

determine whether or not a crime has been committed after the fact. Nevertheless, some laws are both necessary and necessarily vague, and clear and predicable standards have usually evolved to deal with such cases.

Liberals, by contrast, are especially fond of such broad grants of authority, except when it comes to regulating smut. It is ludicrous for liberals to posture as opponents of state restrictions when they have created a society in which one must get the state's permission to work in many trades, to raise the price of one's labor or product, to set up a new business, or to advertise that your product cures acid indigestion. Aside from selling diluted hallucinogenic drugs, the only commerce *not* considered immoral by the New Left is the exploitation of the auto-erotic fantasies of the sexually frustrated.

Where cities have used liquor licensing powers and other pressures to keep "topless-bottomless shows" out of their

boundaries, such shows have often moved to highways between the cities. This presents some inconvenience to the proprietors and patrons of such places, but it does strike a workable compromise between total censorship and the commercial blight and creepy atmosphere that typically accompanies the skin trade. Similar community licensing or zoning authority could easily be extended to other avowedly pornographic enterprises. Anyone who wished to establish an "adult" bookstore or theater would then have to conform to certain standards regarding offensive signing, and would have to locate in specific areas. The porn vendors on Times Square, for example, might be prohibited from scribbling "Live Sex" on their windows, and be required to relocate to, say, the Bowery.

The community is clearly the optimal decision-making unit for drawing the line between racy and raunchy, because community standards take "neighborhood effects" into account, while allowing for a variety of choices between different social

environments. "Banned in Boston" is a principle far less subject to abuse than either setting national standards for obscenity, or setting no standards at all.

In *Economics and the Art of Controversy* (1958), John Kenneth Galbraith warned conservatives not to exaggerate their objections to statist interventions lest they lose their credibility. Surely liberals need the same lesson regarding the Mario Savio syndrome of identifying "free speech" with the right to offend others. Yelling "fire" in a crowded auditorium is not a whole lot different from peddling the hot stuff in a crowded city. A society has a perfect right to circumscribe the boundaries of individual choice when those choices interfere with the lives of others. Those who would be the first to object to an unsightly hamburger joint in the middle of a scenic area seem to have no objection to a schlock shop peddling porn in someone else's neighborhood. It's hypocritical at best, and quite inconsiderate. □

Thomas H. Etzold and B.W. Menning

American Strategy in the Nuclear Age

THE REVOLUTIONARY age of nuclear strategy has raised anew the oldest, most basic question of foreign policy, that of the relation between force and diplomacy. Paradoxically, the more powerful weapons become, the more reluctant people are to employ them. In the thermonuclear era, that reluctance has seemed almost an imperative, so that people have wondered whether war can still be a rational policy alternative, whether any goals have sufficient validity and importance to require their attainment through nuclear conflict. Hardly anyone today maintains that war represents merely the extremity of political recourse, or even, as at times in the past, a casual or desirable alternative far short of the extreme.

The relation between force and diplomacy has been the subject of repeated debate in post-1945 American foreign policy. In the period from 1947 to 1950, massive failure to limit Soviet expansion and to construct a congenial postwar order occasioned initial assessments of that question deep in the confidential recesses of the American bureaucracy. A decade later the question again dominated discussion, partly because of the new Soviet ability to carry nuclear destruction to the United States and partly as a result of an increasingly activist American foreign policy. In the early 1970s, as the war wound down in Southeast Asia, Americans were examining the question again. For the third time in twenty-five years, the United States is in search of a national strategy; as in the past the debate and its conclusions will define the nature of subsequent American foreign policy.

The first period of questioning about national strategy in the aftermath of the bomb occurred two short years after the United States had demonstrated for all the

world its conclusive strategic power at Hiroshima and Nagasaki. By 1947 the confidence American leaders had derived from the atomic monopoly had diminished. Foreign policy goals had been simple to define, hard to achieve. Americans had hoped to avoid the outbreak of a third world war and to prevent Soviet and communist expansion. By 1947 American failure in the latter regard was more than obvious; it was disturbing and ominous. During the next three years, as American leaders' lip debated national strategies, impressive new failures in China and a potentially disastrous loss of security inherent in Soviet acquisition of the bomb were to provoke reexamination of the relation between force and diplomacy, in this case the American nuclear monopoly and the American intention to inhibit Soviet expansion.

Obviously, the atomic monopoly of 1945-1949 was insufficient to stop the Soviets in Eastern Europe, or the communists in China, despite Truman's aggressive posturing and veiled threats. The bomb as the only backstop to policy had proven inflexible, and lack of conventional forces threatened to paralyze American negotiators. During Marshall's tenure as Secretary of State, many negotiators warned of the injury that would result from massive and overhasty demobilization. The old soldier himself grew frustrated and impatient over the rigidity of his negotiating position: "... when I was Secretary of State I was being pressed constantly ... to give the Russians hell. ... I was getting the same appeal in relation to the Far East and China. At that time my facilities for giving them hell—and I am a soldier and know something about the ability to give hell—was 1-1/3 divisions over the entire United States. That is quite a proposition when

you deal with somebody with over 260 and you have 1-1/3."

After a few months under Marshall the State Department concluded that the United States needed to increase its conventional military forces. The Policy Planning Staff, led by Paul Nitze, recommended "a major reconsideration of national strategy." At about the same time the newly formed National Security Council reached similar conclusions, and with participants from State and Defense the NSC initiated discussions which culminated more than two years later in the famous NSC-68 proposals for large increases in conventional forces.

Adoption of the containment policy in mid-1947 almost ensured that such recommendations would emerge from any consideration of political-strategic necessity. The State Department had explicitly stated that the main reason the United States needed to maintain armed strength was to furnish "support for our political position"—that is, containment. For the first time in postwar years, it became clear that a massive strategic threat would not guarantee Soviet amenability, that Americans could not halt Soviet expansion or turn Soviet probes except by meeting them one by one as and when they appeared and by employing varieties of limited counterforce.

After NSC-68 appeared in spring 1950, the United States developed a strategy combining massive retaliation and primitive flexible response. The Truman Administration, and the Eisenhower-Dulles Administration after it, continued to rely on massive strategic nuclear air power in potential direct confrontation with the Soviet Union. At the same time, both administrations developed the conventional alternative to nuclear war first used extensively

in the Korean police action, though clearly foreshadowed in the formation of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization in 1948-1949.

Many writers have recognized the essential continuity in policy between the Truman and Eisenhower Administrations without realizing the extensive continuity in strategy as well. The emphasis on massive retaliation of the Dulles-Eisenhower years was the public continuation of Truman's reliance on nuclear air power in direct conflict with the Soviet Union. The applications of conventional force received less publicity, but perhaps should have received more, for to the creation of conventional forces and regional defense organizations (both of which continued under Eisenhower) Dulles and Eisenhower added new (to Americans), subtle, and increasingly disreputable non-nuclear modes of forcible coercion. These resulted, for example, in the conventional intervention in Lebanon in 1958, the continuing deployment of conventional land and sea forces in and around Taiwan, the overthrow of governments in Iraq and Guatemala, the attempted subversion of the Indonesian government, and the erection of a satellite government in southeast Asia.

While the Eisenhower Administration was working out in practice some implications of the containment policy, academic observers of foreign relations were exploring the implications of policy in the New Age. Their conclusions and suggestions would initiate the second great debate on national strategy in the Cold War. Henry Kissinger, along with Herman Kahn and General Maxwell Taylor, substantially influenced the development of the McNamara Doctrine, the almost infinitely expanded flexible response of the 1960s. Kissinger and Kahn considered the relation of force and diplomacy abstractly, and then with "ruthless precision" elucidated the logical imperatives for policy.

In the nuclear age, Kissinger argued, the security of geographical isolation which provided time for threat analysis and defensive preparation were no longer elements of the American position. A nation without those advantages, traditional for Americans, could not afford to wait for threats to develop unambiguously. A nation lacking such a margin of safety must conduct more "precautionary policy. It cannot permit a significant change in the balance of forces." The balance of forces and the strategic position and security of the United States could now be upset in a variety of ways, not only military, but political and psychological. "The age of the hydrogen bomb is also the age of internal subversion, of intervention by volunteers, of domination through political and psychological warfare. . . . Moreover, nuclear technology makes it possible, for the first time in history, to shift the balance of power solely through developments *within* the territory of another sovereign state."

Kissinger continued: "At a time when we have never been stronger, we have had to learn that power which is not clearly related to the objectives for which it is to be employed may merely serve to paralyze the will. . . . If the Soviet bloc can present its challenges in less than all-out form . . . it . . . will then pose the appalling dilemma of whether we are willing to commit suicide

to prevent encroachments, which do not, each in itself, seem to threaten our existence directly but which may be steps on the road to our ultimate destruction. No more urgent task confronts American policy than to bring our power into balance with the issues for which we are most likely to have to contend" (*Nuclear Weapons and Foreign Policy*, 1957).

Kissinger's analysis subtly extended the philosophy and practice of power politics and containment. It foreshadowed, even required, a thoroughgoing American commitment to conflict and interventionism that finds its ideological, though not its practical, parallel in the Truman Doctrine. As the Kennedy Administration expanded American conventional forces, mobile reserves, helicopter, airborne, naval and marine forces, and developed large counterinsurgency and special (guerrilla) forces, a contemporary political analyst praised the McNamara Doctrine of flexible response for making containment "at last a viable, detailed defense policy for the nuclear age."

Although U.S. policy during the Eisenhower-Dulles years had never excluded a resort to non-nuclear conflict, the rhetoric of massive retaliation and "brinksmanship" had both obscured the acquisition of real flexibility and hindered the develop-



ment of a coherent and rational national strategy. By bridging the gap between posture and theory, the Kennedy-McNamara doctrine of flexible response realized a new consistency in strategy. At the heart of the doctrine was a heroic appeal to rationality, an appeal which placed a high—and probably unwarranted—degree of confidence in the ability of decision-makers and their advisers to comprehend, plan for, and ultimately control situations requiring the use of force. Scholars both inside and outside of government provided the intellectual foundation for the new consistency when they optimistically thought and wrote in terms of "ladders of escalation," or paradigms, whose rungs marked nearly every stage of conceivable conflict ranging from an exchange of harsh invective to all-out nuclear war.

Under Secretary of Defense Robert S. McNamara, the elaboration of flexible response represented an attempt to restore rationality to strategic planning in an era when the vast power of weaponry seemed to have rendered war—the use of unlimited force in pursuit of policy—"unthinkable." In the language of strategic studies in the early 1960s, cost-risk calculations formed the basis of policy planning—an approach and terminology reminiscent of European,

and especially German, strivings in the late nineteenth century. The cost-risk approach of the McNamara years constituted an attempt to realize under modern conditions the attractive environment in which Clausewitz's famous dictum would be valid: when risks could be calculated and costs foreseen and managed, war would comprise only the modest extension of diplomatic pressure. As the State Department had concluded somewhat earlier, the *raison d'être* of capabilities and ready forces was the support they could lend to American political postures.

During McNamara's tenure, the Department of Defense attempted to bring rationality into both sides of the cost-risk calculation. On the cost side of the equation, perhaps the most notable development was the systematic application of modern business management techniques to spending, procurement, and planning. Since the beginning of World War II, when the question of the military budget had first attracted more than the usual amount of public attention, various administrations had experienced the frustration of wrestling with the problem of allocating limited monetary and manpower resources within an even more voracious defense organization. McNamara's whiz kids subjected the department to searching scrutiny, employing cost-effectiveness accounting and systems analysis in a major effort to restore the military appetite to manageability and to bring efficiency, logic, and order to security management and planning.

In the nuclear age it was even more essential to cut risks than to cut costs. How could one think of supporting political positions through forces in being or forces in use in an era when massive and intolerable nuclear exchange loomed so darkly? American planners seemed to have found an answer when to the traditional flexibility apparent in the Eisenhower years they added nontraditional flexibilities and a doctrine which provided harmony and order in the convergence of power and politics. The essence of risk-cutting lay in avoiding confrontation with adverse nuclear powers, thereby keeping the possibility of nuclear exchange remote. By introducing subtleties, variations, and extra steps into the "ladders of escalation," flexible response seemed to remove the imminence of the nuclear threat. And the development of unconventional forces enhanced the ability of the United States to confront its adversaries by indirection, through the sublimated great power conflict which surfaced in the third world under circumstances requiring decidedly new capabilities and responses.

To complement the search for rational order during the Kennedy-McNamara years the Defense Department greatly expanded programs for training and strengthening the military and police establishments of "friendly" governments. The chaos of change and revolution in the third world threatened the stability fundamental to the kind of predictability vital to planning and managing national security and foreign relations in order to minimize risks. By providing material and advisory assistance in support of counterinsurgency and internal development operations, the Department stressed the nonconventional dimension of flexible response at

a time when subversive movements defied the more conventional applications of counterforce.

In the early 1960s the new harmony between capability and philosophy led to the acquisition of a stronger and more diversified nuclear deterrent, as well as the bolstering of conventional and nonconventional forces, but not to the planner's utopia that some people had expected. In the most important test case, Vietnam, it became apparent that many elements of the new flexibility and rationality were either flawed or of limited value. In actuality, modern business techniques possessed limitations. While they were of great assistance in planning resource allocation, for instance, they were much less useful as aids in the management of violence. Flexible response as doctrine was supposed to guarantee the United States a wide range of alternatives either in ascending or descending the ladder of escalation in any given extension of politics beyond diplomacy to force. In theory, decision-makers retained the option of expanding or curtailing the level of force or engagement in a manner that corresponded to their interpretation of the cost-risk, and especially the cost-effect or cost-benefit calculation. When cost exceeded potential benefit, or when risks rose too high, one could deescalate or even disengage.

In practice, American involvement in Vietnam demonstrated that in some instances flexible response was flexible only in one direction, and that the ladder of escalation was in fact one-way, always leading upward. The costs of involvement quickly outran even the most extravagant estimates of potential benefit, partly because of the prominent effect of a factor thus far omitted from cost calculations, that of domestic reaction to and constraints on foreign military policy. In Vietnam the United States found itself applying amounts of force which would have brought many conventional enemies to their knees. Faced with a war in which nerves and obstinacy weighed more heavily than supplies and firepower, in which almost no amount of force would suffice short of that required completely to destroy the enemy, the prudent practitioner of flexible response would have chosen to disengage. Paradoxically as high costs began to outrun potential advantages and to encourage reconsideration of involvement, they also grew to represent a level of investment, of sacrifice, which was closely allied with national pride. Just as a gambler on a losing streak tends to throw good money after bad, decision-makers could not make a "peace without honor" which they would be able to justify only by overlooking the American casualties and expended resources.

The flaw in the philosophy of flexible response was a failure to understand the fact that violence possesses its own dynamic, a kind of internal logic that is impervious to systematic and rational analysis. Former Under Secretary of State George Ball understood the logic behind escalation when he wrote, "It is in the nature of escalation that each move passes the option to the other side, while at the same time the party which seems to be losing will be tempted to keep raising the ante. . . . Once on the tiger's back we

cannot be sure of picking the place to dismount." Expressions such as Ball's raised distinct doubts about the possibility of employing systematic and graduated force to obtain political victory. They might have made decision-makers somewhat more reluctant in resorting to force, had they not come too early in the Vietnam experience to be the product of observation rather than of prophetic insight.

Although the Vietnam experience has tended to discredit flexible response, the general concept has survived in American-European policy. There were, after all, good reasons why the doctrine had not worked well in Vietnam. Long before the end of American involvement, people were looking for and finding explanations for that failure, and there was overwhelming agreement that modern high-technology industrial states were not equipped for prolonged war in an insurgency framework against developing states. Conventional modes of warfare availed little or nothing against guerrillas, and the less conventional components of America's new flexibility could produce only limited success.

That severe limitation of success coupled with the special difficulties of warfare under insurgency conditions spurred the reorientation of American policy in part capsulized in the Nixon Doctrine. Thwarted



in Southeast Asia, tired of great investment with little return, Nixon and Kissinger reevaluated the advantages of subliminal confrontation and displaced aggression and concluded that the United States would do better to negotiate directly with the other superpowers over questions and areas essential to American policy rather than to fight them indirectly in areas of marginal and submarginal interest and significance. In an era of increasing concern over resource allocation, peripheral conflict had become a luxury if not an extravagance. The nontraditional modes of warfare developed to fight such conflicts in the third world likewise appeared to have been luxuries rather than the essence of flexibility.

In contrast, Europe represented a context in which American interests were far greater and more clearly defined. More important, in Europe the elements of modern technological warfare could be effective and influential, and American power rather than being dispersed and dissipated could be concentrated. It is no surprise that at the center of the Nixon-Kissinger foreign policy was a return of attention and interest to Western Europe, the developed industrial area of the world, where American economic and political interests were

strongest, and where American diplomatic and military capabilities promised to be relevant and effective. The search for balance in Europe and between the East and West, represented in the cautious advance on the German problem, SALT I, and the upcoming MBFR (Mutual Balanced Force Reduction) negotiations, signified a continuation of the attempt to create stability and thus predictability and order in the precise arena in which the gyrating instability of the early Cold War had originated.

In the reconstituted European context, the doctrine of flexible response still remained valid, even integral. Had not the greatest fears of nuclear confrontation arisen from the terms of confrontation and competition in Europe? Had not the security and integrity of Western Europe been among the few clear interests declared in advance to be worth nuclear exchange? At this moment the wild proliferation of capabilities in the Kennedy-McNamara years stood out as the extravagant luxury it had in fact been. Nixon and Kissinger had come full circle, back to the flexible response of 1957-1960, curiously enough the years in which Kissinger's writing had stimulated the exaggerated developments of the early 1960s. The return to such a posture in Europe represents as it did in years past an attempt to escape the continuing logic of the balance of terror, to retain a sphere in which force could be the rational, usable extension of practical politics, as it had been for the *Realpolitiker* of the nineteenth century.

At least, one might say, the return to European concerns and to the discarding of fancy varieties of capability may prevent future expenditure of blood and treasure in trivial and remote causes. The reorientation of American policy, the moderation of goals, terms, and areas of conflict augurs the return of perspective, the final triumph of rationality in the attempt to link force and diplomacy.

Unhappily, this final triumph can also muddle our understanding of the very real difference between force and diplomacy. Insofar as flexible response has represented an attempt to avoid the mindless, uncontrollable violence and destruction of nuclear holocaust, it is both desirable and necessary. Flexible response as developed since the early 1950s, and especially in the Kennedy-McNamara years, was intended to minimize the dichotomy between peace and war, between diplomacy and force, a dichotomy that seemed restrictively and dangerously obsolete in the nuclear age. Furthermore, flexible response eased the overt and increasing competition between Washington diplomats on the one hand and warriors on the other for the dominant voice in national policy planning. In aligning the techniques of persuasion along an unbroken continuum, a ladder of escalation, the ideologies of the new strategic era blurred the dividing line between diplomacy and warfare, in part to permit compromise between the competitors for influence over national policy.

But flexible response was developed in the era and under the aura of a containment strategy. It was as much intended to make force a deliberate extension of diplomatic technique as to stave off nuclear exchange. Flexible response did not begin with Kissinger and Kahn in 1957, though

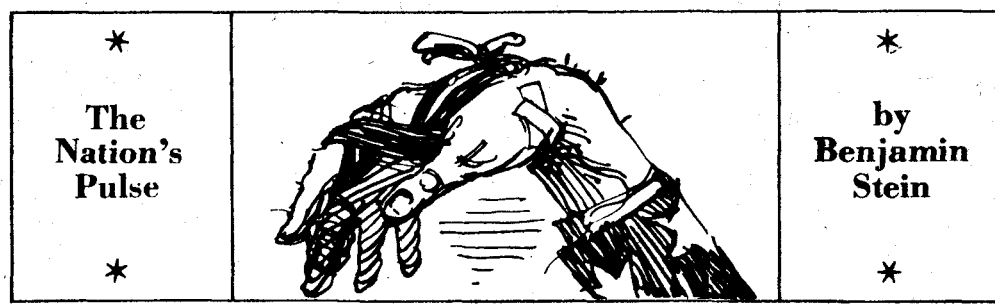
they greatly enlarged its terms and provided missing components of theory. The capability and subsequently the doctrine of flexible response grew out of the revival of conventional forces following the recommendations of NSC-68, coincident with Soviet acquisition of the bomb.

Thus diplomacy and war remain dichotomous, qualitatively different, because of the internal and irrational dynamic of violence, which is no mystical characteristic. The use of force invites counterforce, as witness the genesis of the American containment policy of the late 1940s. When force meets counterforce, both initiator and respondent become victims, and victims of violence, the objects of threats and applied force, lose the clearheaded objectivity necessary to read the cost-risk and cost-benefit

calculations of a national security manager. It is understandably easier to be rational in the use of force than in the experience of it. In such a context the apparent deception involved in a Gulf of Tonkin incident becomes less significant than the experience of having been shot at, whatever the provocation, whatever the context. When the first man on each side has died, the internal logic of violence may wrest control of subsequent events from the once rational decision-maker. When there has been cost or expenditure, there must be an accounting, and when that cost is measured in blood, who can confidently and willingly make that accounting?

In the current formulation of American foreign political and military relations, there is a basis for optimism, just as there

is for reserved concern. The replacement of a containment policy by a concept of balance has already demonstrated its potential for a reduction of tension, hostility, insecurity, and instability. But the retention of flexible response as the doctrinal basis for policy is less reassuring. In the 1960s, the doctrine of flexible response, by diminishing the significance of the resort to force, became an invitation to intervention and war. With the Vietnam war so close, it is hard to believe that flexible response, even in its more confined European application, will not invite another misstep. For the decision-makers of a generation of peace, the resort to force cannot remain a simple or logical extension of diplomacy. It is, and should remain, a distinguishable last resort. □



Solzhenitsyn: His Meaning for Americans

AT GREAT PERSONAL cost, Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn has given the American people a lesson of incomparable value and timeliness. The lesson is the importance of perspective in assessing our American political system and its prospects.

Solzhenitsyn has just allowed publication of his book entitled *The Gulag Archipelago 1918-1956*. It is a comprehensive history of the Soviet concentration camp and terror system. The "Gulag" was the administration of the concentration camps which spread across Russia like islands in an archipelago. The history goes from 1918 to 1956 and is told largely out of the mouths of the survivors and nonsurvivors of the camps, the arrests, and the tortures.

It tells a story of how 1984 arrived in Russia in 1918 with the terror decreed by Lenin. That terror surged through time in wave after wave directed at non-Bolshevik revolutionaries, landed peasants, intellectuals, army officers, scientists, and every kind of nationality which ever crossed Lenin or Stalin.

Solzhenitsyn argues that the terror was not an aberration from Lenin's saintliness, brought on by Stalin. He shows that terror was woven inextricably into the Soviet system from its first days, and has never left that system. The Soviet crimes against humanity, he points out, in sheer number, exceed the Nazis'. Whole nationalities and classes were exterminated—often upon a whim.

And, the writer says that it is as if Bormann and Goebbels were still running things. Persons who were intimately asso-

ciated with the most barbaric forms of terror against the innocent still flourish in positions of power in the Soviet state. The people who rose through the murder of the innocent live in villas and are driven in limousines. Trials of even the most vicious Stalin era criminals simply do not take place—a shocking comparison with even the sorry record of trials of Nazi criminals.

Solzhenitsyn shows how the system killed its victims not only physically, but first in spirit. Knowledge that the whole nation was in fear made the resistance of any individual seem futile. Thus, resistance to even the most outrageously unfair and brutal acts did not materialize.

The book is obviously full of meaning for those few Russians who will be able to read it. But for the world at large, its greater significance will be in the American reaction to it.

It says to Americans that with all of the problems of our American system, we would do well to look at what our chief political and military rival has to offer.

The book could hardly have come at a more opportune moment. The American people have been so buffeted with news stories about how bad our system is (supposedly) because of the Vietnam war, the Watergate events, the gasoline shortages, that polls have shown new lows of despair about the fundamental moral strength of our country.

The Gulag Archipelago should tell us that even if the worst of all the allegations about our system are true—the Vietnam war was a cruel misadventure, bungling and immoral men were operating within

the White House, the rewards of the economic and judicial system are distributed unfairly—that is all trifling by comparison with a pressing alternative—the Soviet system.

The American system faces serious and real challenges. Facing up to them will make America stronger, not weaker. But what can and will weaken America is the kind of self-doubt which is rubbed into the American system and psyche by an obsessive dwelling upon faults, real and often imagined, in American life.

It is bad, even very bad, for people using the power of government to eavesdrop on others' conversations. It should be stopped. But our gain will be nil if we flagellate ourselves to weakness while those without shame make themselves stronger. It will do no lasting good to make our system hemorrhage to the point that those who feel no compunction about the slaughter of the millions will overcome, bit by bit, around the world.

If we make our President so weak and powerless by harping on whether he knew that a certain conversation was held on a certain date that he cannot lead us to stand against a system that starves men to death because they satirize the government, we will not have done a service to the cause of law.

Solzhenitsyn shows us that even in what some consider a dim hour for our system, that system is still a beacon for the rest of the world.

He shows us another kind of perspective too. Who in the world can match the bravery of the men and women who defy the Soviet system from within? Theirs is a life of unrelieved torment for what is to them no more than an abstraction—freedom of speech and thought. For their efforts there are no fund-raisers in Manhattan co-ops, no network television, no worshipful mass following.

For their service to a condition which we consider fundamental, they are estranged from their compatriots, impoverished, jailed, beaten, made insane by drugs and conditioning, and finally hounded to their deaths in brutal work camps. If we lost what we now have, who among us would suffer as much to get it back? □