



THE AMERICAN PUBLIC AND NATIONAL SECURITY POLICY

Dr. B. Abdul A. A. Said

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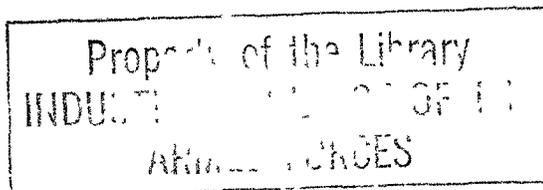
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2 October 1962

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DR. SANDERS: Most political analysts agree that in democratic countries leaders must take into consideration considerations of public opinion. The same political analysts disagree as to how much weight public opinion considerations merit in this consideration by leaders.

Today our speaker, Dr. Abdul Said of American University, has a challenging task to try to put this vague subject into proper perspective and into proper focus.

Dr. Said has a record of academic achievement and practical experience as a consultant to many important private and government organizations. This is Dr. Said's second lecture at the Industrial College.

Gentlemen, Dr. Said.

DR. SAID: Admiral Rose, General Stoughton, Dr. Sanders, Gentlemen:

I am honored to be here. I am not certain how sharp of a focus I will be able to draw this morning. I will confine my remarks to some general observations since a topic of this nature cannot be dealt with in a very specific nature. Yet, on the other hand, when one discusses it in its generalities one will commit many errors. So I will confess what the Greeks have confessed in the past. Two things I am certain of are: (1) In most of my observations I will be wrong. (2) Sometimes I will be honest. We will try to do it this way.

I will give you a brief background regarding my interest in this topic. Last year I had a grant from the Rockefeller Foundation and traveled to North Africa. Upon arriving at one of the North African airports I was aboard an Italian aircraft.

The security officers at the airport, as usual, asked all of us to submit our passports, our travel documents. Almost everybody on that aircraft were Italians and French, and the security officer was pretty nasty to them. Many of those people don't like either the Italians or the French by virtue of their colonial background. Then he came to me and looked at my face. He said, "Your travel documents?" He said it in French. I gave him my travel documents. He looked at the travel documents and looked at them again. He said, "What is your name?" So I told him. He said, "I can't believe it. How come you are traveling on an American passport?" I said, "It's easy. In the United States you have all kinds of people. Americans are composed of Italians, Greeks, Germans, Irish, Orientals, Arabs, and what have you." This officer in a very serious tone of voice said, "No doubt you Americans are all mixed up. You are like a salad." I thought his statements in a way were very interesting. They more or less incited me to become more interested in the American public, because throughout my travels—I stayed there almost one academic year--my job was to conduct interviews with persons from all walks of life. Almost invariably the first question they would ask related to American foreign policy. Often-times I had to sit in coffee shops on the floor trying to defend the foreign policies of Mr. Dulles. They have not as yet developed any strong reactions to the foreign policy of the New Frontier and hence they didn't ask many questions.

My presentation this morning will be divided into three major parts. The division is purely arbitrary, oligarchic, and dictatorial. I have done it for one simple reason. It is the only way I know how to do it.

The first classification I have designated as the new dimensions of international politics. I have selected the first classification because I do believe that unless we acquaint ourselves with the new dimensions of international politics it might prove to be difficult to understand the emerging role and the emerging challenges and preferences of the American public in foreign policy.

The second classification will address itself to the American ego image in foreign policy. This ego image in foreign policy I had to learn and understand more accurately while staying overseas on the grant.

The third classification will refer to the popular American look in foreign policy. What are the preferences of the American public in the field of foreign policy?

Some of you may have heard this. I would like to say this because I think it is indicative in many ways of how Americans react to foreign policy. Many years ago in one of the conferences held in Geneva, a conference that usually was composed of professors of politics, the Chairman of the conference became completely disgusted with the heated arguments of the professors. He ordered the conference adjourned, asking the professors to go back to their homelands and conduct research on elephants. He said: "Gentlemen, we have been discussing politics at great length. Why don't you go home, do your homework on elephants, and come back the following year." They went home. They did research on elephants, and they returned the following year. Upon their return the Chairman asked the French professor, "What is the result of your research?" The French professor replied by telling him that he had written a book entitled L'Elephant

Amour. That made sense. He looked at the Soviet professor and said, "What have you done, sir?" The Soviet said, "I have written 55 volumes entitled The Elephant and the Decline of American Capitalism and Imperialism." Then he looked at the Arab professor, and he said, "What have you done, sir?" The Arab professor said, "I have written about 6 or 7 volumes on The Elephant and the Arab-Israeli Dispute." Then he addressed himself to the American and the American emerged from his chair and said, "Well, sir, I have written a very small do-it-yourself pamphlet, about four pages long, entitled The Elephant: How to Improve It."

In a way this is indicative of the American approach to foreign policy: "How are we to improve it?"

Let us go to the new dimensions of international politics. I think one of the very significant dilemmas that the American public faces in its endeavors and attempts to understand the role and position of the United States in world affairs derives from the fact that many Americans as yet have not understood, or have not fully appreciated, the new dimensions of international politics. It seems that the international political system has come into abrupt conjunction with modern technology. The traditionally held and traditionally accepted notions of foreign policy in many ways have become obsolescent. As a result of this collision between technology and foreign policy, a great deal of frustration has arisen. Personally--and some of you might disagree with me--I do not believe that the main source of the tension in international politics today derives from the ideological conflict. I am not underestimating the ideological conflict. The ideological one

is a very significant conflict. But I do believe that much of the tension in international politics today and much of the misunderstandings in the reactions of the American public to foreign policy today result from the frustrating attempts of governments, states, men, and equally women to fit the traditional political categories into the modern present international environment.

It seems to me that, as a result of this collision between international politics and technology, one could conceive of three new dimensions: First, a new structural dimension in international politics. Second, a new procedural dimension in international politics. Third, a new substantive dimension in international politics.

In trying to comment on these dimensions briefly, if you take the first, the structural dimension, the international system today is not what it used to be in the past. In 1945 the United Nations was composed of 51 member states. Of the 51 member states 3 states came from Africa, 9 from Asia, about 20 from Latin America, and the rest from the other parts of the Western world, including the Soviet Union. This means that in 1945 less than 12 percent of the membership of the international system was from the non-West. The other members came from Western nations or nations that did partake in the past of Christian or Western or European civilization.

Look at the United Nations today. I think the last figure is about 106. It might be 108. It was 104 last week. It could be 106 and 108 next week. What has happened? The number of African states has risen from 3 to 30 or 31. The number of Asian states has increased from 9 to about 25. The number of Christian,

Western-wide, European states is almost stabilized. Fifty-four percent of the membership of the international system derives from non-Western people. Thus the whole structure has changed. Yet many Americans still insist on looking at the international system of the bygone days of 1933. A certain American official went as far as stating, "Why should we worry about what a diplomat from Africa has to say, or a diplomat from Asia? After all these people are emotional, these people are sentimental, and their views on international politics are not important." That might be so, but the gentleman has overlooked one significant aspect--there is a new dimension. These states exist. These states have become active participants in the international system. What is even more distressing, in a way, is the fact that while on the one hand the structure of the international system has changed to incorporate within it 54 percent membership composed mainly of strangers, intruders, newcomers, by virtue of technology the world today lives in a closed political system--meaning on the one hand that the house has become invaded by many strangers who speak completely different languages, having developed in completely different historic ways, and, on the other hand, by virtue of technology, they are forced to live under one roof.

More than ever before international politics has become more intimate. There has never been a period in history where international politics has been so intimate. Yet on the one hand we have this much intimacy in the international system and yet an intimacy imposed upon a people who insist that it is not intimate, who insist that we live under one roof but we will not engage in any communication or we might misunderstand one another. This applies to both West and non-West. It is a

situation very similar to a person living with a wife and not conducting the marriage responsibilities.

You might ask me a question: Why is this system closed? Why is it more intimate? I'll give you one example. In 1942-43--some of you might recall this--when the late Prince Abdullah of Jordan declared war on Germany, I recall then that even the British press ridiculed and laughed at Prince Abdullah. Even the French press, the Allied press, in ridicule said, "And now, alas, we are going to win the war," trying to make fun of the situation. After all, who was Abdullah? Jordan was nothing but a patch of sand. But nobody ridicules the developments today in Viet Nam, in Laos, in Cuba, in Yemen. Why? Because, by virtue of this closed political system what has happened is that there is no more any place for any state to hide. The American public might as well know this. They cannot hide.

To engage in ideological intoxication, to sing the praises of isolationism, to hope to step aside from the prophecies of history or to stop the clock of time will not change the fact that there is no place to hide.

Second, there is no more an estate on this earth which is not in some form or another significant to some other state. I think this is extremely important, because we cannot any more say that there does exist any one state that is not important.

What is the significance of this structural dimension, this new dimension? This new dimension has developed a number of consequences giving rise to other new dimensions procedurally and substantively. Procedurally, diplomacy

is not what it used to be in the past. Procedurally, war is not what is used to be in the past. Procedurally, the conception of victory and defeat is not what it used to be in the past. Let's face it--war has become a method, not an objective. Peace more than ever before is a method to be pursued, not an objective.

We hear ^{the} statement, "Let's win the cold war." What is the validity of such a statement as a guiding political principle? How do people win the cold war? Is this a valid political principle as a guide for action or is it not? I hope we raise these questions in our discussion following the presentation.

Now, if you take the consequences of the structural and substantive dimensions, what do you observe? Above all you observe that consensus has become much more difficult than ever before in international politics. Above all you discover that in international politics there is a new force--nationalism. You also discover that ideology has become very important. Personally, I do not subscribe to the thesis that ideology is not important. Ideology is important for many reasons. Nationalism is important for many reasons.

I will just select a few reasons and comment on them briefly. One could look at it this way: The 15th and 16th centuries came. What happened then? God was nationalized. Man nationalized God in the 15th and 16th centuries. Hence, replacing the conception of Christendom, the conception of humanity that until then was accepted as the ultimate notion of good and the ultimate notion of moral values was replaced by a new notion, the nation state. The nation state became the center of the ultimate moral values of a society. Ever since then the international religious frontier was broken and the political frontier began

to develop. The development of this political frontier expanded. First it developed in Europe. Then it came to the Americas. Then it went throughout the world. The political frontier has become international.

Technology in the 20th century now has broken the international frontier as the Reformation did break the religious frontier. Now, with the breakdown of the international frontier it is only natural that ideology, nationalism, and ideas become significant. More than ever before international politics has become an exercise in the prosecution of value differences. Personally, I disagree with the notion that international politics, as our esteemed, great father of international politics has suggested, Professor Morgan, ultimately is a play for power. It has become substantively a very different issue than what it ^{been} has/for the last 500 or 600 years. These are some of the changes.

Another change one could refer to, speaking of the consequences, is: Besides nationalism and besides ideology, we see a new dawn of political consciousness. We see revolutions of rising expectations. We see nations insisting that their governments, in the field of foreign policy, achieve for them what governments usually in the past achieved in the field of domestic policies. This is something else. This relates to the American public directly.

The older nationalities, the older states, including the United States of America, as a result of this collision between technology and international politics, are learning that these new states are forced to widen their horizons. They are forced to expand their national interests to apply to areas which they have neglected in the past. Some of them refuse to do so. Some of them do so. But the whole situation

has really changed.

Now, when we look at these changes and try to comment briefly on the United States, we see that many Americans today would like to live in the past. I tell my students at the university, when we have arguments about foreign policy, just to provoke them and to really make them mad--and they get mad and they get provoked--to suppose that I am a historian writing history in the year 2050 and to suppose I have written, "The American people, like every other people before them, even though they believed they were unique, after all were also the run-of-the-mill nationality, and they, too, failed to translate their national philosophy into a national attitude, and because they, too, failed, they, too, like the Romans were defeated, not from without, really, but from within. They, too, could not be salvaged by their atomic bombs." They get mad.

This could happen. It could happen because throughout history no great nation has declined because that nation has become less powerful in military terms, but nations have declined, because, I do believe, the moment those nationalities become great powers they live on the seventh cloud; they bid farewell to humanity; they say goodbye to humanity. I can only suggest, may the good Lord help humanity if the Soviet Union decides to join the human race before we do. I mean this not very literally, but I mean it in a very philosophical sense. May the good Lord help humanity. I say this with a great deal of conviction because I do believe that if the ship is permitted to sink before the Americans rejoin humanity again then I doubt that there is any salvation.

What do I mean by saying that I hope they join humanity? Because it seems

to me that a great nation becomes great as the result of the development of a great national philosophy internally. The Romans did develop a great national philosophy. The Greeks did before them, and before the Greeks when you think of the ancient kingdoms, they too had developed great national philosophies. Our greatness here is, to my mind, a byproduct of the development of a great national philosophy. To my mind the American Constitution and the Federalist Papers are not merely reflections of political genius. They are more than that. They are great political discoveries. It is only sad that in politics we don't usually speak of inventions or discoveries.

This Nation has become great as the result of the development of this great philosophy but, what happens? Usually when nations become great they become egocentric. They become so egocentric that that they can't see beyond their noses, and in these moments of egocentricism they can only think of their own problems and their own worries.

Coming to the second aspect of our discussion, what is the American ego image and how has it evolved? I would like to start with the assumption that every nation has an ego image. Every nation has an image of its mission on earth. Every nation has an image of the purposes it seeks to achieve or fulfill in international politics. But, again, before stating this, you must bear in mind that in discussing the /foreign policy of any nation, be it great or be it small, but especially of a great power, its successes will be determined by the extent to which the policy-makers and the public in that nation respond to the two requirements of domestic politics and international politics.

One could observe from history that, whenever the requirements of domestic politics or the requirements of foreign politics become more and more apart, it becomes almost impossible for that nation to pursue an effective or a consistent foreign policy. History is full of cases where the requirements of domestic politics have ruined the effectiveness of the foreign-policy objectives of that nation, and history has many examples where the requirements of foreign policy, because they have been overemphasized, have ruined the domestic politics of that nation. Suffice it to refer to Hitler, to Mussolini, or to many of the dictators of the 20th century. This great emphasis on foreign policy cripples the nation and deprives the national zone of its life or of any of its effectiveness.

It seems that throughout history the only way a nation, the only way a policy-maker or policy-makers, or the people can reconcile these two, domestic and foreign policies, is to do so only within the context of their diplomatic history, only within the context of their diplomatic traditions. They can only do so on the basis of their own experience. How could a person reconcile ends and means except on the basis of reason, which to a large extent is conditioned by experience?

Before I go into discussing this experience, I would like to make one statement. Personally I disagree wholeheartedly with the debate that was raging in the United States three years ago, the debate that centered around the theme: Should we or should we not divorce foreign policy from domestic politics? I say that the whole debate is irrelevant. I say the issue is not to divorce one from the other. One could give this analogy: Foreign policy being the father and domestic politics being the mother, divorcing them will ruin that nation; it will terminate

that institution. The best thing to hope for is to reconcile. It's like marriage also. I remember when my high school teacher used to tell me that marriage was a fifty-fifty proposition. After I got married I discovered it's not. Sometimes it's 90 to 10, sometimes it's 99 to 1, and sometimes it's 50-50, meaning again the great art of statesmanship internally is to reconcile between the two, rather than to permit one to superimpose upon the other.

After all, what is foreign policy? To me foreign policy stands for one thing, to maximize the value synthesis of that society. If foreign policy ceases to maximize the value synthesis of that society, then that foreign policy becomes ineffective and becomes without a purpose. What is its purpose, then, if it cannot maximize the values of the society which it represents?

With this in mind, going back to what was suggested, namely, that a people can only reconcile foreign and domestic policy on the basis of their experience, and applying this to the United States, what has been the experience of the United States? Looking at the United States, I think the United States has had a very unique experience. So unique has the American experience been in diplomatic history that many Americans, even today--as Professor George Kennan has suggested--misunderstand the logic of American history. I am not suggesting that I completely support his thesis, but suffice it to say here that the United States of America originally was born out of a balance-of-power situation. The United States of America was raised under extremely favorable international circumstances. The United States of America was not called upon in the early stages of the game to make any great positive commitments or great positive decisions.

The United States of America in the early stages of the Republic did produce great diplomats, great statesmen. This is all true. But what has happened? After achieving what the United States has achieved, many Americans became like spectators in a poker game. Since, on the basis of their experience, they did not have to participate in the interactions of foreign policy, then they developed the luxury of moralistic attitudes, as has been suggested by a number of social scientists in the United States. They developed sentimental attitudes about foreign policy, legalistic attitudes, scholastic attitudes. Then many debates were raised in the United States as to what ~~was~~ the American attitude. As long as that was merely theoretical, we were not worried about it. But then, in the 20th century, the United States enters the arena as a great power. Then the United States, upon entering the arena as a great power, takes these attitudes to the international scene, and then, seriously and sincerely, the United States tries to apply those attitudes. I am not suggesting that there is anything wrong with the attitudes or right with the attitudes. This has been the experience.

I think it ~~was~~ on the basis of this experience that another American official, about four years ago, in making a statement to the press, suggested: "Why on earth can't the Arabs and the Jews get together and settle their problems in a Christian spirit?" I think some of you might recall this. It was about 4 or 5 or 6 years ago, in 1956, when both Arabs and Israelis became extremely over-enthusiastic amateurs in the exercise of political differences. It has also been suggested on the basis of this experience--I am sure you have heard this--I read this in newspaper columns: Why did we give China to the Communists? Well,

China was never ours to give to the Communists. I am not saying that an argument should not be made there, but an argument should be made in the proper perspective. It was suggested in the Egyptian-Israeli-French-British War: Why don't we give Sinai to so-and-so and get it over with?

There has developed the impression that the President of the United States is the Caliph of the world, the Sultan of humanity. He is not. He is just the President of the United States. There has developed this exaggeration, this unboundlessness in the American attitude toward foreign policy. It is also reflected in domestic politics. As I ask my students always: Who needs a 25-foot car? Yet we have 25-foot cars, almost 25-foot cars. There is this notion of unboundlessness, that everything has an answer, that everything can be conquered. American girls like boys of 6'6" or 6'7". It is the idea of bigness, unboundlessness, the idea that things don't have limits, that, since by virtue of our history, we conquered the West, that, since by virtue of our history, my great grandfather, the Apache, was forced to more or less adjust himself to the situation, that, by virtue of a great stroke of luck, genius, and hard work-- I grant all of these things--and that since we were successful in achieving and in performing all of these achievements, there has developed the attitude of unboundlessness.

It might be hard for you to accept, but for me, as a nonnative American, as an American who comes from a completely different culture, I really can detect this unboundlessness and this exaggeration in the American character.

But not only this--there developed an attitude of an indecision of pragmatism among the Americans in the field of foreign policy. Americans have become undecided pragmatics in the sense that on the one hand they are dogmatic idealists, meaning they rely upon idealism, they consider idealism as something that is very significant, yet on the other hand, by virtue of the American experiment, they have also become pragmatics in the sense that success to an American is very important. Success to many Americans, or at least in the American national character, becomes a measure of truth. So there is this constant indecision of pragmatism or idealism--on the one hand to be dogmatic about one's ideals and yet on the other hand to make success a measure of truth. I have tried to coin a phrase in this respect. There are many ways of looking at it. I think one of the ways one could describe the American attitude is one of idealistic approaches to realistic concepts. I will discuss this in a moment. It is one of idealistic pragmatism. In many ways Americans are idealistic in their thinking but realistic in their actions.

This much for the American experiment, this much for the American experience and the American diplomatic legacy. Now let's come to the other aspect of the discussion, No. 3, the American look in foreign policy, the American style, the American prejudices. I would like to cite them. Here I have discovered that the discussions of Professor Armand Gabriel, Professor Lerch, and others who have written in the field of American diplomacy are most demonstrative of these preferences. Professor Gabriel describes these preferences as moods. I agree with him. I don't think Americans in general have anything more than moods in

foreign policy. It depends on the mood. Under certain moods, under certain circumstances, they develop certain moods. You ask the taxi driver, or you ask many other people. It really depends on the mood.

All of us loved Castro when he first came out. We clapped for him. Some people went and received him at the airport. Two or three months later we were against him. I am not suggesting that we should not be against him, but we overreact in these moods. There is always this tendency of overreacting to situations.

Let me try to comment on the American prejudices but, before we do, bear in mind one thing: Americans really don't have time for foreign policy. While I was in Morocco, a Moroccan asked me a good question. He said, "Your people are trying to lead the world. They are imperialists." I said, "You are wrong. The Americans are busily leading their complex lives and they are not doing a very good job even at that. They are not leading anybody. I think foreign policy to Americans occupies only a secondary position. It is not to be looked upon as the most important thing for many reasons. Above all, the average American exhausts his energies in trying to find ways and means of dealing with his tax situation, in trying to find ways and means of paying his bills, in trying to fight the traffic jams in the morning and trying to fight them back in the evening, in watching his favorite TV programs, and reading his favorite newspapers. He is busy. His energies are so much exhausted that he really doesn't have the time to be able to develop a consistent reaction to foreign policy."

I have tried on a number of occasions throughout my travels in the United States

to ask Americans about foreign policy. I will give you one example. I remember the case of Bizerte. You remember it, two years ago. I wrote an article about this last year, in 1961. When the war in Bizerte occurred, the American press was quiet. They didn't say anything about it. They didn't know how to react. Then two days later an official in the State Department made a statement, and like an orchestra the newspapers followed suit, with complete, disorganized metaphysics of misinformation. It was beautiful. It was so beautiful that I had one experience. One of my vices is the fact that I have written a book on Tunis. One reporter, whose name I will not mention, because this is not an address against him, in one of the Washington newspapers, wrote an article about the whole situation, and he referred to the treaty between France and Tunisia, and to the fact that this treaty/^{was} signed between France and Tunisia. He said that on the basis of this treaty France was right in doing what it did. So I felt like calling him. I said, "Being an ignorant person, I would like to inquire from you, which treaty are you referring to?" "Oh," he said, "the treaty." I said, "Which one-- 1955, 1956, 1957, or the revision of 1958?" He said, "The treaty." I said, "I want to know. I am a student. I have to write a paper." "Well," he said, "How do I know?" I said, "You wrote about it in the press." Then I introduced myself. I said, "People come and ask me what treaty. I think the treaty you referred to has been superseded by another treaty." Well, he didn't know about this. So he gave me the classic answer. He said, "Well, I have to meet a deadline." We will come to this in a moment. We think a deadline becomes an important thing.

Now let me single out the various moods. You will note that I am really

being critical. This is deliberate. I am getting away with it. As long as I can get away with it I'll be critical. One could classify various American prejudices in foreign policy. What I'll tell you now is not new. It is nothing original. Many people have referred to these things.

The first general mood is that of withdrawal vis-a-vis intervention. This is one of the American prejudices in foreign policies. How does it occur? It comes as follows, if you observe how the American public reacts. If the issues of national security are not vital or not considered to be vital, or do not threaten war, the average American will withdraw as far as commenting on foreign policy or national security is concerned. He will not express much opinion. He becomes indifferent. But then, when he is threatened, he goes to the other extreme. He wants to intervene. "Let's send the boys to do the job."

Like one of my friends when the situation in Jordan was deteriorating said, "Why don't we send the Marines?" This was a very responsible man. He said, "Why don't we send the Marines to intervene?" Before that the same person had withdrawn. He said, "Let's have nothing to do with it." These are two extreme reactions--in moments of stability to ^{completely} withdraw from foreign policy, and in moments of overactiveness to intervene, to send the Marines to do the job. This is not said in any disparaging tone of the Marines. I have great respect for the Marines. That is not the issue here. You see these two extremes of reaction. Why is it this way?

I think it is partly based on American history, partly based on the fact that the average American, as I suggested earlier, does not really have the time to

think in any other terms. So his reaction has to be oversized; it has to be unbound; it has to have no limits; it has to be an extreme reaction one way or the other.

Another prejudice of America is its oversimplification. This again derives itself from the same roots, the roots of American history. I will give you some examples. Many Americans have the notion that everything has a gimmick, everything has a key. I remember three years ago a gentleman came to my office at the university. He was a wealthy gentleman. He said, "The American University refused to admit my son." I said, "Yes, I am sorry to hear this." He said, "Doc, what's the gimmick?" I said, "What do you mean by 'gimmick'?" He said, "How does he get in?" So I told him, "Not everything has a gimmick. Some of us are stupid, so we don't have gimmicks." To him everything must have a gimmick. Everything must have a way.

This is again based on this conception of great automation in the society, and this is applied to American foreign policy, this oversimplification, the desire, the insistence that everything really has an answer. You see this in classrooms. You should teach a freshman class. One of the first things you face in a freshman class is that the students insist on having answers. So I tell them, "I will disappoint you. Your question, as far as I know, does not have an answer." "How come?" they ask. I say, "It doesn't have an answer. How come? I am not responsible. It doesn't have an answer."

So in the field of foreign policy there is this insistence that there are keys, there are master keys, that everything must have a master key. We have many

famous social scientists now who are consuming their energies in finding such master keys, finding ways of unlocking the mysteries. Since we have done it before we can also do it in foreign policy.

Another significant prejudice of Americans is one of pessimism and optimism. This is beautiful in the United States. There are these two extremes. Americans are either pessimistic or they are optimistic. There is no middle ground. You go to this school and you read the press. The press is optimistic. This is another Munich. It is not another Munich. Munich was away back in 1938. This is a completely different situation. Are our securities threatened? I am not suggesting that the security is not threatened. But this optimism-pessimism doesn't last. It begins sometimes with optimism and this is related to withdrawal-indifference. It begins usually with optimism, that everything has its solution and it is related to a previous point. Then it becomes pessimism, that there is no solution and the only solution is war. There is only the solution to win the cold war. I keep hearing the statement, "How do we win this cold war?"

A friend of mine who teaches in one of the Southern universities came up North and is with us at the university. I asked, "Why did you come?" He said, "Oh, I would like to get my doctorate. I would love to be in Washington." He said, "Furthermore I was looked upon as being pink." I said, "This is healthy. To be pink is really healthy. It is a sign of health." Such words as "pink" are non-descript political terms. I always tell myself, if one has the courage, rather than tell people you are pink, one should tell them exactly what you think. Tell them you are Marxist. Why tell them you are a pink when you are a Marxist.

Argue it out with him. If he is a Marxist then, fine and dandy, try to convert him. If you can't convert him, send him to some insane asylum, or something of the sort.

Then the other prejudice is tolerance-intolerance. This is beautiful. Americans are a very tolerant people, but you can't corner them. Once the average American feels he is cornered, he becomes intolerant. He becomes intolerant in such a form that he wants to finish it. Chiang Kai-chek, many people feel--some people feel, at least--it has been discovered later, dragged the Americans in a raw deal. Some people feel this way. The same people who feel this way assume that the moment the Americans discover that they had such a rotten deal they will really get out of it. I think Americans do this sometimes. When they discover they are at the bad part of the business they tend either to be intolerant or to rush out of the situation.

Another preference is idealism and cynicism. I will not comment on this. That was in the field of the first observations. It goes back to American idealism and pragmatism. Yet this is really damaging to the American image overseas. I found it almost impossible in my discussions with many people overseas to convince them of the merits of your foreign policy, almost impossible to fight back on the accusation that Americans are self-righteous, that Americans are hypocrites. I kept explaining to them American history and why Americans are not hypocrites.

Let's see why foreign people act the way they do. I think for many reasons. Professor Morgenthau did, I think, analyze one of the reasons. He said,

"Americans behave in political ways but want to impress upon people that they are behaving in the name of God and Christianity." They talk too much. This is what I say. Americans talk too much about foreign policy. They are under the impression that they have to overexplain every move to everybody. You know from private life when you talk too much. When you explain to your wife every move then you are in trouble. I have discovered this, this idea of having to explain. "Where have you been?" "I went to the movies." "Well, the movies are out at 11. Where did you go?" "I went to have coffee." "With whom did you have coffee?" "I saw my friend." "Male or female?" It's the same with foreign policy. The U-2 incident is a classic example. We tried to cloak the U-2 incident with some Christian moralistic ideas. Why talk about it? Some of you say, "But we have to be honest." We have to be honest about something dishonest? It doesn't make too much sense. Why be honest about something dishonest?

Then there is the Cuban situation. Be honest about something else. Often-times nations have to act in foreign policy. They don't have to overexplain things to everybody. They can present their views in the way they see fit.

Another thing concerns me very much as a person who has adopted this Nation as my home. I forgot to tell you--when I became a citizen one of the judges asked me, "How does it feel?" I said, "It feels bad." He said, "Why?" I was pulling his leg. I said, "Now I have lost all of my glamour and exoticness. I am Mr. Citizen. I pay taxes like everybody else. Before this one was exotic a little." Americans have a tendency to look upon foreigners as something good, something unique, something different. This is a point here--the superiority-inferiority complex of Americans in the field of foreign policy. Americans, by virtue of their

historical experience, have the right to feel superior. They have the right to be proud of their achievements. But yet, by virtue of the social developments of the United States, the Americans don't have a sense of location. Actually this is one of the many reasons I have this affection for my new homeland, because Americans are like my previous people, they are like nomads. They don't have a sense of location. They move too much. They change their social habitat. They change their physical habitat. By virtue of this constant move, Americans have not developed a sense of identification with anything in particular. This has given some Americans an undue sense of inferiority. They want to drive European cars. I drive one, too. They like European operas. They like to copy European fashions. They like to imitate the British. They speak with a British accent after staying in London for 2 or 3 days.

This is the idea of inferiority-superiority. On the one hand they feel they are superior. Yet on the other hand they have developed a tendency of feeling they are inferior.

Just let me conclude. I feel in general that one of the general weaknesses of the American public is lack of information. I do not believe the American public is well informed on issues of national security. It is not well informed on issues dealing with the United States. It is not well informed on the role of the military, one of the significant aspects, I think. Many Americans still believe that the military has no role in foreign policy because of the traditional attitude of Americans. Traditionally, as you very well know, Navy was the largest branch of the service. Why keep them out? Army was a very small outfit, because we did not

need an Army, it was suggested. Now, of course, the Air Force has outnumbered the other two branches. Traditionally the Army was looked upon as something to fight wars and that's about all. Hence, in many ways, now, when we speak of Armed Forces in the United States, the public doesn't know the functions that an Army, an Air Force, the Marines, a Navy would have in foreign policy. By virtue of the new dimensions of international policy the role of the Armed Forces has changed. It has become a more active participant.

Here I disagree with the statement that this is dangerous. It is not dangerous. Some people have suggested that we will have a military coup d'etat. I don't think we will have a military coup d'etat, but I think the people who suggest it are the same people who cannot see the significance in this change.

I think the other weakness in general is the impatience of Americans. This impatience of Americans reveals itself mainly in times of crisis. I would say another weakness is emotionalism. Oh, you think that Latinos are emotional. Sure, they are. But Americans are emotional, too. Many Americans are very emotional about foreign policy. They become very sentimentally committed about foreign policy.

Now, what are the strengths that could be developed? One of the greatest strengths that should be developed, because this accounts for the greatness of this Nation, is the debating of major issues. Here I have a message I want to make. I make it as a person who has lived under a dictatorship and who can tell the difference. We always say that in this Nation we have the right to express our opinions. We sure do. But we should distinguish between having the right

and making use of the right. Many Americans don't make use of the right. What's the use of having the right if man doesn't make use of it?

This is one of the areas of the relationship of the public to foreign policy that could definitely be developed. It is one of the major underdeveloped areas.

I think another source of strength of the American public is that Americans are generally altruistic people. They are generally an idealistic people. This is good. Personally I do not accept the cynical interpretation of the public because it is always profitable to start life with as large a reservoir of idealism as possible, because throughout life this reservoir of idealism is going to be gradually reduced and consumed. And it is good to begin with as big a reservoir as possible.

There are many other aspects of the strength of the American public. There is one thing I would like to mention, and I will conclude with this. We should not consider, as Walter Lippman suggested once, public opinion as the final arbiter of foreign policy as long as our public is not well informed. If we are to accept the public as the final arbiter of foreign policy and national security, then we should inform the public. If the public is not informed then the American leadership should not look upon it as the arbiter but should try to guide it, lead it, educate it, in the hope that it will become a good arbiter and not an emotional arbiter, not a sentimental arbiter, because then its judgment of this international environment is going to be one which is blurred and one that is out of focus.

Gentlemen, it was a great pleasure to be with you. I will very humbly submit myself to your questions.

Thank you very much.

DR. SANDERS: Dr. Said wants to make one statement and then will open the question period.

DR. SAID: Dr. Sanders asked me a question and I would like to comment on it for the benefit of the group. He raised a question as to whether the statements that were made regarding American prejudices are not universal, in the sense that they are not typically American but apply to many other nationalities.

I would say that in many ways I would agree with him. The only thing I would say here is that I think it is not really relevant whether they apply or do not apply, in my way of thinking, for one reason, the reason being that this is the leader of the free world, and a father should not only set a higher example but should have better taste than the others. Of course when I am overseas I tell the British and the French when they become overcritical, "You are not any better."

But then there is this question in my mind. My assistant in the university, when I give him some advice on something usually says, "Why should I do it? You don't do it." I say, "Take it from me, that's a good reason why you should do it, because I know."

QUESTION: Would you comment on the role of the President in informing the American public on these things?

DR. SAID: There has developed an argument that has gained some momentum among some students of international politics and political science that some Presidents in American history have tried to feel the pulse of the American public and react to it. To some extent I do agree with this statement. I have lived in the United States for 13 years on and off and I can remember of cases where an

American President gave a leak to the public to see how the public would react. Sometimes, not always, on the basis of that reaction he formulated some kind of a decision. But this is not true always. I think that throughout American history we also have had a chance for a President to assume more leadership. Personally I am in favor of more effective leadership on the part not only of the President but of the whole bureaucracy, as well as the legislature--not only the Executive Branch of the Government but the Legislative.

Some of you might ask another question, because it is related to the first question, on the problem of integration. This is my position on this: I think it is very regrettable--and I am not talking on the viewpoint of what foreigners would think of the United States--that whenever we have some dirty linen we throw them at the Supreme Court to wash them. I think that before throwing any linen on the Supreme Court we should try to assume greater national leadership and see if those things could be achieved through leadership first.

This is where foreign policy and domestic policy infringe on one another. There are areas where leadership could be exercised in guiding the public--not in dictating to the public--I would be opposed to this. Dictating to the public would deprive American foreign policy of its basic good, namely, of the availability of this forum.

QUESTION: Can you comment on the feasibility of educating the public, so that they could be informed?

DR. SAID: I have had some experience with this. I had a television program. Some of you might have watched CBS in 1959. It was early in the summer. The

program I was conducting then was on world politics. Then I have had the experience of meeting with many reporters, correspondents, and others. While I have a great deal of respect for many of the reporters I have met and many of the news commentators, I would say a goodly number of them are illiterate in the field of foreign policy.

This really worried me. It worried me a great deal. I started to think what could be done about this. I made one suggestion but many people don't think it is feasible. I think it is feasible. We expect in the United States our professionals to pass certain tests or to have certain qualifications. I had to pass tests and have qualifications to be what I am, and the same thing with you, for promotions. We have this in the medical field, in your field, and in almost all other professional fields. I think journalism, communications, should try to develop a tighter purpose of what it is doing, to develop more qualifications.

It is regrettable that our leading newspapers are full of errors, of mistakes, of hitting people with a cane on their heads, telling them how to think and what to think and why to think and the way to think, or just giving misinformation--not all of them. I am referring to some of the leading ones, including one that we have here in Washington.

Well, what do we do about this? Is it feasible? I think so. I think President Kennedy was very right in suggesting that the press should develop a greater sense of responsibility. But to say that is not enough. I think that should come from within and not from the Federal Government. They should develop some criteria, some qualifications, which would help, because, after all, we rely very much on the press,

the radio, and especially television.

QUESTION: Do you think it is possible for our bureaucracy to develop this leadership and still continue our political system?

DR. SAID: I was trying to think yesterday of leadership. I had to give a lecture on leadership in the emerging nations, on the kind of leadership they have. I then suggested that leadership could be effective only if it operates in terms of crystallized objectives and goals. This is a basic criterion. Unless the leadership can operate in terms of certain crystallized objectives and goals, national objectives and goals, it cannot be very effective.

Let's take the international scene. On the international scene--and it is not, of course, in question--many of these new nations have been deprived of leadership because both Americans and Soviets in the early stages of the game developed a conventional level of hysteria about international politics. They became hysterical, both of them. Gradually we tried in the United States to liberate ourselves from our hysteria. When I say "hysteria," please do not misunderstand me. I am not saying that it is hysterical to be opposed to communism. No, this is not at all the point. But it is hysterical in opposing communism to chop our own noses to spite our own faces. Let's oppose it constructively and realistically, the way we can hit it best, the way we can be most effective.

Now, on the national level I think what has happened again is this sometimes blurring of national goals and national objectives. Well, President Eisenhower, as you might recall, tried to make a study committee and to define what are the goals for Americans. I doubt if this could be defined through research. This has

to come out through collective leadership. In a way this is a circle. It can't be done one way. It has to be done many ways. I think we are in need of clarification of our goals as we transplant them internationally.

What are we trying to do? Are we trying to translate our beliefs outside and impress on people that this is the best thing they could do, or are we trying to convert our national philosophy into an international attitude? I think the latter is better. What I mean by the latter is this--not to impress on people that democracy is best for them but to impress upon them our own experience as we see it and to apply our own experience in our dealings with them.

Now, nationally I think that bureaucracy has been trying to do a marvelous job. I say this from my own observations in the United States. One of the things about bureaucracy is that Americans don't like bureaucracy. They suspect bureaucracy oftentimes, but I think it has tried, be it the State Department, be it the other Federal agencies. They have been trying.

I really don't have any qualms here. I think in the case of integration they have not tried as effectively to lead as they should. Personally I do not believe we could legislate effectively cultural change, because cultural change, once legislated, you might be forced to enforce it, as we have discovered. Cultural change should come through education, leadership, and, to accelerate it, effective leadership.

QUESTION: How successful do you think the American public could be in improving their attitudes in foreign affairs?

DR. SAID: Of course until about 4 or 5 years ago our public school system

did not pay more than little attention to foreign affairs. Then we became hysterical, after Sputnik. Then we went overboard, .On this we overreacted, as usual. What did we do in going overboard? We started emphasizing the science curriculum. Now we go to universities and we have all kinds of scholarships to make mathematicians, engineers, doctors. That's good. I have nothing against it. But the cause of liberal education in many areas in the United States has been defeated. If not defeated, liberal education has been restricted. A goodly number of our schools are becoming trade schools or professional schools. Why? Because many of our great Americans go to the Soviet Union and they come back impressed with Soviet education. I will submit that the Soviet Union doesn't have education. What they are trying to create is professionals. But education in its literal implication doesn't exist in the Soviet Union.

I wouldn't have any inferiority complex about how good their education is and how bad our education is, or how good theirs is as compared to our education.

However, recently we have been teaching more courses on foreign policy. I think in 1959 or 1960 particularly the response to the challenge has been more adequate, but not completely adequate. It might take, I would say, maybe 5 to 10 years.

QUESTION: Sir, you have cited a series of shortcomings in public understanding of foreign policy. Could you relate this directly to specific task failures in the execution of American foreign policy?

DR. SAID: Of course we can do this only on the national level in the formal sense of the word, taking examples of United States foreign policy. I think the

Cuban situation is one. When I say "the Cuban situation," there I bear in mind the following: Any foreign policy move incorporates two ingredients--decision and action. In any foreign policy move we have to reconcile the desirability of the possible with the possibility of the desirable. Many Americans don't accept this. Hence, the most that we can expect is to have our decision as close to the parameter of desirability as possible. Whenever we do not wish to do this, then we suffer from inaction in our foreign policy--any nation will suffer from this--or indecision.

I think in the case of Cuba there was no such sharpening of the focus on what ought to be done. I think it was a spontaneous reaction. I am not passing judgment on whether it should be done or should not be done, but if it were done the way it was done, then it should be done the proper way. Otherwise it shouldn't be done. I think there there was a great deal of prejudice and preference as to the line of possibility and preferability.

I think another example which we have not been willing to accept applies to the Middle East. I draw on this because I have had experience with this. This was the Eisenhower Doctrine. The Eisenhower Doctrine was a mythological doctrine. It was a myth. It was a myth because it was based on an unrealistic appraisal of the situation in the Middle East--the myth being, namely, this--that the source of the danger to the Middle East was the Soviet Union. If we could give them enough money and if we could give them some kind of a pact--you remember the Baghdad Pact--it was the solution. You remember that the Baghdad Pact did not work. When we discovered that the Baghdad Pact didn't work, we sent

million

Mr. Richards with \$2.2/in his pockets. It was suggested in the papers that Mr. Richards was sent on a fact-finding mission. I then suggested that he was on a pact-finding mission. He was trying to locate the Baghdad Pact and see what had happened to it. Well he came back. He couldn't find it. So there is no Baghdad Pact.

So the President reacted. This Eisenhower Doctrine came, and we discovered later, after the Eisenhower Doctrine, that really it didn't help the situation, because the problem is internal. I am not suggesting that there is no Soviet pressure. There is Soviet pressure. But the Soviet pressure has been taken care of through unilateral agreements--not completely taken care of. The other pressure is the Arab-Israeli conflict--domestic relations, inter-Arab relations, and relations within the region. The Eisenhower Doctrine does not take care of this.

This in my mind would be another example. Of course the other/^{classical}example is the case of Laos, this overreaction to the Laos situation based on information not always very valid.

QUESTION: Doctor, will you comment on the American versus the Russian public image, please?

DR. SAID: Of course, in replying to the question, sir, I can only be general and I must confine my comments to the area I know best, namely, Central and North Africa and the eastern parts of the Mediterranean, meaning the Middle East.

The Soviet Union has not made any great ideological impact upon that medium. The image of the Soviet Union is as follows: They feel that the Soviet Union is a

great power, that its achievements are great, and that its achievements are very relevant to their own progress. In the early days they felt that the Soviet Union had no ulterior motives, but beginning, I think, in 1960, the image has changed and they recognize the ulterior motives of the Soviet Union more so than ever before.

As far as good will is concerned, I would say in general it is considered to be expedient to deal with the Soviets in those regions. Those people there do not have the same reactions as Americans do toward communism. They don't take it as seriously as an American would. To them it doesn't have the same damnation. They take it really with a bucket of salt. This is one of the areas of misunderstanding.

As far as Americans are concerned, there is good will towards Americans, in spite of all the criticisms they make of Americans. They tell you that these are decent people--maybe the decency is part naivety, or something of this sort. But, of course, in this particular region they have other political grievances against the United States. We can't discuss them, because they are of a specific nature. I was referring to the Arab-Israeli question. It wouldn't be fair to discuss it because that's a different story. In their grievances they feel that the United States supports colonialism, supports France, Britain, in the foreign policies of the region.

There is good will towards the United States, but there is a great deal of misunderstanding. They really don't know what the United States is. This is shocking to any person who goes there. I did have to explain to them so many things that are

elementary about the United States. For example, one of the things they would ask me, and these are educated people, was, "You teach in the university?" I would say, "Yes." They would say, "The university tells you what books to use?" I would say, "No I use my own books. They don't force me to use their books. I use the books I want to use." They know very little about social life. What they know is mainly derived from either distorted Soviet propaganda, which they believe in many instances, or American films which they want to believe, about cowboys, and things of that sort. There is a general tendency to think that Americans are oversexed, overfed, indifferent, big talkers, and things of this sort. But there is the feeling that you can trust them. I think this applies to their reactions to Americans.

But there is this lack of information. USIA is trying to do a good job in many of these areas. But again there is a problem here, and it goes back to the American character. I was with one USIA officer. He said, "Today we had a film and 500 people came." He was proud. I said, "So, what was the film about?" It was some Marilyn Monroe film. I said, "What good did you do the American national interest? What was the film you had yesterday?" He said, "It was about American technology." I asked, "How many came?" He said, "Fifteen." I said, "To me that 15 is better than the 500." He has a quantitative way of analyzing it.

There are other reasons. The Soviets emphasize external manifestations. I slept in the same hotel with many Soviet officials and Communist Chinese in Tunisia and Morocco, and there too, you would be surprised how little Soviets know about the Americans and how misinformed they are. For example, this

Soviet guy was asking me about the teaching profession. He was a full professor. When I explained to him about the things we do he wouldn't believe me. He thought that I was an agent trying to sell American propoganda. This is, I think, one of the main problems.

QUESTION: In pursuit of the line of questioning that Dr. Sanders started, in our moods of pessimism and inferiority when we tend to look upon some of the older, possible European, nations as being superior intellectually, in that they have a ruling class and an intellectual elite, you might say, is it not possible that, by virtue of our political system, we are able to export our ignorance or advertise our areas of ignorance a little more, but that we really have as large a proportion of intellectual and well informed people as these other nations do?

DR. SAID: I definitely agree with your premise that we have much, if not more. Personally, I am of the belief, and I have attended French and British schools before American schools, that it is a myth to assume that French and British education totally is better than American education. This is based on my own experience. Above all here we teach students to think, which is extremely important, and we teach them also research. I think we respond to the needs of the prevailing times, to my mind, more so than the French or British education.

Yet I think, on the other hand--and your question was that maybe it was through our political system that we parade our ignorance or inferiority--I have never thought of it this way, but I would say that you have a good point there. That could be discussed. It could be further elaborated upon. But what concerns me is the fact that I, as a person, see this phenomenon--the American stereotype

overseas. I think one of the reasons the American has developed a stereotype is that when he is confronted with foreign culture and foreign environment he tries to cling to his isolation by behaving in a unique way. Whether he does it because of his historic development, I don't know.

One thing I think I would accept is that man is at his best and man is at his worst in the United States. Man is at his best because man is at his freest in the United States, and man is at his worst at his freest. But I think this is the great magic of the American tradition, the magic that man here is really at his freest. We have to accept what the consequences of this freedom are, regardless of what they are.

DR. SANDERS: Dr. Said, thank you very much for a thought-provoking and stimulating lecture.

DR. SAID: Thank you.