

POLITICS & GOVERNMENT

for the 1965 Library Services and Construction Act, designed to help states extend and improve library services, aid construction and inter-library cooperation, and provide special help to big-city libraries. (Congress *authorized* \$110 million for fiscal year 1978 and \$140 million for 1979, but only *appropriated* \$60.2 million each year.)

FOREIGN POLICY & DEFENSE

*The Country
They Love to Hate*

"Reflections on Anti-Americanism in Our Times" by Paul Hollander, in *Worldview* (June 1978), P.O. Box 986, Farmingdale, N.Y. 11735.

The United States has been the subject of more denunciation, hostility, and abuse by foreign ideologues and intellectuals than any other nation in the world.

Hollander, a University of Massachusetts sociologist, attributes this worldwide animosity to America's affluence, its pervasive cultural presence (which, thanks to American movies, magazines, and television, extends through much of the world), and the recent notion that the United States is a superpower without the will or capacity to achieve its foreign policy goals (e.g., in Indochina). Helping to tarnish the nation's image is the fact that so much is known about the United States. Also contributing is the strident anti-Americanism of American intellectuals (such as Herbert Marcuse, Noam Chomsky, and Susan Sontag) who seem ridden by guilt over the alleged injustice and corruption of their own social and political system.



American cartoonist Cobb expresses a common vision of America in this drawing of a rapacious Uncle Sam devouring an unending stream of the world's dwindling resources.

From Cobb Again (Glebe, N.S.W. Australia: Wild and Woolley Printing, Ltd., 1976).

FOREIGN POLICY & DEFENSE

But what provokes the greatest hostility, or at least ambivalence, everywhere, Hollander argues, is America's "moral-ethical (and aesthetic) confusion." It is the "American spectacle of a moral and aesthetic free-for-all, of the astonishing ups and downs of moral (and philosophical-ideological) fashions" that most shocks outside observers because they fear its spread.

The export of these "confusions, of high and easily frustrated expectations, ethical relativism, nonmaterial insecurity, forms of spiritual malaise" alarms intellectual critics abroad because such "Americanization" seems to promise the decline of their own traditional values and institutions.

America's Failure of Imagination

"U.S. Policy and the Two Southeast Asias" by Donald E. Weatherbee, in *Asian Survey* (April 1978), University of California Press, Berkeley, Calif. 94720.

Since the end of the Indochina war, the members of the anticommunist Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN)—Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Thailand, and Singapore—have sought to develop a "regional resilience" to the threat of communist subversion. It is an effort that depends on Western and—as yet, uncertain—American economic, political, and military involvement.

The 1975 defeat in Vietnam created a "new international reality in Southeast Asia," says Weatherbee, a professor at the University of South Carolina's Institute of International Studies. The perceived U.S. retreat from its regional commitments, the revived Sino-Soviet competition, and the swift consolidation of Communist power in Laos, Cambodia, and Vietnam led the ASEAN nations to conclude that the balance of power in the region had tipped sharply in favor of the communists.

In their initial reaction, the ASEAN states tried to demonstrate their independence from the United States (e.g., the demands to close all U.S. installations in Thailand, the dismantlement of SEATO, and Philippine assertiveness in negotiations over U.S. base rights) and sought "normalization" of their relations with communist neighbors.

Now, says Weatherbee, the ASEAN states realize that their attempts to have the communists recognize Southeast Asia as a "Zone of Peace, Freedom, and Neutrality" has been viewed as a sign of weakness. Rather than accept communist Vietnam's demand for the elimination of all U.S. influence in Southeast Asia as a precondition for "neutrality," the ASEAN group seeks a more tangible American role in the region, including continued military and economic assistance.

However, they find Washington hamstrung by a Vietnam "backlash," preoccupied with human rights as an overriding issue, uncertain of America's real interests, and holding to a wait-and-see attitude. Instead of broadening its association with ASEAN, Weatherbee concludes, the United States—either by intention or default—is slipping toward a position equidistant from the two Southeast Asias. It is not so much a failure of nerve; it is a "failure of imagination."