

**FOREIGN AFFAIRS** By Theodore C. Sorensen ONE OF THE BASIC FLAWS in our post-war thinking about world affairs has been our missionary zeal to assure a decent society to others. We have naturally assumed that our own political, economic and social systems represent the desired standard of decency; and in a vain (both meanings of the word) attempt to foster these standards or to suppress other standards among peoples with wholly different cultures and capacities, we have overextended our own commitments, meddled in the internal affairs of other nations, tied ourselves to the shakiest of despots, provided ammunition for those charging us with racial, political or economic exploitation and made more difficult and costly the abatement of the Cold War. I do not wish to be listed among those who place all the blame for all the ills in all the four corners of the world on the hapless head of Uncle Sam. Our troubles with Stalin, with Mao, with Castro and with others— (continued on page 92)

**RACE RELATIONS** By John V. Lindsay RACE IS THE GREAT DOMESTIC ISSUE of our time. It infects virtually all of the most inflammatory problems in our troubled society—violence and civil disorder, the accelerated increase in crime, welfarism, the blight of our cities, unemployment and poverty. Poverty is the dead weight that holds the black man down. It is not simply a condition; it is a handicap and, of late, it has become the goad that has driven him into the streets. Humorist Sam Levenson reports, quite accurately, that although he grew up in poverty on New York's Lower East Side, he and his brother Albert didn't realize it until later, because all their friends and neighbors were poor, too. Today, however, the television set—described by the Kerner Commission report as "that universal appliance of the ghetto"—gives the slum dweller a window to the world beyond his ordinary view. It is only logical that he should want a piece of that world. The mayor (continued on page 270)

**EQUALITY & OPPORTUNITY** By Kenneth B. Clark IN MARCH 1964, President Johnson called for "a national war on poverty." The objective: "total victory," he said. This declaration of war on poverty was not abrupt; it had deep roots in recent American history. Franklin D. Roosevelt's New Deal, with its Emergency Relief Administration, its Works Project Administration, its National Youth Administration, its Civilian Conservation Corps, was an earlier version of that war, but it never achieved the final goal—the elimination of poverty itself. Despite the past two decades of rising prosperity and general affluence, the persistence of pockets of poverty and the related pathologies of increasing crime and delinquency and other manifestations of economic and racial discrimination have demanded the development of new approaches to the solution of these long-standing social problems. The civil rights crisis, reflecting, among other things, the increasing disparity in the average (continued on page 273)

**THE PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT** By Peter Matthiessen A DECENT PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT for man is not attainable without control of human numbers. Like a culture of bacteria that ceases to grow when it can no longer dissipate its own wastes, man's increase must stop; should pollution of the atmosphere continue at its present rate, a permanent halt to the culture of man is predicted in less than a century. A poisoned biosphere knows no national boundaries; that the U.S. is rich, or that its own birth rate has started to decline, will be almost meaningless, because man's habitat is one. If we are fortunate, new technologies will defer the day of reckoning until world populations can be stabilized and pollution of earth, air and water brought under control. Nuclear fuels will make the crucial difference of abundant power. Together with fertilization of the sea, desalinization of salt water, weather control, intensive recycling of everything from wastes to water and other advances (continued on page 275)

**SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY** By Jerome B. Wiesner CAN SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH and technology help mankind create a more decent society? I think so. To be sure, at the end of a year that has seen two assassinations, the invasion of Czechoslovakia, the start of a new round in the arms race and the violence of the Democratic Convention in Chicago, this conclusion doesn't come easily. Some of the world's most thoughtful and humanistic observers—among them, Archibald MacLeish, Jean-Paul Sartre and Jacques Barzun—believe that science will ultimately be man's undoing; that in elevating science and technology to the dominant role they hold in the advanced nations, forces beyond human comprehension or control have been unleashed. For most of man's existence, certainly, nature was his worst enemy. Now civilization's most serious threats are all man-made by-products of his efforts to cope with nature. No one can deny that the careless exploitation of (continued on page 277)

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dangerous arms race enormous sums better spent on internal development. A comprehensive ban on all nuclear testing—thus including underground testing—would add some meat and meaning to the recent antiproliferation treaty. New arms-control measures in central Europe could guard each nation's allies against a surprise attack while reducing the troop-maintenance burden on both the U.S. and Russia.

A true accommodation with the Soviet Union, however, must ultimately be accompanied by peace in the Middle East and a reconciliation in Europe. An Arab-Israeli cease-fire dangerously maintained by equal flows of outside arms is not a substitute for a final Middle Eastern settlement; and a truly united and secure Europe is not possible without a more-or-less-final German settlement. Despite the Czech setback to hopes for east-European evolution, our policies should be directed toward more contact, collaboration and eventual confederation between the two Germans, not toward encouraging the political slogans of some West Germans regarding their eventually getting either a finger on a nuclear trigger or a foot in the lands east of the Oder-Neisse.

(B) A new approach to China will be even more difficult to swallow, necessarily growing out of a Vietnam settlement and requiring a reversal of some two decades of public miseducation. New words, new gestures and new palliatives will not be enough. Only a bold and basic change in approach can bring our Chinese policy into line with reality. To wait until the heirs of Chiang Kai-shek fall out over his estate would be easier; but to wait until the heirs of Mao Tse-tung seek a *rapprochement* with the Soviet Union would be dangerous. However much we may disapprove of her conduct and language, and whatever disputes may divide her internally, the government of China is entitled to sit in the United Nations and to be recognized by the United States. No world organization will be truly meaningful as long as one fourth of the world's population is excluded; and no nuclear or other pact we propose will be truly effective if our only contact with the world's newest nuclear power is confined to a monthly exchange of harangues at Warsaw. Once these and other fundamental changes are undertaken, mutual trade, tourism, contacts and cultural exchanges should follow. All this will be a bitter bullet for many Americans to bite; but the alternative is increasing and unreasonable fear and hatred on both sides as the high noon of a nuclear showdown draws nearer each day.

(C) A new world community governed by law instead of despair will

require many steps, large and small. We need a United Nations capable of functioning in every kind of dispute, with a permanent peace force of specially trained and earmarked forces from nonpower nations. We need nuclear-free zones in addition to Antarctica and outer space, where today not too many inhabitants are benefited. We need controls on the transfer of conventional as well as nuclear arms. We need an expansion and codification of international law to govern more than postal and telegraphic relations. Above all, we need to equalize the levels of food supply and population on a planet in which 3,500,000 children will die this year from hunger and malnutrition. Before the world population doubles again by the year 2000, we must learn to make better use of our surpluses and fertilizers, extract food from the ocean depths and increase the use of modern farm machinery, methods and pesticides. But all this will be insufficient if there are 300,000,000 more mouths to feed every few years. National and international measures to encourage the limitation of populations will continue to meet religious, educational, financial and practical obstacles; but adopting such measures by free choice now is surely preferable to facing in the future either coercion or chaos.

These are all difficult tasks, unpleasant alternatives and gloomy prospects for a new American foreign policy. Heated criticism and bitter controversy will surely surround every one of these steps. No doubt, it would be easier to resign from the world, but that avenue is not open; and not wishing to see our planet blown up, we cannot afford to give up.

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of a city such as New York must take a special, active interest in the poor. They have had no easy, routine access to city hall, so I have gone to them; I visit their neighborhoods and listen to them on their own ground. It's a sizable constituency; they comprise some 2,000,000 of New York's 8,000,000 population. The majority of our poor are members of racial minorities, and 1,000,000 of them receive welfare payments. This is a typical pattern for most of the great cities of America. The quality of life among the poor is also much the same from city to city. In New York, the ghetto may be packed and tall; and in Watts, it may spread out in seeming openness for miles. But the heritage of the ghetto endures from place to place: the smell of garbage, the jobless drifters on the streets, the scream of police and ambulance sirens during the night.

The issue of race, however, is not all black and white. With the national unemployment rate at less than 4 per-

cent—experts tell us this is nearly rock bottom—the rate among the nation's 600,000 Indians is 40 percent. Their life expectancy, in a country with an average life span of 70 for both men and women, is 44. Among the 1,000,000 migratory farm workers, a good many of them Mexican-Americans, the average annual income is little more than \$1600. This is reported by Cesar Chavez, director of the United Farm Workers Organizing Committee and a leading figure in the fight to improve the farm workers' lot. Moreover, because they're migrants, they don't qualify for unemployment insurance or welfare grants. They are nearly a lost tribe, whose children and aged women pick berries in the summer sun for 12 hours a day. Labor economists label them "stoop labor," farmers refer to them as "pickers," but Cesar Chavez calls them people.

In New York and other East Coast cities, another group—the Puerto Ricans—confronts the barrier of race without even the initial advantage of knowing the language. Puerto Ricans are immigrants to this largely immigrant country who, like all such groups, find themselves starting at the bottom. They begin with few skills and no way to communicate, and they remain where they are because of the handicaps of ancestry, accent and skin color. Even in this country, many continue to draw the wages of a peon. It was significant that one of the more serious disturbances in New York in the summer of 1967 occurred in East Harlem, known to outsiders as Spanish Harlem but called "*El Barrio*," or "the prison," by its residents.

When discussing the twin problems of race and poverty, we usually talk about money, because only with money can the poor make contact with the rest of society, and only with money can they stay alive. But money—or the lack of it—is only a superficial gauge of the degradation, squalor and crippled pride of the poor. What most of us know about the poor are the statistics—although we've learned something from the violent outbursts of frustration we have witnessed for four summers now. A Negro senior at Yale recently told a reporter for *The New York Times*, "This is supposed to be one of the best colleges in the country. But these guys live in an unreal world, a world that doesn't encompass the things that a man who is struggling with society has to deal with. They don't know half as much about us as we know about them—because they've thought so little about us for so long."

Occasionally, we may encounter a really sustained account of ghetto life in books like *Invisible Man* or *The Autobiography of Malcolm X*. But mostly, we must rely on the newspapers. Item: the arrest of a black teenager in a Long Island suburb for threatening passing

motorists with a rifle. His mother explained he had stormed out of the house in a rage when he found his six-year-old sister sobbing in the bathtub, vainly trying to scrub away the color of her skin.

With the benefit of that kind of insight, white America ought to be better able to understand why the polite requests for integration in the early Fifties have been transformed into outraged demands for action now. "We are tired of living in the dungeons of poverty, ignorance and want," Martin Luther King said in the midst of one of his peaceful campaigns for equality in 1963. "We have come to the day when a piece of freedom is not enough for us as human beings." Impatience was creeping into even that moderate voice. He added: "If the inexpressible cruelties of slavery could not extinguish our existence, the opposition we now face will surely fail. We feel that we are the conscience of America." The claim was not arrogant; it was the statement of a time in which there were few leaders or groups who would define "conscience" as simply and forcefully as Dr. King did—an equal opportunity for every man to find his place freely in this society. [See Martin Luther King's *A Testament of Hope* on page 174 of this issue.—Ed.]

I would like to believe, however, that our racial minorities are not alone in their assertions of conscience. Every American should have a decent income, a decent education and decent housing. He should enjoy a life free of the brutality of organized humiliation. These objectives are not only within our reach but attainable within relatively few years—if we have the will to reorder our national priorities. Moreover, the investment in the means to achieve these ends will produce not only returns by way of improvement in the quality of life but measurable dollar profit for the nation as a whole.

Time and time again in our history, we have invested massively in great projects designed to cure or, at least, relieve social afflictions. The Tennessee Valley Authority is a good example. It was established in 1933 to improve the vast Tennessee river valley, an area larger than New England, involving parts of seven states. In the Thirties, the region contributed only 3.4 percent of the nation's Federal income-tax revenues. Its residents, on an average, were making half as much as the rest of America. Most valley people were farmers, beset by flood, displaced and threatened by machines and bypassed by industrial growth.

Organized as a Government-owned corporation, TVA was empowered to use the credit of the United States and was launched with the help of \$50,000,000

derived from the sale of bonds. It was charged, in President Roosevelt's words, "with the broadest duty of planning for the proper use, conservation and development of the natural resources of the Tennessee river drainage basin and its adjoining territory." This monumental order drew sharp criticism. Nonetheless, TVA built a system of dams that controlled floods and turned 650 miles of the raging Tennessee river into a productive waterway for commercial freight. The hydroelectric power produced by the dams serves 2,000,000 homes, farms and businesses. Woodlands have been rebuilt and soil- and water-conservation projects have helped save or create farms. In the TVA area today, four times as many people work in industry as did in 1933 and the percentage of tax collections has doubled.

Why can't we duplicate the TVA in our ghettos? The TVA is an example of Government acting broadly and decisively in response to an enormous problem. It is also an example of the benefit that is distributed to many, not to a few, by the improvement of a specific area that had been excluded from full participation in American life. At few times, I think, has the need been greater than it is today for some parallel program, something very big, indeed, to return 20 percent of our nation to itself.

Whatever we do will cost money. We have only to look at the alternatives to discover whether we can afford the investment. The welfare system is in a shambles. Repression has not controlled civil disturbances and never has throughout history. In the days immediately following Dr. King's assassination in April, trouble struck 170 towns and cities: 27,000 persons were arrested, 3500 were injured and the property damaged or lost to looters amounted to about \$58,000,000. Forty-three people died. This doesn't count the cost to Government for the 34,900 National Guardsmen and 23,700 Federal troops called out last April or the money spent on sanitation, emergency social services and relocation of burned-out families. No figures can compute the damage done to a society that lives in fear of itself. "Every time I hear a fire-engine bell," a Washington housewife was reported to have said, "I recall John Donne. I wonder if the bell is tolling for me."

Even without the burden of civil disorder, the welfare system doesn't ease people's lives; it degrades them. As a system, it is ill conceived, practically impossible to manage and unfair to most of the people it involves. Welfare payments of one kind or another reach 7,500,000 people each month. Of them, 2,700,000 are old, blind or otherwise handicapped; 3,600,000 are children

whose parents can't support them; 1,200,000 are the parents of these children. Of the 200,000 fathers, over two thirds are incapacitated and most of the rest require assistance because they can't support their families on what they earn. Few believe that this system really helps people break out of the poverty cycle. "I think it stinks," a young Negro warehouseman in San Francisco remarked bluntly. "People are so tied to that crummy check that they're afraid to say boo."

The National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders offered a series of considered recommendations to improve the welfare system and suggested that it eventually be replaced by a system of national income supplementation. More and more economists and civic and government leaders are coming around to this point of view. The Commission, on which I served as vice-chairman, told the country what we have to do to wipe out the breeding grounds of violence: We must create 2,000,000 jobs, half of them in the private sector, and train people to fill them. Six million low- and middle-income housing units must be built. The education on which advancement depends must be extended and improved. The money needed to do all this, we said, will be an investment, the return on which will be realized not only in the number of persons who will be able to take part in our economy but in the number who will be able to contribute to our professions, provide leadership in their communities and convert the dialog between blacks and whites in America from a shouting match to a conversation.

Standing in the way of that investment is the war in Vietnam. The cost of that war has been in excess of 100 billion dollars, while at home our most urgent needs have been unmet. This is not the place to recapitulate my opposition to the war, except to point out that until our role in it is concluded, both our will and our means to act at home will remain limited. The truth is that we must wage war here, in the United States, against the aggression of poverty and prejudice. This will require a giant commitment that we have yet to make. And time is running out.

"The sufferings that are endured patiently, as being inevitable, become intolerable the moment it appears there might be an escape," Alexis de Tocqueville, the student of American democracy, wrote in the 19th Century. "Reform then only serves to reveal more clearly what still remains oppressive and now all the more unbearable. The suffering, it is true, has been reduced, but one's sensitivity has become more acute." Today we are discovering that the little we are doing may be worse than nothing.