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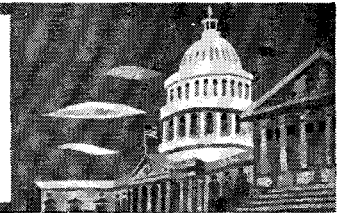
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Distributed by New York University Press

State of Affairs



The China Watchers

WASHINGTON is worrying about how to contain China and in this it not only has a co-worrier; it has an accomplice: the Soviet Union. The Kremlin, in fact, has even larger reason to worry, because of its long, common border with China. And now that it is involved in an intra-party conflict with her that is far more searing, far more widespread in global terms than was Stalin's with Trotsky, it is no wonder that the closer one analyzes Soviet policy in Asia the more obvious it becomes that the Kremlin is taking a leaf from the American "containment" book.

In the last few weeks Soviet diplomatic activity to that end has been remarkably intense, remarkably enterprising, and, at least for the time being, remarkably successful. There was, first of all, Mr. Kosygin's extraordinary effort at what the West would term personal diplomacy at Tashkent; with the exception of Peking, this brought him plaudits from everyone, including the United States. It was a novel experience for American diplomacy to stand on the sidelines, distant and watchful, while the Soviet Union brought off what they themselves could not; for despite the vast amount of aid the United States has poured into both India and Pakistan, it has lost the necessary pull in New Delhi and Karachi.

The British, in a sense, felt even more remote from what was once their undisputed sphere of influence and what nominally is still part of the British Commonwealth. Lord Curzon might have turned in his grave, but contemporary Whitehall welcomed Russia's new role in that part of the world. Geopolitics no doubt helped and so did the heavyhandedness of American policy, which has alienated Indian and Pakistani public opinion.

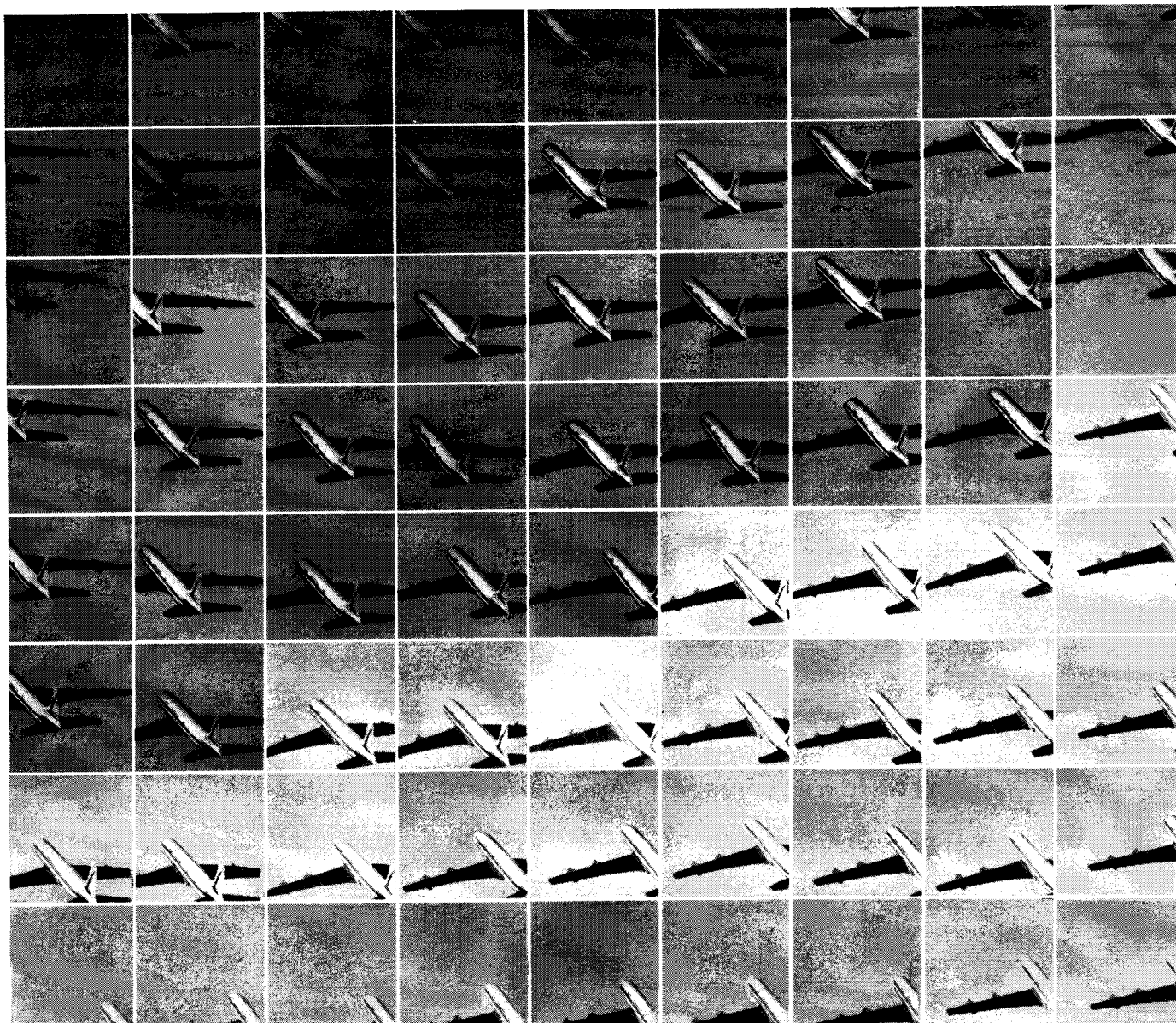
What impressed official Washington most and what inspired new hopes for some sort of tacit parallelism of Western and Soviet policies was the basic aim of Mr. Kosygin's intervention: the furthering of stability and cooperation in the Indian subcontinent. This represents a fundamental change, for in the past Soviet policy has been out to undermine and disrupt non-Communist territory wherever and whenever possible. Mr. Kosygin's performance will undoubtedly harden Soviet influence on the subcontinent. To what extent it will also weaken

the links between Karachi and Peking remains to be seen, for that was plainly one of the Soviet leader's aims; but strong Soviet pressure on India (at first reluctant even to agree to the Tashkent meeting), which resulted in her withdrawal from Pakistan territory occupied by India since the cease-fire, must have caused Ayub no small feeling of gratitude. The Tashkent agreement was, of course, only a first step on very uncertain ground, and massive problems remain to be solved. But with the Soviet Union exerting responsible influence and the West ready to cooperate with economic aid as soon as it is satisfied that Indian and Pakistan are not wasting it on replenishing their armories, the outlook for stability in the subcontinent should improve, depressing any hopes for new Chinese adventures.

Mr. Kosygin does not strike the visitor on first acquaintance as a flexible, imaginative diplomat or one likely to take large risks. But in his calm, politely determined way once he has set himself a target, he is apt to be a most persistent and cogent bargainer who knows how to mix reason with pressure. To Mr. Khrushchev words came easier than action. With Mr. Kosygin the opposite is true; the Soviet Prime Minister is not a man to waste words. In his general political outlook he is probably more conservative than his deposed predecessor, but that doesn't prevent him from seeing where Russia's real interests lie (he may, in fact, see these more clearly and less adventurously than Mr. Khrushchev).

The visits of Mr. Shelepin to Hanoi and Mr. Brezhnev to Outer Mongolia and the Japanese Foreign Minister's call in Moscow also seem to fall into the general scheme of containment of China, a policy the new rulers must have decided on when the attempts to reach a *modus vivendi*, following Mr. Khrushchev's fall, had clearly failed. This containment policy in fact has priority in Moscow, taking precedence over the improvement of East-West relations.

The results of the visits to Hanoi and Outer Mongolia by two of the highest Soviet leaders, designed no doubt to strengthen Moscow's influence and to impress the hosts, are not yet crystal-clear. Both North Vietnam and Outer Mongolia border directly on China—a fact they cannot ignore. Hence whatever is said publicly is carefully weighed



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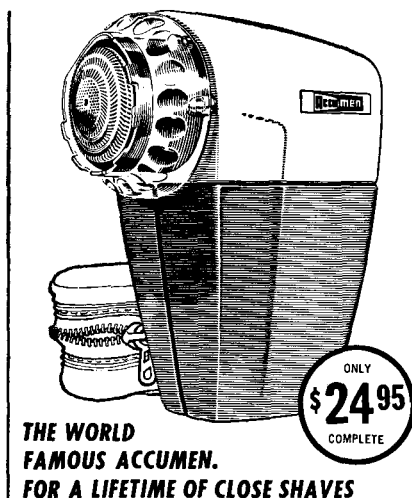
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to avoid giving offense to Peking. When Western statesmen tried hopefully to induce Mr. Khrushchev to counteract the Chinese in Laos and Vietnam, he used to say in private talks that those areas were too far distant for the Soviet Union to take any real interest. But after Kosygin a year ago, it was Mr. Shelepin this year who did not think Hanoi was too far off to try to harden Russia's influence there. The Kremlin must realize that in order to bring the Vietnamese war to an end at some point it must try to preserve among the North Vietnamese a political balance between sympathies for the Soviet Union and those for China; so that when the time comes Russia will be in a position to help counteract the Chinese—who will never bow to an end to the war short of total victory for their Vietnam.

Relations between the Soviet Union and Japan have been tenuous up to now; but the visit of the Japanese Foreign Minister to Moscow recently is a sign of slow but perceptive improvement. In the 1904-05 war Japan defeated Russia and has kept a sharp eye on her ever since. Today the Soviet Union would doubtless welcome Japanese help in the containment of China.

Here again, Soviet and American interests may sooner or later find themselves on a parallel course.

—HENRY BRANDON.

The Suicide's Daughter

By S. Dorman

THE girl whose mother took poison wouldn't drink from a glass unless it was rinsed. Her childhood swelled in a castle of doubt; stones turned when she touched them.

Asleep, she killed rumours with her teeth, climbed turrets no one had built, and dizzy with perspective, fell.

Each time the curtains flapped, her windows opened on the smell of graves. Portly as balloons, tall people smiled that it was noon and all was well

but when dinner knives lay wisely by the spoons, she never dropped a crumb, or spoke.

Nourished on secrets she grew up and for her child's sake planted herbs and greens.

The daughter's daughter would not climb the towers or dip a drink up from a hidden well. Outspoken, she screamed aloud her griefs, and sang her mother's piece: that all doors open on a view of graves.

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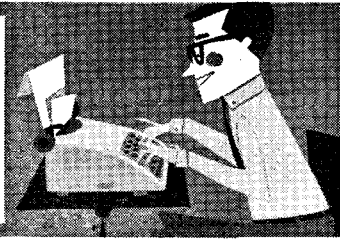
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Top of My Head



What Makes Sammy Shuffle?

From a New York Times interview with Sammy Davis a week before his first TV hour:

"Is there anything distinctive about your show, compared to other weekly variety programs?"

"Yes," replied Davis. "There's a colored fellow who's the host and star of it."

IT'S ALL too confusing. Forty years ago there was a young Jewish entertainer named Al Jolson who was trying to pass as Negro. Today there is a young Negro entertainer named Sammy Davis who is trying to pass as Jewish.

What genetics has to do with entertainment at this late date eludes me. And it certainly should have eluded Mr. Davis when you consider the many alternative answers he could have given to the question of how his show will be different from other hour variety programs. He could have replied that the

host and star of the show can dance rings around any other host. He can sing with the best. He is more graceful, more energetic, and a much greater impressionist than any other host of any other variety program.

Mr. Davis is under the delusion that he is still in the old show-business era of the great Bert Williams. I recall the famous poker-game sketch in which Mr. Williams called another player's bet. The player said, "I've got a straight flush, what have you got?" And Mr. Williams replied, "I've got two deuces and a sharp razor."

And what has Mr. Davis got? Nothing—only talent, show biz know-how, a rapport with any audience, and a sharp wit. But also, he apparently has a chip on his shoulder. He breaks no new ground. He's no Jackie Robinson. There was the king, Cole, a host before him. Also the queen, Lena. And Bob

Cosby, co-star of *I Spy*. Color them any hue in the spectrum and their talent prevails.

Mr. Davis seems still to be fighting to overcome. If he is, he's shadow boxing. Actually all he had to overcome on his first program was the appearance of two of his guests, Richard Burton and Elizabeth Taylor. This, as I understand it, was Miss Taylor's first appearance as a guest on a variety program. Miss Taylor is an important star in movies and has big talents. But not for the twenty-one-inch home screen. Mr. Burton, aloof and unbending, lent a stark dignity to the program, which Mr. Davis was not able to overcome as he all but groveled before such majestic grandeur.

I don't know how well acquainted you are with these two guests but I recall reading some obscure newspaper stories about their first meeting in Rome a couple of summers ago when they starred in a movie. That was also too confusing. It seems that Miss Taylor, an English girl turned Jewish, was in Rome trying to pass as Egyptian. While Mr. Burton, a Welshman, was in a toga trying to pass as Orson. And now here they were, guests on a show starring Sammy Davis, who is—well, I've lost track.

It is quite obvious that booking this famous couple on a program of song and dance, neither of which either did well, was intended to get what is known as a high rating with a high percentage of viewers. Which, according to the decimal counters, they did quite well. Actually Mr. Burton and Miss Taylor would have enhanced the rating that night even if the host had been Conway Twitty.

But in enhancing the rating, the producers failed to enhance the capabilities of Mr. Davis. I say "producers" because in a prior statement the star had announced that any mistakes made on this show would be his. And one of the mistakes was booking these two great stars if Mr. Davis was going to spend the hour genuflecting before the presence. The only spark of the real Sammy Davis showed up toward the end of the program when he was reunited briefly with his father and uncle and they performed the Chilton and Thomas airplane glide that used to close their old vaudeville act.

The *coup d'état* for this viewer was when he hung the picture of Miss Taylor and Mr. Burton on one of his memory walls and vowed that no other picture of any future guest would ever grace that wall. Amen.

Next Friday Mr. Davis returns as host of his weekly hour variety program. I hope Mr. Davis feels equal to the task. I also hope he feels equal. And finally I hope I will be able to say of his next show, "I come not to bury Davis, but to praise him," if I may paraphrase the noblest Roman of them all, Richard Burton.

—GOODMAN ACE.



"We're becoming slaves to unconventionality!"