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dividuality, was that they thoroughly understood the world they lived in. For the New England fisherman, the Midwestern merchant, and the Southern planter, the family was his fiefdom—his vocation as well as avocation. But with the growth of industrial society, Americans became subject to so many rigid “sovereignties”—corporations, unions, and above all, tiers of government bureaucracy—that conformity took precedence over individuality, and the family was relegated to “leisure time.”

The irony of American history, Dos Passos contends, is that in our recent haste to solve problems through government action, Americans have lost the conviction that the best government is self-government. Americans need to reaffirm an individual commitment to work for the public good—to disprove the 19th-century historian Macaulay’s contention that “institutions purely democratic must, sooner or later, destroy liberty or civilization or both.”

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Taiwan’s Future

“Thinking Through the China Problem”
by Richard H. Solomon, in *Foreign Affairs*
(Jan. 1978), 428 E. Preston St., Baltimore,
Md. 21202.

U.S. concern for the security of Taiwan is the chief obstacle to normalization of diplomatic relations between the United States and the People’s Republic of China. The Chinese demand the cutting of U.S. ties with Taiwan, abrogation of the 1954 U.S.–Taiwan mutual defense pact, and withdrawal of all U.S. forces from the island. Solomon, director of the Rand Corporation’s research program in International Security Policy, thinks it unlikely that normalization would expose Taiwan to an invasion from the mainland for at least a decade.

The 100-mile-wide Taiwan Strait, he writes, presents a major barrier to direct amphibious assault. By all indications, the People’s Republic neither possesses nor is constructing landing craft suitable for such an attack. Nor is Peking training enough pilots to provide the air cover such an invasion would require. Despite Peking’s 15-to-1 advantage in aircraft, Taiwan’s modern air defenses would take a heavy toll.

Mainland China could try to isolate Taiwan through military and diplomatic pressure. But that would lead to conflicts with the United States and Japan, Taiwan’s major trading partners. As long as the Soviet border threat preoccupies the Chinese military, Peking will seek good relations with Tokyo and Washington.

The future status of Taiwan is an emotional issue in both China and the United States. However, Solomon argues, further delay on normalization could spark a return to Sino-American hostility or outright confrontation. With the U.S. military presence on Taiwan already fading

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(from 10,000 troops in 1972 to about 1,000 today), the United States might someday find itself in the awkward position of having a commitment to Taiwan without the means to meet it.

Pro and Con on NATO Arms

"NATO Arms Standardization: Two Views" by Dewey F. Bartlett and James H. Polk, in *AEI Defense Review* (no. 6, 1977), American Enterprise Institute, 1150 17th Street N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036.

Standardization of military hardware, long an operational goal of the 13-nation Atlantic alliance, is the "key" to NATO's survival as an effective deterrent, according to Senator Bartlett (R.-Okla.). But General Polk, former commander in chief of the U.S. Army in Europe and the Seventh Army, believes that standardization is generally not worth the time, effort, or money required.

Lack of standardized weapons and parts in the NATO force, says Bartlett, creates a "domino-like chain of inefficiency." The Senate Armed Services Committee, on which Bartlett serves, estimates that NATO has lost 30 to 40 percent of its effectiveness because of its confused mix of weapons systems. The alliance now fields 31 different antitank weapons (with 18 more under development), 7 different tanks, 8 armored personnel carriers, 24 families of combat aircraft, 100 kinds of tactical missiles, and 50 varieties of ammunition. With NATO nations plagued by rising manpower costs and faltering economies, distribution of common equipment, Bartlett argues, could save \$10-15 billion a year.

But Polk questions Bartlett's estimates of potential savings. He sees a greater need for cooperation in battle rather than for peacetime economies. Standardizing spare parts, he argues, is "impractical, costly, and idealistic." Efforts to standardize should be confined to "essential" items, such as fuel and ammunition. As for other duplication, Polk concludes, "the best policy is to forget it."

Bomb the Ban

"Candor, Compromise, and the Comprehensive Test Ban" by Donald R. Westervelt, in *Strategic Review* (Fall 1977), U.S. Strategic Institute, 1204 K St. N.W., Washington, D.C. 20006.

For two decades, the United States has sought to negotiate a treaty with the Soviet Union to eliminate underground testing of nuclear weapons. But according to Westervelt, a staff member of the Los Alamos Scientific Laboratory, the problems inherent in such a "comprehensive" test ban (current treaties cover only above-ground testing) could eventually result in a shift of the strategic balance in favor of the Soviets. He believes that only with a "limited" test-ban treaty—or none at all—can the United States maintain its technological edge over the U.S.S.R.