guidance gives you no very firm answer at the moment."

In Sloan's view, the case illustrates how difficult it is to mix economics and politics: "What is flexibility for the [White House] economist may be ridiculed as policy flip-flops by opposition politicians." Not until August 1967 did the President's counselors become sure—or forceful—enough to convince him to request a 10 percent Vietnam War surcharge on federal income taxes. Only in June of 1968 did Congress pass it. Too little, perhaps; too late, without a doubt.

FOREIGN POLICY & DEFENSE

Needs and Morals

"In the National Interest" by Arthur Schlesinger, Jr., in *Worldview* (Dec. 1984), P.O. Box 1935, Marion, Ohio 43305.

In most countries, pursuit of the national interest is the unchallenged goal of foreign policy. But Americans are divided. Some see U.S. foreign policy in terms of "interest," others in terms of good and evil.

Schlesinger, a City University of New York historian, counts himself a member of the former, or "realist," camp. Morality, he says, hardly figured in the foreign-policy calculations of the Founding Fathers. But after the War of 1812, as Americans turned their backs on Europe, "they stopped thinking about power as the essence of international politics." Today, many Americans of various political persuasions—including Jimmy Carter and Ronald Reagan—agree that morality must come first in the making of U.S. foreign policy.

Schlesinger disagrees. He objects to the moralists' argument that nations should abide by the same moral ideals (e.g., charity and self-sacrifice) as individuals. Because they are "trustees" for their people, governments have no business being sacrificial. As Alexander Hamilton wrote, "Future generations . . . are concerned in the present measures of a government; while the consequences of the private action of an individual . . . are circumscribed within a narrow compass."

Nor does international law hold out much hope of enforcing good behavior. Nations can make effective laws for their own people because their citizens share "an imperfect but nonetheless authentic moral consensus." But no such consensus exists among nations; they agree only on the barest of standards for civilized conduct. Moreover, international rules may tell nations what not to do but cannot say what *to* do.

On a practical level, Schlesinger believes, American foreign-policy moralists of both Left and Right suffer from a penchant for striking poses and often sacrifice results. And there is always the danger that moralism will give way to fanaticism.

Schlesinger favors making pursuit of the national interest the mainspring of American foreign policy. He concedes that "almost as many follies have been committed in the name of national interest as in the name of national righteousness." But he insists that adhering to vital national interests, properly construed, would spare us many mistakes. During the mid-1960s, for example, such "realist" thinkers as Hans Morgenthau and George F. Kennan, Jr., opposed on pragmatic grounds deeper U.S. involvement in South Vietnam.

"States that throw their weight around," Schlesinger concludes, "are generally forced to revise their notions as to where national interest truly lies. This has happened to Germany and Japan. In time it may even happen to the Soviet Union and the United States."

What U.S. Generals Are Thinking

"Generally Speaking: Surveying the Military's Top Brass" by Andrew Kohut and Nicholas Horrock, in *Public Opinion* (Oct.-Nov. 1984), American Enterprise Institute, 1150 17th St. N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036-9964.

If academic stereotypes were suddenly made real, the senior members of America's military would probably resemble the maniacal General Ripper of *Dr. Strangelove* fame. Just how far that caricature is from the truth is revealed by Kohut and Horrock, respectively president of the Gallup Organization and *Newsweek* correspondent.

Moderate conservatism in politics, caution on defense issues, and considerable diversity in other matters were the key attributes of the group portrait that emerged from a 1984 Gallup telephone survey of 257 generals and admirals—more than 25 percent of the flag officers stationed in the United States. All but a few of them had served in Vietnam.

By overwhelming majorities, Ronald Reagan ranked high in their esteem; Jimmy Carter, low. There was not always such near unanimity: 42 percent expressed support for the women's movement; 47 percent, criticism. Oddly, the authors report, the more stars on their shoulders, the more politically liberal the generals and admirals were likely to be. Graduates of the military academies generally stood a bit to the left of their colleagues from civilian universities.

All but 16 (six percent) of those interviewed rejected the notion that armed conflict with the Soviet Union is inevitable. A majority (58 percent) subscribed to the proposition that the United States should seek military parity with the Soviets rather than superiority. Nearly three in four believed that if a Soviet-American war were to break out it could be limited to conventional weapons; 57 percent held that a nuclear exchange could be limited to smaller tactical nuclear weapons; 75 percent said that there would be no winner in an all-out nuclear war.

Among current threats, only the prospect of a Mideast conflict that sucked in the two superpowers made a majority anxious. The generals do not lust after action in the Third World: 42 percent declared that they were "concerned about U.S. forces being drawn into open conflict in Central America."

In the generals-are-people-too vein, the survey showed a high level of job satisfaction among members of the top brass (though lower among