

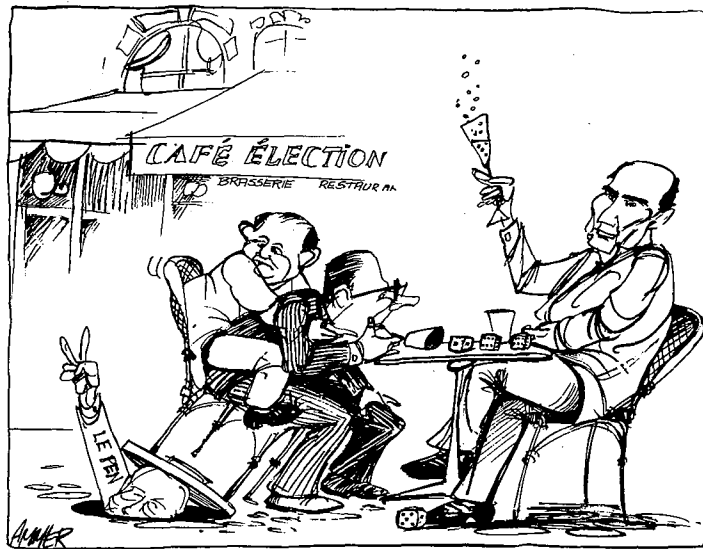
eigners who cease being such are presumed to have exchanged that identity for a French one. Unlike in the United States, there has never been a sense that immigrants are in any way creating the nation. "Immigrants could cleave to a France already established, but they could neither make nor remake it."

Whereas in the United States "the recollection of immigration and the exalta-

tion of ethnicity [have become] something of a cottage industry," in France, ethnic interest groups, like other interest groups, are seen as a contradiction of Rousseauian notions of the general will. Until 1981, in fact, a statute prohibited foreigners from forming organizations.

Yet because the central government is so important in France, and because there is no American-style federalism, local con-

licts quickly become *national* problems. The fragmented party system is very vulnerable to single-issue movements. Jean-Marie Le Pen's anti-immigrant *Front National*—which has won elections by overwhelming margins in some areas with heavy concentrations of immigrants—has achieved a national importance that a similar extremist party in the United States would find hard to win. Ethnic and racial concerns play no small role in American politics, of course, but "the politics of integration or exclusion" in France, Horowitz says, has "a bluntness and a resonance" that it does not have here.



Jean-Marie Le Pen, of the anti-immigrant Front National, was himself a key issue in 1988 elections in which François Mitterrand (right) won a second seven-year term as president of France.

Africa's New Democracies

Twenty-five African countries—about half of all those on the continent—are now either democracies or else strongly or moderately committed to democratic change, according to the African Governance Program at Emory University's Carter Center. Joseph, the center's director, warns that this is only the beginning of the African quest for freedom. "Unless the new democracies can restore economic growth," he writes, "they will face direct challenges

"Africa: The Rebirth of Political Freedom" by Richard Joseph, in *Journal of Democracy* (Fall 1991), 1101 15th St. N.W., Ste. 200, Washington, D.C. 20005; "Democracy in Africa" by Carol Lancaster, in *Foreign Policy* (Winter 1991-92), Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 2400 N St. N.W., Washington, D.C. 20037-1153.

from the very social forces that are currently undermining authoritarianism."

The democratic movement in Africa first hit the headlines in 1990 in the wake of the democratic upheaval in Eastern Europe, but it is not just an echo of events elsewhere. "Many groups and individuals that are now fearlessly confronting their governments have defied them surreptitiously for years," Joseph notes. The extended anti-apartheid struggle in South Af-

rica turned out to be a catalyst. "African governments long castigated the oppressive policies of South Africa's apartheid regime while indulging in similar practices themselves." As South Africa peeled away its repressive laws, black African regimes felt popular pressure to do the same.

But it was the dismal economic performance of the old autocratic (and typically corrupt) regimes that was decisive in their loss of legitimacy. By the end of the 1980s, some governments, such as then-President Mathieu Kerekou's in Benin, were literally bankrupt; others, as in then-President Kenneth Kaunda's Zambia, tried to fill their empty coffers by simply printing more money (which triggered hyperinflation) or by diverting funds away from productive investment. Austerity measures mandated by the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank increased hardships and public discontent. Although Africans at first blamed the international financial agencies, they eventually began to hold their authoritarian governments responsible. They will be no less demanding of democratic governments, Joseph predicts.

All will not be lost even if the first democratic governments fail, Georgetown University's Lancaster contends. The result probably would not be "a permanent return" to autocracy and repression, but "periodic shifts between military and elected civilian governments, much as have occurred in Ghana and Nigeria over the past 30 years

PC Among the Latinos

Ever since the Mexican Revolution (1910), it has been *de rigueur* for Latin American intellectuals to be "progressive" and "anti-imperialist." In the 1950s, Peruvian novelist Mario Vargas Llosa recalls in *Commentary* (Feb. 1992), a new form of the imperialist menace was discovered: "cultural penetration."

[Its] purpose, we were told, was to pervert native cultures and deprive Latin American countries not merely of their raw materials but also of their "souls." (A richly documented book by the Chilean Ariel Dorfman—now enshrined as a professor at Duke University—purports to show how Donald Duck, yes, Walt Disney's Donald Duck, was the cornerstone of this evil cultural conspiracy.)

From this point on—and even more so after the Cuban Revolution in 1959—denunciation of the United States became a daily professional exercise for a considerable number of Latin American intellectuals. Granted, in more recent years this orthodoxy was practiced rather mechanically and without any real conviction. . . . But the fact remains that anti-Americanism is still one of the indispensable requirements for acceptance in the Latin American intellectual class. Indeed, without it, one can hardly hope to prosper, since the cultural establishment is still, for all practical purposes, a branch of the political Left, regardless of glasnost, perestroika, or anything that has happened since.

Oddly enough, this profession of faith—hatred for the United States disguised as anti-imperialism—nowadays is actually a rather subtle form of neocolonialism. By adopting it, the Latin American intellectual does and says what the cultural establishment of the United States (and by extension, elsewhere in the West) expects of him. . . .

Thus, one of the most exquisite paradoxes surrounding the abundant rhetoric of so many Latin American sociologists, political scientists, anthropologists, ethnologists, journalists, poets, essayists, and novelists—all of whom denounce the "cultural penetration" by the giant of the North—is that this rhetoric is the best (and perhaps the only) proof that such "penetration" exists at all. For without it, how could so many learned and creative writers manage to win grants, invitations to speak, subventions, travel expenses, book contracts, stage productions, art exhibits, etc., with which the cultural establishment of the United States subsidizes and enthusiastically stimulates those who have turned anti-Americanism into nothing less than a source of livelihood?

and as have occurred in most of Latin America. And, as in the now largely democratic Latin America, economic development and political experience over the decades may enhance the effectiveness of democratic governments and discourage military intervention in politics."