad, "Revolutionary Warfare," Gettleman, *op. cit.*, pp. 351-362.

remembered that one is liable for any action having obviously inescapable and brutal consequences, even if such consequences were not part of one's deliberate intent. Theodore Draper illustrates it this way:

One who fires a machine gun into a crowd in order to kill a single person can hardly protest that he did not mean to injure anyone else 'deliberately'—especially if he misses his intended victim, as sometimes happens in the bombing of military targets. The indirect but unavoidable by-products of a course of action cannot be exempted morally.⁴⁰

This does not mean the Vietcong were morally exempt. But the point has been made: the NLF did not declare war on its own "infrastructure." The Vietcong was composed of predominantly light infantry units, without naval and air striking power; they could not match our massive destructive capacity even were they to concentrate the major portion of their fire-power on civilians. And while any murder is morally wrong, the extent of the evil is to some degree affected by the enormity of the number of deaths. We have done most of the killing. We say so and produce statistics to boast of it: by February 1969, we claimed to have killed approximately 400,000 Vietnamese in the South alone—they were all enemies. In one respect the claim was correct: our enemy is the people.

THE RIGHT TO SELF-DEFENSE

The inverted morality of nationalism demands that a nation have not only a right but a duty to do *whatever it deems necessary* to protect its own security. While the end is laudable, one might question the blanket mandate. Since "national security" is often as difficult to define as the "danger" that supposedly threatens it, the tendency is to equate the barely possible with the almost certain, the remote with the imminent, the presently innocuous with the

potentially lethal. Thus self-defense is interpreted not merely as defense against actual or impending attack but also against anything that might possibly infringe upon our vital interests; vital interests are defined as the maintenance of American power in any part of the world that might become threatened; and a threat is any future contingency which the fearful imagination can manufacture. Not probabilities but "possibilisms" become the operational imperative. Or as Weinberg said more than three decades ago: "The extremism of the nationalist's ideology arises from the assumption that since the dangers of international life are not always calculable by reason, defense should err on the side of madness rather than reasonableness."⁴¹ The necessity of self-preservation knows no law, and national security becomes the ultimate value. But even ultimate values might be questioned: "Why is it that, no matter what the cost to another nation or to international society, the right of preserving the nation and all its vital interests is considered morally unquestionable?"⁴² Were we ever to ponder that question we might decide that there are some actions which, even if deemed necessary for the preservation of American security are so morally reprehensible as to be forsaken. We might further wonder whether the limitless pursuit of national security does not become self-defeating. For doing "whatever we deem fit to maintain our security" includes violating and destroying the security of other nations, the result being that the nation most obsessed with "organizing the peace" in order to safeguard its own national existence is the nation which growing numbers of people view as the foremost violator of peace.

THE ARROGANCE OF VIRTUE

To support military dictatorships in the name of democracy, to create satellites under the banner of self-determi-

nation, to violate treaties while championing world law, to propagate lies in the name of truth, to wage war in the name of peace—such is the Orwellian cast of moral imperialism. Virtue, doubting everything but itself, can violate the natural rights of others without pause because it operates under the sovereign presumption of its own unchallengeable ethical superiority. It is only partly true that napalm has dulled our moral sensibilities; in large part, it was our nationalistic morality—carried to its self-aggrandizing conclusion—that made us capable of producing and using napalm.

The immense power mobilized in the name of virtue carries its own corrupting influence. Dean Rusk once suggested that we revise Lord Acton's theorem. The United States, he believed, was not corrupted by its great power because our strength was employed only in pursuit of America's "simple and decent" objectives. But to presume that "power corrupts" by making men suddenly malicious and wicked is to miss the point. "Innocent and well-meaning people," Zinn noted, reflecting on his days as a US Air Force bombardier in World War II, "—of whom I considered myself one—are capable of the most brutal acts and most self-righteous excuses, whether they be Germans, Japanese, Russians, or Americans."⁴³ Power corrupts an entire nation in many subtle ways, Gary Porter reminds us, "by creating pressures for the use of the power which is available, by increasingly expanding a nation's legitimate security needs, and by becoming the object of pride and prestige."⁴⁴

At the turn of the century many Englishmen thought it unjust that their powerful nation should forcefully subdue the small Boer Republic. Several decades later many people were outraged that Mussolini's legions armed with planes, tanks, and poison gas were waging full-scale modern war on a backward Ethiopia. Today, the immorality of a titanic industrial nation pulverizing a tiny agrarian

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country with every conceivable instrument of death seems to have escaped us. This is how power corrupts. With incomparable arrogance we take it upon ourselves to decide that a small Asian nation is better dead than red, and—having the power to do so—we help them achieve that goal. By the inverted logic of moral imperialism, we deliver frightful devastation on Vietnam in order to save that people from aggression, thereby placing a high value on the purity of our intentions and a rather low value of Vietnamese lives.

Not arrogance but humility is what motivates us, Secretary Rusk insisted, responding to Fulbright's charge that we were succumbing to "the fatal arrogance of power." "These problems should be approached on one's knees," said the Secretary. "These problems make pygmies of us all, and unless we approach them with humility we will never solve them." But the very undertaking that led Rusk to his humility is what Fulbright questioned. The arrogance rests in the assumption that we are ordained—whether with legs astride or in genuflection—to solve the problems of mankind and create a world order according to our own image.

Virtue tolerates none of the restraints which ordinary vice is made to suffer. But if actions such as ours can be perpetrated in the name of anti-communism, what evil is there left to do in the name of communism? It was the South Vietnamese Buddhist, Pham Cong Thien, who in a brief prayer made the first and final plea against moral imperialism: "Lead us not into Salvation, but deliver us from Deliverance."

NOTES

1. Weinberg, *Manifest Destiny*, *passim*.
2. Rusk quoted in Stillman and Pfaff, *Power and Impotence*, p. 6.

3. Saul Padover, "How the Asians See Us," *New School Bulletin*, 28 December 1965.
4. Gunnar Myrdal address to SANE rally, reprinted in *SANE World*, January 1967.
5. Johnson quoted in *The Atlantic*, September 1966, p. 12.
6. Harlan Cleveland, *The Obligation of Power* (New York: 1966).
7. Draper, *Abuse of Power*, pp. 157-158.
8. Testimony before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, 28 June 1966.
9. Bedell Smith (representing the United States at Geneva), "Further Documents Relating to the Discussion of Indochina at the Geneva Conference," Gettleman, *op. cit.*, p. 154 ff.
10. Text of Geneva agreements, Gettleman, *op. cit.*, p. 137 ff.
11. See President Eisenhower's letter to Diem, October 23, 1954, Gettleman, *op. cit.*, p. 204.
12. See the *Interim Reports* of the ICC, Gettleman, *op. cit.*, pp. 166-190.
13. *New York Times*, 13 August 1965.
14. *New York Times*, 2 August 1967; the earlier statement was carried in the edition of 8 May 1966.
15. *Philadelphia Inquirer*, 26 August 1966.
16. *Washington Post*, 11 September 1966.
17. See *New York Times*, 10 September 1966; *Baltimore Sun*, 10 September 1966; *Washington Star*, 10 September 1966.
18. *Washington Post*, 14 September 1966.
19. The decree is cited more fully in Lynd and Hayden, *The Other Side*, p. 194.
20. See James A. Wechsler, "A Lost Election," *New York Post*, 21 September 1967.
21. *New York Times*, 28 July 1968.
22. Kenneth Boulding, "The Learning and Reality-Testing Process in the International System," *op. cit.*, p. 10.
23. John Macklin, *Mission in Torment* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1965), p. 100.
24. *Culture Against Man*, p. 47.
25. Quoted in Jay Neugeboren, "Disobedience Now," *Commonweal*, 16 June 1967, p. 367.
26. *New York Times*, 29 September 1964.
27. Lyndon B. Johnson, Address to the American Bar Association, August 12, 1964, Gettleman, *op. cit.*, p. 163 fn.
28. Final Declaration of the Geneva Conference, 21 July 1954, Gettleman, *op. cit.*, pp. 151-154.
29. *New York Times*, 6 May 1965.

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30. *New York Times*, 18 June 1965.
31. See Robert Sherrill, *The Accidental President*, pp. 42-43.
32. This observation is taken from Herman and DuBoff, *op. cit.*, p. 89.
33. Press Conference, *New York Times*, 18 November 1967.
34. William Foote Whyte, "Thoughtways of Foreign Policy," *op. cit.*, p. 641.
35. See Bernard Fall, *New Republic*, 9 October 1965, pp. 18-21; Malcolm W. Browne, *The New Face of War* (New York: Bobbs Merrill, 1965), pp. 115-118; Robin Moore, *The Green Berets* (New York: Crown Publishers, 1965), pp. 49-50; also comments in White, *op. cit.*
36. *New York Times*, 28 October 1967.
37. *Ibid.*
38. *Ibid.*
39. See Max Born in *Bulletin of Atomic Scientists*, April 1965.
40. Draper, *Abuse of Power*, p. 186 n.
41. Weinberg, *Manifest Destiny*, p. 409. My entire discussion of moral imperialism is heavily indebted to Weinberg's classic.
42. *Ibid.*, p. 410.
43. Zinn, *The Logic of Withdrawal*, p. 5.
44. Gary Porter, "Globalism—The Ideology of Total World Involvement," Fall and Raskin, *op. cit.*, p. 326.

The Tragic Success

No society is fully awake either to its inherent nature or its natural prospects, if it ignores the fact that there are many alternatives to the path it is actually following and many conceivable and possible goals besides those which are immediately visible.

LEWIS MUMFORD

It would be a heartening experience not in keeping with the dismal habits of our history, were we Americans to come to the realization that despite our size and wealth we are not the Almighty's anointed; we are capable of selfishness, myopia, injustice, vanity and violence, and given our immense power, more able to sin in those directions than most other peoples. Our belief that any heinous action we take is justified by the purity of our intentions, while any constructive action the "communists" take is a

cloak for evil is one of the great tragedies of this world.

American anti-communism displays that durability which is the common characteristic of demonological ideologies. To be sure, demonic imagery is capable of changing. The United States fought a war with Germany and Japan, yet both are now considered our allies. Even the would-be monsters presiding over the Kremlin are now viewed as human beings capable of responsible action. But hostile images sometimes endure despite repeated evidence to the contrary. "Because friends are expected to be friendly and enemies to be hostile, there is a tendency to view their behavior in line with these expectations," notes Ole Holsti, "The image of the enemy is clearly self-perpetuating, for the model itself denies the existence of data that could disconfirm it." ¹

This is especially true when the enemy is a disembodied entity called "communism." Foreboding assertions beginning with phrases like "The communists want . . . ," "The communists may be planning . . . ," "The communist strategy is . . ." should be rejected forthwith as meaningless and misleading statements. After years of mindless cold-war propaganda Americans have a most imperfect notion of what "communism" and "social revolution" are in such places as Southeast Asia and Latin America, and given the dramatic transitions occurring in those regions and in the more established Soviet and Eastern European nations, a most imperfect notion of what "communism" is anywhere in the world. To say the least, it is time we adopt less emotive and more concrete images to describe the widely varied socio-political phenomena that are now subsumed under one fearsome stereotype.

Many of the conflicts we face seem unsolvable because we attempt to construct operational solutions based on the very images and premises which originally bred the conflicts. Once we extricate ourselves from the phobic premises of anti-communism we enter upon a new reality and are

able to see and create new options. We will discover that:

there are some communist governments that are more worthy of our respect than some anti-communist governments. There are some anti-communist governments that are so unpopular with their own people that they cannot be saved . . . There are some anti-communist governments that are not worth saving, regardless of how small the risks may be.²

And there are some governments that, if taken over by social revolutionaries, would enjoy honest rule and reform for the first time in their histories, a prospect we should not only tolerate but welcome. As of now, we seem to prefer the continuation of oppression and want to the social revolutions that might assault these ills; when revolutionary forces emerge we are prepared to destroy them and, if necessary, the people they seek to reach. This position is not only reactionary, it is profoundly inhuman.

NON-INTERVENTION

The advocates of interventionism do not think of themselves as inhuman; they believe that a firm stand in one land will save us from even greater wars by persuading revolutionaries in other lands that such uprisings are not worth the cost. A failure to hold the line, they argue, will only lead to a succession of conflagrations eventually threatening our very shores. The Vietnam war is important, then, primarily for its admonitory value. This view, sometimes described as "the domino theory" or the "Munich analogy" is simple in imagery and deficient in evidence. It is difficult to see how intervention in Vietnam convinces people in other lands that social revolutions are too costly since the Vietnamese themselves, the very people who have received the full brunt of this admonition, seem not to have got the message. Our counterrevolution-

ary actions have not had much exemplary value. As Howard Zinn reminds us:

. . . What effect did our refusal to allow the defeat of South Korea (1950–53), or our aid in suppressing the Huk rebellion in the Philippines (1947–55), or the suppression of guerrillas in Malaya (1948–60), have on the guerrilla warfare in South Vietnam which started around 1958 . . . If our use of subversion and arms to overthrow Guatemala in 1954 showed the Communists in Latin America that we meant business, then how did it happen that Castro rebelled and won in 1959? Did our invasion of Cuba in 1961 . . . show other revolutionaries in Latin America that they must desist? Then how explain the Dominican uprising in 1965? . . . and did our dispatch of Marines to Santo Domingo end the fighting of guerrillas in the mountains of Peru? ³

Those who believe that the American presence in Vietnam greatly influenced the “anti-communist” Indonesian upsurge of 1966 should be reminded that the Indonesian coup broke out at a time when there were only two weak US divisions in Vietnam and there was not yet a certitude of their survival or build-up.⁴ The inference that we must intervene in one country in order to avoid intervention in another could be turned around and with better logic we might conclude that it is useless to fight in one country when the same conditions of social grievance and rebellion exist in another, for no matter how thoroughly we destroy one land we thereby have not solved the problems of any other.⁵

Not only is the domino theory incorrect in arguing the admonitory value of intervention, it is fundamentally wrong in presuming that revolutions are evils which we must crush. Given the increasingly murderous efficiency of technological counterinsurgency and the continued US efforts to expand and improve the military forces of reac-

tionary governments,* it is conceivable that we could maintain a reactionary social order throughout much of the third world. In Thailand, the Philippines, and most of Latin America, the native armies are undergoing a full-scale shift to anti-guerrilla training with the understanding that their primary function is not to guard their national frontiers from invaders, but to protect the existing regimes from their own people. Such a policy is deplorable not because it is doomed to fail, but because it might very well succeed. The "order and stability" we achieve will dictate that the downtrodden and exploited of the world cease their resistance and acquiesce in their fate.

It is time American unequivocally ceased its counter-revolutionary interventionism. Our policy should be predicated on the belief that there are no people on earth over whom we have the right to exercise the judgment of life and death, no matter how displeased we are with their internal rebellions. Such a commitment means not only that we refuse to employ American troops to protect unpopular regimes, but that we dismantle our entire global

* The US counterinsurgency program has reached enormous proportions. As early as 1963 some 57,000 American government personnel were being put through counterinsurgency courses. These were all *civilians* and did not include the far greater number of military personnel involved. The United States maintains large Special Forces contingents in almost every Latin American and Asian country. Troops from these countries are equipped, trained and supervised by Americans. A host of new technological devices and weapons, including armored amphibious vehicles, landing-craft, helicopter gun-ships, flame-throwers, rockets, aerial reconnaissance and detection instruments, have been distributed and used by native militarists and their American "advisors." A joint hemispheric intelligence bureau designed to detect "communist activities" and to "coordinate police and repressive action" for the entire continent puts Latin American security police and intelligence forces effectively under the training and guidance of CIA. See William J. Pomeroy, *Guerrilla and Counter-Guerrilla Warfare* (New York: 1964), pp. 37-41.

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counterrevolutionary apparatus including the military advisory teams, the Special Forces units, the CIA conspiratorial network, and the billions in armaments deployed throughout the world to bolster native military forces in the war against their own populations.

Would such a policy lead us into isolationism? It makes no more sense to equate non-intervention with isolationism than to equate intervention with internationalism. A nation that refuses to interpose its power into the internal affairs of other lands is only respecting one of the time-honored principles of international conduct and is not thereby committed to burying its head in the sand. The truth is, our present policy of unilateral interventionism with its indifference to the opinions and feelings of others, is more characteristic of a self-willed isolated power than of an internationalist one.

A true commitment to internationalism, as opposed to our present moral imperialism, would bring an increase in cooperative intercourse with other nations (including leftist governments we now eschew) in those areas (trade, travel, cultural exchanges, joint scientific and economic endeavors, etc.) that represent the more decent side of international life. A non-interventionist America could still give technical aid when and if such aid could be utilized to advance the living conditions of the masses rather than fatten the powerful and corrupt. In this undertaking, working through international agencies, we can make common efforts with other industrial nations including the Soviet Union. We need to recognize that the destinies of other peoples are not matters we can or should regulate, and that the superimposition of American values and power, however well-intended, does more harm than good. If history teaches us anything, it is that vital transformations depend largely upon the political will and energy of the indigenous people.

Free from the taint of our own interventionism, we can

lend ourselves without hypocrisy to the peaceful settlement of international disputes, offering our good offices when welcomed, minding our business when more suitable, and relying on quiet negotiations, international commissions, and world court adjudications rather than on threat, unilateral police actions, and brute force.

A non-interventionist America can still maintain minimal forces to insure the security of its own boundaries while recognizing that real security will come only through a political rapprochement with Moscow and Peking and the gradual mutual de-escalation of armaments. The record of past years shows that a viable accommodation with both China and the Soviet Union is neither unthinkable nor unattainable and that, while neither of those two powers are emancipated from their own demon theories, sane and conciliatory actions on our part encourage similar responses from them. A new understanding with China, however, is not likely until we are prepared to end the US military encirclement of the mainland and cease our violent defense of reactionism in Southeast Asia.

THE ANXIETY OF THE "HAVES"

The anti-communist impulse possesses all the pernicious psychological advantages of reductionism, stereotypy, and self-fulfilling prophecy. It battens on the innate rigidity of fear and on that sense of boundless self-righteousness which is the expression of the collective ego. It offers itself as the last defense of Democracy, Capitalism, and the American Way of Life, and it enjoys the support of the multi-billion dollar military-industrial-scientific establishment it helped to create. It is the outgrowth of our loftiest messianic visions and our crudest materialistic drives and as such it tells us more about ourselves than about the world we inhabit.

For many generations Americans have envisioned man-

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kind as developing in a linear extension of the American experience, open to our investments and enjoying the inspirational example of our political institutions. Our goal has been a world of "law and order" with a decided advantage going to those who define the order and enforce the law, a world respectful of mankind's best interests. That these interests also happened to be identical with the best interests of the United States was no cause for embarrassment, it being understood that the less fortunate peoples, if not misled by revolutionaries, and if given occasional succor from the happiest, richest, most successful nation in the world, would eventually learn productive ways, develop orderly liberal institutions, and come into the blessings of peace, prosperity, and property. Give or take some cultural variations, they would emerge as had America, from the howling wilderness to the machine-fed garden.

This vision is still with us and so is the nightmare that always lurked behind it, the fear that others might turn their backs on the American-defined world order and construct competing social systems which propagate values (especially those relating to the distribution and use of wealth) that somehow might undermine our own system, plunder our treasure and oust us from the pinnacle of power. Lyndon B. Johnson, with characteristic eloquence, summed it up before a cheering Junior Chamber of Commerce audience: "We own half the trucks in the world. We own almost half of the radios in the world. We own a third of all the electricity . . ." But the rest of the world, he added, would like to trade places with us. "Now I would like to see them enjoy the blessings that we enjoy. But don't you help them exchange places with us, because I don't want to be where they are." For many Americans, Johnson was touching the vulgar heart of the matter: keep others from taking what we have.

Whether when dealing with the black ghettos at home

or facing a poverty-stricken world abroad, Americans are increasingly placing their faith in technological counter-insurgency. "The army," reported the Associated Press on 15 February 1968, "is stockpiling riot control equipment in strategically located depots across the country, and is ready to airlift it to any city if civil disorders break out . . ." Police departments throughout the nation were arming themselves with new arsenals of automatic weapons, armored tanks, flak jackets, steel helmets, mace, and tear gas. Opinion polls in 1967-68 indicated that Americans were almost as worried about "crime in the streets" (i.e., ghetto disturbances) as about Vietnam; many people advocated "stronger anti-crime" measures but few expressed indignation over the conditions which caused riots and few protested the far greater white counterviolence perpetrated by those who suppressed the riots.*

By turning reality on its head, the haves usually manage to convince themselves that they are being mistreated by the have-nots. America is succumbing to a fierce anxiety and a siege psychology, feeling victimized by distant tiny nations and by its own severely deprived black minority. We not only ally ourselves with the privileged elites in other lands, we imitate them, placing our faith in repression, thereby to avoid the necessity of facing up to funda-

* It is a well-documented fact that in Watts and Newark, with few exceptions, those who were killed were Negroes, including women and children, shot by police and National Guardsmen. Acts of brutality by law-enforcement agents were common occurrences. In the summer riots of 1967 there were a few white deaths—usually accidental killings by police and Guardsmen, but the black people killed numbered in the hundreds. The reader is referred to Conot's study of Watts, Hayden's eye-witness report on Newark, and the Report of the President's Commission on Civil Disorders which the President himself ignored. Robert Conot, *Rivers of Blood, Years of Darkness* (New York: 1967); Tom Hayden, "The Occupation of Newark," *New York Review of Books*, 24 August 1967, pp. 14-24; *Report of the National Advisory Commission of Civil Disorders* (New York: 1968).

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mental structural changes. Too many Americans are compelled not by any deep concern for other people's well-being but by an irrational fear for their own skins and own possessions. The American haves, be they old-family plutocrats or newly arrived working-class home-owners, seem no more capable of transcending their own narrowly defined interests, no more capable of a sense of empathy, charity, and urgency toward less fortunate people, no more capable of exercising political imagination and courageous social invention than the ruling classes of other lands. But why should we have assumed otherwise? Many of those who celebrate the Great Society are so wedded to the status quo at home and abroad that they are unable to embark upon any of the fundamental transitions needed to create a great society; they remain incapable of looking critically at standard American values because they are the prime products of those values. Beset by fears that the communists and the blacks are moving in, they place their faith in the violent enforcement of "law and order" at home and abroad.

When we see the counterinsurgency suppression of Vietnam reenacted in our own cities, we are left with the questions: What kind of a nation are we? If we are so strong, why are we so fearful? If we are so prosperous, why are we so impoverished in the quality of our national life? If we are so free, why are we so oppressive? If we are so peace-loving, why are we so violent?

Ours is a society in which unsurpassed wealth goes hand in hand with insufficient medical care, urban decay, unemployment, unequal educational opportunities, chaotic public transportation, plundered and polluted natural resources, inequitable taxation, mindless communications media, collusive trade practices and evergrowing corporate profits; in short, a society in which "technology is at its most developed and its misuse most shameful"⁶ and pri-

vate power and wealth rather than public need have the greatest say in the allocation of material resources.

Ours is a political system that can expend \$85 billion annually to crush social change in other lands, but can make no realistic expenditures to effect social change at home; a system which devotes almost all of the public funds to the production and use of technological violence; glorifies the purveyors of that violence; commits mass murder abroad and then seeks the cosmetic solution of a gun control bill for murder at home. One of the more notable victims of this madness, Senator Robert F. Kennedy, offered this eloquent testimony some months before his assassination:

Our gross national product now soars over \$800 billion a year. But that counts air pollution and cigarette advertising and ambulances to clear our highways of carnage. It counts special locks for our doors, and jails for the people who break them. It includes the destruction of the redwoods, and armored cars for the police to fight riots in our cities. It counts Whitman's rifle and Speck's knife and television programs which glorify violence the better to sell toys to our children.

Yet the gross national product does not allow for the health of our youth, the quality of their education or the joy of their play. It does not include the beauty of our poetry or the strength of our marriages, the intelligence of our public debate or the integrity of our public officials. It measures neither our wit nor our courage, neither our wisdom nor our learning, neither our compassion nor our devotion to our country.

It measures everything in short, except that which makes life worthwhile; and it can tell us everything about America—except why we are proud to be Americans.

Children are starving in Mississippi, idling their lives away in the ghetto and committing suicide in the despair of Indian reservations. No television sets—not even seventy

million of them—can bring us pride in that kind of wealth.

Nor are we taking pride in our place in the world. Once we thought, with Jefferson, that we were the “best hope” of all mankind. But now we seem to rely only on our wealth and power.

So half a million of our finest men struggle, and many die, in a war halfway around the world; while millions more of our best youth neither understand the war nor respect its purpose, and some repudiate the very institutions of a Government they do not believe. . . .

Our power is enormous, the greatest the world has ever seen. Yet, as we see old allies pulling back to their shores, and old alliances dissolving in quarrels, we sense that even America cannot act as if no other nation existed, flaunting our power and wealth against the judgment and desires of neutrals and allies alike. We wonder if we still hold “a decent respect to the opinions of mankind”—or whether, like Athens of old, we will forfeit sympathy and support alike, and ultimately our own security, in the single-minded pursuit of our own goals and objectives.⁷

THE HOPE FOR CHANGE

While the restructuring of American society may prove to be the most desirable task of our history, it is not a prerequisite for more immediate foreign policy changes. If it is necessary to await a social revolution at home in order to end the tragedy of American global interventionism, then ours will be a vigil of heartbreaking duration. The converse is more likely, that is, fundamental domestic reforms stand a better chance of materializing only as we free ourselves from an overseas policy that drains our treasure, depletes our resources, bloats our military, distracts our energies, and intensifies our fears, our intolerance, and our faith in brute force.

Changing the political consciousness of the informed public and of our political leadership is not an easy accomplishment, but neither is it an unforeseeable one. Transi-

tions in foreign policy can come when the organized and unorganized populace begins to generate a new sense of urgency and thrusts forth a competing set of images. It is already evident that growing numbers of Americans are questioning the validity of cold-war shibboleths. The vigor and militancy of the peace movement, the political challenges, writings, demonstrations, and direct-action protests of dissenters have opened a dialogue and raised critical questions about our international conduct hitherto seldom entertained by any sizeable segment of the informed public. Nor are political leaders as unresponsive to new climates of opinion as we sometimes think. Sensing the momentum of an articulated public opinion, politicians allow themselves to entertain thoughts which a short time previously were considered heretical. Even men of extremely limited courage, and this includes most politicians, begin to speak of a need for new directions. More often than not, the rhetoric is a cloak for inaction, for while American liberals are always for the right thing, they rarely seem capable of actions that might cause them some deprivation or discomfort by bringing them into conflict with the powers that be, actions necessary to achieve the reforms they ostensibly favor.

While indeed there is no cause for undue optimism, it should be remembered that the decisionmaker is allowed a wider range of choice and flexibility in foreign policy than he usually enjoys in domestic policy. Official actions not only reflect the prevailing opinion but help create it. Many government policies win public support as *faits accomplis*, because there is a presumption that our leaders must have sound reason for their decisions. This public acquiescence works for better or worse. When Eisenhower sent troops into Lebanon, the public accepted, perhaps uneasily, "the necessity for action." When he refused to commit American land forces to Vietnam, the public also accepted "the wisdom of restraint." Kennedy's Bay of Pigs

venture, even when demonstrated a failure, had popular backing if not popular understanding. His unwillingness to intervene in Laos or to launch another and stronger invasion of Cuba also won public acceptance. The same public that supported nuclear proliferation as a "grim necessity" eventually gave resounding approval to the nuclear test-ban treaty. The populace that opposed any "softness toward communism" now seems to support the moves for friendlier relations with the Soviet Union.

Once reassured that there are no dire consequences in pursuing a less militant policy, the public will accept the less militant policy. The best way to reassure the public is by demonstrating the new policy's advantages, that is, by putting it into operation. Political leaders play a large part in creating the climates of opinions which supposedly imprison them, and those leaders who free themselves from the anti-communist mania of past decades will find that the venturesome departures they advocate today will become the conventional wisdom of tomorrow. Within limits, the unthinkable becomes thinkable by uttering it and acting upon it.

As a last word, we might remember that certain of the values paid lip service to by American anti-communism, such as "human dignity" and "individual freedom" are precious ones derived largely from the ideology of classic democracy. But we part company with anti-communism because its commitment to freedom is a hypocrisy, its imagery is warped, its reasoning is hopelessly impoverished, and its policies have brought us to grief and shame.

In their achievements, the anti-communist ideologues, liberals and conservatives, have generated wrongs more costly than they allegedly combat, and in so doing they have become the evil they profess to abhor. To the misfortune of countless innocents, they have had full opportunity to put their ideology to the test. For more than two decades the nation and the world have been treated as an

experimental laboratory for the theory and practice of anti-communism. The results have been a tragic success, the creation of a grotesque "reality" to fit a grotesque imagery.

If America can survive only by placing its faith in such an ideology, then America does not deserve to survive and indeed it will not—at least not in a way that is recognizable to free and humane men. Our best hope is that we may yet stop destroying others and start healing ourselves.

NOTES

1. Ole Holsti, "Cognitive Dynamics and Images of the Enemy," *Journal of International Affairs*, 21 (1967), p. 17.
2. Ronald Steel, *Pax Americana* (New York: Viking Press, 1967), p. 321.
3. Howard Zinn, "Vietnam: Setting the Moral Equation."
4. Bernard Fall, "The American Commitment in Vietnam," *Saturday Review*, 4 February 1967, p. 40.
5. Fulbright, *The Arrogance of Power*, p. 186.
6. See Henry S. Kariel, *The Promise of Politics* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1966), pp. 1-10.
7. *New York Times*, 10 February 1968.

The Martial State

None other than General Douglas MacArthur once said: "In the final analysis the mounting cost of preparation for war is in many ways as materially destructive as war itself." But most Americans seem to support a giant military establishment and would have little sympathy for the political leader who was found to be indifferent to "our defense needs." This was not always the case. Through most of American history a strong distaste for standing armies, military professionalism and large armament

budgets relegated the military to a peripheral and impoverished status in American society. World War II brought a dramatic transition in attitudes. The traditional suspicion was superseded by a new feeling that "the military must have all that they needed," as Huntington notes, "and that it was beyond the capacity of Congress to inquire into military estimates in any fundamental way. The result was that the services got what they wanted and ended the war with some fifty billion dollars in unused appropriations." ¹ If Congress is possessed by the martial spirit, the same often has been true of the White House. As Senator McGovern described President Lyndon B. Johnson's attitude: "The rising level of defense, the supersonic plane—he'll talk about them, glamorize them, throw the full weight of the White House behind them." ²

The military's influence in other governmental branches reaches right into the US Arms Control and Disarmament Agency. ACDA Director Foster has testified: "We have a very close relationship at the staff level to make sure that the military is active and informed. The Defense Department has assigned us 13 active officers headed by a lieutenant general in the Air Force. Assisting him is a major general in the Army and some 11 other colonels." All policy recommendations made by the ACDA to the President are first discussed with the Committee of Principals which includes the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and the Secretary of Defense. The lieutenant-general heads the Weapons Evolution and Control Bureau of the ACDA.

As industry became the supporter of ever-increasing defense preparedness, military men spoke more and more of free enterprise as epitomizing "the American Way of Life." With 90 percent of the contracts awarded with no competitive bidding on the open market, carefully cultivated personal contacts between corporation and military personnel became an all-important determinant of who gets what from whom. Service officers, looking forward to

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the financial and social rewards that came with entrance into the business world, have been far from unresponsive to the solicitations of particular corporate interests. The Herbert Committee discovered that in 1960 more than fourteen hundred retired officers from the rank of major up were employed by the top hundred weapon concerns.³

To cite two interesting cases: General Joseph McNarney led Air Force cohorts in a successful 1950 battle against the Navy for the B-36 bomber, resulting in huge allocations for a plane that was already obsolete. Then immediately upon retirement, he went on the payroll of Convair, the plane manufacturer who happened to have produced the B-36. As corporation president he drew \$75,000 a year in addition to his yearly Air Force pension of \$16,000. Rear Admiral Lloyd Harrison had an equally remarkable career. After eleven of the F3H Navy Jet fighters produced by McDonnell Aircraft and Westinghouse had crashed in flight, Admiral Harrison insisted that the contractors had good performance records. The Navy followed his advice for a \$302 million expenditure—later admitted to be a disastrous waste. The Admiral upon retirement became Vice-President of McDonnell Aircraft.⁴

The military has spent millions of dollars on public relations. As early as 1948 the Commanding General of the European Theater alone had 107 military and 30 civilians on his publicity staff. Professional advertising techniques have been employed to glorify the "image" of the various services, and to push for particular strategic and military commitments. In its successful campaign for the 1948 Draft Act, the Army admitted, with pride, that it had enlisted the help of 370 national organizations including the US Chamber of Commerce and the American Legion, contacted 351 mayors of American cities, promoted at least 591 articles and editorials, enlisted the aid of radio and television speakers, and even had the Boy Scouts dis-

tribute "fact sheets." ⁵ The nation's youth are being militarized in a more direct fashion: the first of 1,200 US Marine Junior ROTC programs for youths of the 14-18 age group has been initiated at Jesuit High School in New Orleans. General Wallace Green congratulating the students for being the first to receive the "honor," said: "We in the Regular Marine Corps are proud of this new addition to the Marine Corps family." The Rev. Donald Pearce stated: "If our youth is rightly instructed, our power will be greater than any weapon man can devise . . ." ⁶ The military, aware of who pays its bills, has provided countless tours for Congressmen to military installations at home and abroad complete with high-level "briefings" and the usual social amenities reserved for important personages. (That it is a federal offense to use taxpayers' money to propagandize taxpayers seems not to have deterred anyone.)

The Pentagon finances most of the technical research at our institutions. This has led to occasional conflicts. Differences have arisen between the Navy and the Operations Evaluation Group at MIT. The Atomic Energy Commission and Harvard clashed over operation of the Cambridge Electron Accelerator, with the University contending that many of the AEC demands constituted "a serious abridgment of academic freedom." Dr. Ellis A. Johnson, head of the Army-financed Operations Research Office at Johns Hopkins found himself out of a job when he clashed with Army leaders who sought "strict control in detail." More in keeping with the military's sense of a good academician was Dr. A. G. Hill, a weapons research man at MIT, who in no uncertain terms noted: "Our job is not to advance knowledge but to advance the military." ⁷

The Pentagon has become one of the most enthusiastic promoters of arms sales. See, for instance, its pamphlet, *Information and Guidance on Military Assistance* which states:

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The Defense Department has embarked on an intensified military assistance sales program . . . Achievement of . . . objectives calls for a very substantial increase over past sales levels. Success in this endeavor will be dependent in large measure upon effective sales promotion.⁸

The use to which such armaments are put provides a dismal note: The massive military aid to Pakistan was applied by the Pakistani against the Indians in the most recent Kashmir fighting, while the Indians retaliated with American equipment of their own. The United States has offered F-86 fighters to Peru which demanded the planes because Chile purchased a like amount of fighters from Great Britain, an action originally taken in response to our sale of twenty-five modern jet fighters to Argentina. The tanks we have given to Jordan despite its declared intention to invade Israel, were destroyed in 1967 by the planes we sent to Israel.

On a smaller scale, in more secretive fashion, the Central Intelligence Agency has moved into American institutional life, financing and infiltrating student, labor, scientific, and academic groups. The CIA has financed the writings of numerous "independent" scholars, and has subsidized publishing houses and periodicals (e.g., *Encounter*). CIA agents have been staff members of the Michigan State University \$25 million, six-year operation in support of Vietnam's late dictator, Diem. The Center for International Studies at MIT was financed in part by the CIA. The scholarly journal on international relations, *Foreign Affairs* had on its advisory board ex-CIA chief Allen W. Dulles, and published an article on the Vietcong (April 1966) by George Carver, Jr. who, while identified as a "student of political theory," was a CIA man. Senator Eugene McCarthy summarized the dangers of an agency like the CIA: (1) it can become a law unto itself; operating independently of even the President (as in Laos by supporting a faction different from the one supported by

President Kennedy); (2) it can clandestinely perform acts for the President which would otherwise not be constitutional (as in the Bay of Pig's venture by raising an army on US soil); (3) it becomes indifferent to the often disruptive and dangerous policy effects of its actions (as with the U-2 flight on the eve of the 1960 Summit meeting).⁹

NOTES

1. Huntington, *The Soldier and the State*, pp. 324-25.
2. See Robert G. Sherrill, "The Democratic Rebels in Congress," *The Nation*, October 10, 1966, for the McGovern comment.
3. Huntington, *op. cit.*, p. 362 ff; Cochran, *The War System*, p. 140.
4. Cochran, *op. cit.*, p. 144.
5. Fred C. Cook, "The Juggernaut," *The Nation*, 28 October 1961, p. 286.
6. See Jack Frazier's correspondence, *The Nation*, 4 July 1966.
7. Cochran, *op. cit.*, p. 307.
8. See Senator Eugene McCarthy, "Arms and the World," *ADA World*, September 1966.
9. See *SANE World*, 7 January 1968.

Civil Defense: Kill a Neighbor

Defense, it seems, is everybody's business. In our total confrontation with the "communist menace," the preparedness efforts of political leaders, legislators, journalists, educators, scholars, businessmen, workers, and military were soon to be supplemented by the involvement of the average citizen in a kind of "direct action" defense. From about 1957 on, over a billion dollars were allocated at the federal, state, and local levels for civil defense programs. Private citizens stood sentinel on housetops as "sky-

watchers" prepared to give warning should communist aircraft appear. Girl Scout groups baked cookies for civil defense workers who, in turn, gave up free evenings to learn the skills of air raid warden. Classes were given on first-aid treatment. School children were made to creep under their desks and cup their hands behind their necks in an ostensibly protective gesture against flying debris. Housewives were instructed to stay away from windows when the explosion came. College campuses and, indeed, whole cities, were interrupted for air raid drills. Highly paid civil defense directors lectured the taxpaying populace on the necessity for preparedness. Advertisements appeared offering "do-it-yourself" home shelters. In the spirit of private enterprise, the government urged citizens to build their own shelters in their backyards—and some did. Thirty million government pamphlets were distributed on how to build a family fallout shelter, along with another pamphlet entitled *Family Food Stockpile for Survival*. President Kennedy personally endorsed a *Life* magazine special which demonstrated that life in a family shelter could be comfortable and adventurous. In a series of articles entitled "You Can Survive Atomic Attack" published in 400 newspapers, Dr. Willard Libby assured millions of readers that 90 to 95 percent of the population could survive if they built shelters. Provisions against thermonuclear war, however, sometimes did not withstand the first test of nature, as Dr. Libby's own shelter collapsed in a brush fire that swept the Los Angeles area. Similarly, when in 1962 a Pacific typhoon paralyzed most of Oregon, the state's elaborate and expensive civil defense facilities proved helpless and worthless.¹

The city apartment dweller had to content himself with plans for hasty urban evacuation. Assuming he were an automobile owner, and assuming that neither the roads, nor his car, nor his person had been dissolved by the blast, he could take to the clogged highways along with millions

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of others and drive to designated evacuation-recreation areas which, lacking any provisions for housing, food, or water, were to serve as survival places for weeks or even months. A perusal of rush-hour commuter traffic in and out of cities convinced many acute observers that the urban dweller would need protection closer at hand. So, in New York, Boston, Washington, and other cities, in basements, hallways, lobbies, school entrances, subway exits, and alleyways, black-and-yellow civil defense signs began appearing which read: "Fallout Shelter," thereby leaving everybody unmindful of the fact that fallout would be the least worry for a large city; a bomb target needs, at the very least, massive *bomb* shelters constructed under tons and tons of rock and concrete—something quite different from fallout shelters which offer protection only from fallout, if that. This illusionary safety fabricated by posting signs in hallways left the city dweller with the worst of both worlds. While the signs were a visible anxiety-provoking reminder of a particularly horrendous danger, the program itself offered no real protection. To the extent that city dwellers took comfort in their urban civil-defense programs, they were the victims of a colossal fraud.*

If the cities did not satisfactorily solve their defense problems, there was some comfort in knowing that many of the top corporations had—by constructing genuine underground bomb shelters for their executive elite.

* Apparently the only thing which matched the civil defense spokesman's fearful pessimism concerning the imminence of nuclear attack was his happy optimism about what was supposed to happen once the bombs started falling. Thus New York civil defense director, James McQuillen, under attack for running an expensive, wasteful and useless program, countered with: "We have more than 1,000 school buildings providing the best potential shelter in their neighborhoods for children. In the event of any possible enemy attack or national disaster, this department should certainly be in effect. It should not be abolished." *New York Post*, 19 September 1966.

Standard Oil of New Jersey, for instance, carved out the inside of Iron Mountain near Hudson, N.Y., complete with a twenty-eight-ton steel door entrance, executive offices, kitchens, dormitories, semi-private baths for the board of directors, brightly painted living rooms, a piped-music room, and living quarters for the clerical help. The leaders of free enterprise were prepared to carry on; only a near direct hit by a multi-megaton bomb would permanently interrupt corporate dealings.²

The civil defense craze, however, began to have some unanticipated side effects. Cochran's account cannot be improved upon:

We were preparing to fight a civil war among ourselves within the larger war against the Russians. Without realizing what they were about, the government planners, in pushing for the family shelter, pushed a program that favored the rich over the poor, the house dweller over the apartment dweller, the home owner over the renter. When it was broadcast over the air waves that it was up to every family to protect itself, the me-first-and-devil-take-the-hind-most spirit was given full rein. A class and regional struggle for survival was about to commence. The county civil defense coordinator warned all citizens of Beaumont . . . to arm themselves with guns to repel the hundreds of thousands of refugees who would flee that way if Los Angeles was bombed. The citizens of Nevada were equally quick to see the danger and resolved that an armed militia was to seal off the northeast route out of Los Angeles. In case of war, said the Nevada civil defense head, they "would come into Nevada like a swarm of locusts." A Chicago suburbanite told . . . reporters that he planned to mount a machine gun in front of his shelter and mow down those who tried to force their way in. In Hartford, citizens were advised to equip themselves with firearms in order to repel those who might be running around "like madmen" after an attack. A Jesuit priest . . . [proclaimed] that self-defense was traditional Catholic morality, and that a person

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had a right to use violence to keep his unprotected neighbors from breaking their way into his family shelter.³

Alarmed by the response, government officials began to tone down their emphasis on civilian preparedness, and the public eventually returned to its previous apathy. Public indifference, it turns out, is not always a bad thing. But at least for some few people, a lukewarm response to civil defense may be due less to their inertia and unwillingness to face reality, and more to their growing suspicion that reality is not what civil defense claims it to be, and that one cannot defend the indefensible except by a search for peace.

NOTES

1. These examples are taken from Cochran, *The War System*, p. 26 ff.
2. *The Wall Street Journal*, 12 January 1966.
3. Cochran, *op. cit.*, pp. 35-36.

The Devil Moves East

It remains for some enterprising social scientist to delineate in systematic fashion the many factors that brought a shift in American attitudes in regard to China and Russia. Here I might suggest some points to consider: The conflict between Moscow and Peking, finally bursting into full view in the early 1960s gave many Americans the new if not necessarily justified feeling that the Russians were, in contrast to the Chinese, somewhat more reasonable people to deal with. While the ebullient

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Khrushchev toured America, courting politicians, businessmen, and the press in his long-standing campaign for "peaceful co-existence" (a phrase of his that was eventually to become acceptable and even popular in the West), Peking talked of the necessity to guard against the "western imperialist threat."

As the Soviet bloc showed signs of pluralistic conflict, and as Europe achieved a kind of East-West stalemate that left cold warriors with little to do on that continent, American attention shifted to "the third world" where it was assumed at first that the Russians, but then the Chinese with their more vocal appeals, were the leading activist force fermenting new revolutions among the "dangerously exposed" have-not nations.

The American tendency to compare the Russians favorably to the Chinese was fortified by events surrounding the Cuban missile crisis. When Moscow withdrew its missiles from Cuba in response to an American blockade, displaying a willingness to avoid nuclear confrontation, Peking derided the Soviets for fearing a "paper tiger." Khrushchev's rejoinder that the paper tiger had "nuclear teeth" seemed further to convince many Americans that the *Soviets* might recognize and respect American strength, but not so the Chinese.

While Moscow and Washington agreed to a treaty to halt all future atmospheric testing, the Chinese, still in the process of developing their first bomb, denounced the ban as an attempt by the nuclear powers to monopolize atomic arms. Their unwillingness to sign the treaty and thereby accept a permanently inferior non-nuclear status, was taken as another indication of aggressive intent by the United States.*

* Any nation that signed the test-ban treaty was surrendering the opportunity to develop atomic weapons of its own, thereby, in effect, leaving itself at the mercy of a nuclear power. Somehow, the Chinese, like the French and a number of other nations showed a reluctance to place that much faith in the superpowers.

While the Soviets voiced bereavement over Kennedy's assassination and sent Mikoyan to the funeral, the Chinese were reported to have greeted the President's death with the tasteless suggestion that the American imperialist got his just desserts. The cold-war stereotypes were changing; by 1964, political cartoons in the American press were depicting Khrushchev as a pudgy, almost benign, figure overshadowed by a slanty-eyed awesome giant labeled "Red China." * And in real life, Barry Goldwater, by 1966, envisioned the possibility of America and Russia allied against a common Chinese enemy in World War III.

Increasing American travel to the USSR made it difficult to sustain the image of Russia as a terrifying mystery. Some American observers, noting the liberalizing tendencies and growing prosperity, were concluding that the Russians were becoming "more and more like us," the most reassuring praise Americans could bestow on any people. China, however, inaccessible to American travelers, diplomats, and journalists, remained an unknown, allegedly explosive, and fanatic nation of 700 million. While Russia was becoming a "have" nation, China remained a "have-not," and in the United States it was assumed that a militant "have-not" country especially of China's size was performe a potential antagonist.

By now the self-fulfilling prophecy was reversing itself in our relations with the Soviets; just as hostility had begotten hostility, now one conciliatory gesture was encouraging another. After the test-ban treaty, both nations signed a consular treaty, formulated an outer space treaty, and considered possibilities for better trade, transportation, and cultural agreements. The rapprochement should not be overemphasized. Military escalation shows no sign of abatement. Many Americans, including numerous mem-

* See for instance the reportage and cartoons in *Time*, *Newsweek* and *The New York Times* "News of the Week in Review" throughout 1963-64.

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bers of Congress, having been told for over twenty years that Russia was our mortal enemy and that all communists were alike, were not ready to make distinctions. (Usually eager for better relations with Washington, Moscow itself has voiced reluctance to "build new bridges" as long as the United States continued its intervention in Vietnam.) But in 1967, the United States was denoting "Asian communism" as our mortal enemy. The new image became the new reality.

The Russian invasion of Czechoslovakia in August 1968 did revive some of the earlier anti-Soviet rhetoric. There was even renewed talk in official circles of "strengthening NATO" against a Soviet attack. But the old apocalyptic passion was not as evident as in former years. For a while during the aftermath of the Czech invasion, China no longer seemed to be the villain of the day. At the time of this writing (February 1969) it is too early to make any judgment on the course to be pursued by the Nixon Administration. Nixon seems inclined to sustain the Johnson policy toward Russia, *viz.*, continued armaments escalation along with continued diplomatic moves and gestures toward rapprochement. His policy toward China, if he has one, is not yet known to many of us.

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

MICHAEL PARENTI has written articles for such periodicals as *The American Political Science Review*, *Commonweal* and *Social Research*, and has contributed to books of collected scholarly essays. He is the author of the forthcoming book *Power and the Powerless*. He received a Ph.D. in political science from Yale University and has taught at the State University of New York at Stony Brook, Brown University and Sarah Lawrence College. Professor Parenti was a visiting lecturer at Yale University and is currently an Associate Professor at the Institute of Government and Public Affairs, University of Illinois, Urbana.