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Problems remain after India-Pakistan war

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Politically, Vihstadt calls himself a "moderate Republican," and admires Burke, John Adams, Disraeli and Tocqueville.

The ostensible purpose of wars is to solve problems and redress wrongs. And like most other wars, last month's India-Pakistan clash did neither. The situation has only been worsened—for everybody—by this tragic resort to arms.

It is evident to most observers that India, long a pious apostle of peace, saw an opportunity to "settle" the East Pakistani question with force, and seized it. Whatever the circumstances, India was clearly the aggressor. The American people agree by over a 2½ to 1 margin that "India was wrong to invade another country, no matter how wrong West Pakistan may have

been in the way it ruled East Pakistan," according to a recently published Harris poll.

Admittedly, the West Pakistanis were far from blameless for what finally developed. In brutally suppressing the Bengali independence movement, Pakistan gave India the opportunity it wanted and planned for, i.e., military intervention.

But this use of guns could ultimately backfire on India. As the "liberator" of Bangladesh, India is finding itself at least to some degree responsible for it. Though it is the world's eighth largest nation in terms of population (75 million), its per capita annual income (less than \$30) ranks it among the Earth's poorest. India, too, is short of funds (although she apparently is not too broke to buy all the Soviet MIG fighter planes she wants) and can hardly feed its own millions.

There are other reasons why Bangladesh could prove a millstone around Indira Gandhi's neck and be a blessing in disguise for West Pakistan.

Ancient antagonisms remain intact. The Bengalis hail the Indian troops as liberators, but how long will this last? Bangladesh is predominantly Moslem, which India is mostly Hindu. The two religions have never mixed (that was why the Bengalis joined West Pakistan in the first place) and there is no reason to think that the recent conflict resolved this ageless religious animosity.

Also to be reckoned with are other rebellious elements on a subcontinent driven by strongly different faiths, races, languages, and cultures. By dismembering Pakistan and fostering a separatist state, India has encouraged restive peoples and created a precedent which will live to haunt her.

India's own Bengalis, who bitterly resent the political and economic discrimination they have suffered at New Delhi's hands, now have only to look across the border to an "independent" Bengali homeland—and want the same for themselves.

Another problem minority is the powerful Maoist party in the Calcutta region. While politically strong enough to take over their area by legal means, they have been prevented from doing so by the repressive police action of the central government. It will be difficult to keep down Calcutta's Maoists any longer without raw military power, given India's present crisis situation.

Indeed, it is not farfetched to imagine the subcontinent reduced to a Balkanized bunch of bickering, poverty-stricken states.

What of the larger questions of the Soviet Union and America's roles in these tragic events? The truth of the matter is that Russia has emerged from the war as the military arsenal and political defender of India. India has military supremacy due to Russia's arms, and diplomatic immunity, thanks to Soviet vetoes in the United Nations.

Unless the Kremlin puts pressure on New Delhi to cease (which is unlikely), India is likely to gobble up half of Kashmir and continue the partition of Pakistan herself.

Russia has been preaching for conciliation and compromise in talks with the U.S., and in the Middle East debates between Israel and the Arab states. She proclaims that the great powers must work together for peace. Military aggression should not be used to achieve political objectives, and rightly so.

But apparently Russia was not interested in accommodation and compromise. The U.S. stressed these principles in vain hoping to force India and Pakistan to stop the bloody

mess and withdraw to their own borders.

The Soviet veto against a mutual cease-fire and withdrawal went against the will of the overwhelming majority of both the Security Council and the General Assembly, and helped lessen further the already low reputation of the UN as an instrument for peace.

To turn to the United States' role in the affair, we find that American liberalism is quick to chide the administration for supposedly acting too slowly in cutting off military aid to Pakistan—and too swiftly in stopping India's economic aid and branding it as the aggressor, and therefore its policy was viciously anti-India and pro-Pakistan.

These are the same people who condemn the U.S. for playing "world policeman," who claim nonintervention is the answer in Vietnam, but who believe that "morality" and "human decency" should somehow require us to arrest our friendly relations with Greece and Rhodesia.

In other words, what Pakistan does to its dissidents should be the key factor in determining our India-Pakistan policy, but what China or Cuba have done to their dissidents is an internal matter that must not influence our policy.

Apparently the liberal community yet labors under the erroneous assumption of John F. Kennedy that all that is needed to solve the problems of the world is the correct action by the American government; that is, get in if we have not been there yet, (as in Pakistan, and according to Teddy Kennedy, North Ireland) but get our if we have (as in Southeast Asia).

What Washington did was identify India as the aggressor and plead for peace. With India victorious, the pundits are crowing that the U.S. has made a gigantic diplomatic blunder that will reduce American influence on the subcontinent.

What is passed over is the fact that America, for all its generous aid in the past, has never had great influence in India, and that Soviet influence has been growing steadily for quite some time anyway.

But my feeling is that, in the long run, events may well vindicate the administration's handling of the Indo-Pak War. For ours was a role based on two very basic and righteous principles. 1) that international disputes should not be resolved by military force, but by meaningful political dialogue. 2) the concept that a nation's internal domestic policies are its own affair, not those of its neighbor or anyone else.



Thousands of refugees still remain from the India-Pakistan War.