

bers elected to Congress in the 1970s tend to devote more attention to serving their constituents, both through congressional services and largely political trips home." Trips home are both expensive and time-consuming. On the average, congressmen go home to their districts 35 weekends a year; in 1978 House members spent \$3.1 million in public funds for such trips.

Many congressmen, then, are responsive, but are they acting as national legislators when they spend so much time soliciting the views of their constituents? "Your representative," Burke said, "owes you, not his industry only, but his judgment; and he betrays, instead of serving you, if he sacrifices it to your opinion." By acting responsively legislators demean the function of representation, implying that a congressman is chiefly a messenger or an ombudsman. By acting responsively, moreover, legislators rarely leave themselves enough time to think about the issues they are grappling with. Finally, by acting responsively they tend to ingratiate themselves with their constituents at the ex-

pense of the country's political institutions.

John Gardner has said that a citizen's movement "should want the freely elected representatives of the people to represent them wisely and well," but Common Cause's idea of republican government reduces legislators to men who are rigid when they should be flexible and servile when they should be proud, legislators who lack the courage to say that they will vote on matters not by taking opinion polls of their constituents but as they see fit, beholden only to their judgment and conscience.

"Our Founding Fathers," Gardner has also said, "presumed continuing vigilance on the part of citizens." They presumed no such thing. They were, in fact, worried about the extreme suspicions many American patriots harbored for all but the most local of governments. Such vigilance, the Founders thought, would make deliberation impossible, for men would be accused of betraying the public trust if they changed their views on any matter. What the Founding Fathers wanted was a new kind of patriotism, a patriotism that ab-

jured motive-hunting, a patriotism that recognized the need for accommodating the views of the numerous special interests that would inevitably arise in an extended republic, a patriotism that acknowledged the importance of an elite corps of national legislators whose "enlightened views and virtuous sentiments" would render them "superior...to schemes of injustice." Whatever we think of the particular changes Common Cause has advocated, its general rhetoric and its specific understanding of representation recall the patriotism that Publius most feared, the patriotism proclaimed by "men of little faith" in representative government—men, as Publius says in *Federalist* 57, "who profess the most flaming zeal for republican government, yet boldly impeach the fundamental principle of it; who pretend to be champions for the right and the capacity of the people to choose their own rulers, yet maintain that they will prefer those only who will immediately and infallibly betray the trust committed to them." □

Douglas J. Feith

RADICAL SHEIKS

What stake have we in wooing "moderate" oil regimes that exploit us economically and politically?

President Carter has assured the country that he will defend the "vital interests" of the United States in the Persian Gulf region "by any means necessary, including military force." Chief among these "vital interests" is our access to affordable Persian Gulf oil. After all, lack of access, unlikely as this prospect may be, could cause economic dislocations with calamitous consequences. For at least the short run (that is, the period in which economic cataclysms occur, governments are overthrown, wars are fought), Persian Gulf oil will remain a vital interest of the United States. Since the violation of Afghanistan, the Carter administration talks as if it grasps the Soviet threat to this interest and will arrange to defy it. But it still shows no defiance toward the region's oil sheiks, though they continually threaten the same interest.

Fear and favor, as it were, govern U.S. policy in the Persian Gulf. Among U.S. policymakers, the ascendant school

Douglas J. Feith is General Counsel to the Center for International Security.

preaches that the United States must pacify, not confront, the oil states. Can such preaching be squared with President Carter's new line on Soviet expansionism and the U.S. interest in oil from the Persian Gulf? Catering to the region's oil-producing countries, it turns out, not only fosters their ability to threaten U.S. interests effectively, but hampers our efforts to secure these interests from the Soviets.

Days after proclaiming his commitment to use force to defend U.S. interests in the Middle East, President Carter told a press gathering that the United States will not be able to defend these interests after all without the consent of the local oil states. Explaining this conclusion, the President said, "I don't think it would be accurate for me to claim that at this time, or in the future, we expect to have enough military strength and enough military presence there to defend the region unilaterally."

In a similar vein, on the same day Senate Democratic Leader Robert Byrd suggested that the Soviets' move into Afghanistan

calls for even more determined U.S. efforts to please the oil-producing countries. Setting an example, Byrd urged Israel to mollify the Arabs with concessions on the West Bank. The strategic complexities of the West Bank issue—for instance, how concessions by Jerusalem would affect Israeli security, or how weakening Israel's military posture would damage America's military position in the region—shrink to trifles, in Byrd's view, when contrasted with America's overriding goal: persuading the oil states to allow us to defend U.S. vital interests. "As long as there is this West Bank autonomy problem," Byrd stated, "our ability to cooperate with Arab countries in meeting the common danger of possible Soviet expansionism is hampered."*

Statements like these reflect the deference U.S. officials pay the oil states, a deference encouraged, naturally, by the oil states themselves. The Saudis in particular are skillful at presenting their case, play-

* This sentiment is of a piece with the administration's decision in January to pressure Jerusalem more vigorously for even greater Israeli

ing on themes of love and dread, marshaling arguments that lead insistently to the conclusion that Americans should fear Saudi displeasure, actively seek Saudi favor, and conscientiously avert confrontations with Riyadh. The most potent of the arguments are those that aim to intimidate, as when Saudi Prince Fahd warns: "We are not compelled to be friends with the Americans. There are many doors wide open to us, be it on the military, technological or economic level. There are many states like the United States which are ready to furnish the kingdom with everything it wants. We can easily replace the Americans."†

Since thoughtful practitioners of intimidation appreciate the usefulness of arranging for their victims to save face, the Saudis offer affirmative reasons why the United States should strive to satisfy their desires. Again, Prince Fahd: "We are not only friends of the U.S. President and the U.S. administration but also regard ourselves as friends of the American people and the American press too. The Saudi Arabian Kingdom's relationship with the U.S. people is a special one and deserves to be respected and safeguarded."

Western press reports and the "scholarly literature" frequently follow Fahd's lead and portray the Saudis as America's blessing in burnoose. There is hardly a reference to Saudi Arabia in print nowadays

"risks for peace." In the words of the *Washington Post* (January 17, 1980): "The Carter Administration unmistakably signaled Israel of its intention to push harder and faster for progress in the West Bank and Gaza Strip autonomy negotiations, in the apparent belief that a breakthrough would make it easier for both the United States and Israel to play a more assertive role in stabilizing the region."

† *Al-Hawadith*, January 11, 1980.

that does not characterize it as either "moderate" or "prowestern." This is illustrated clearly in a study by Dale R. Tahtinen entitled *National Security Challenges to Saudi Arabia*.‡ Tahtinen describes the Saudis as "moderate," "friendly," "stable," "prowestern," and, specifically, "pro-American." (He likewise labels the other Persian Gulf oil states "basically prowestern.") "There would probably be little disagreement," Tahtinen writes, "that a friendly and cooperative Saudi Arabia is crucial to the United States and the remainder of the western world." Although this is accurate only insofar as the lack of general disagreement is concerned, Tahtinen advocates solicitude toward the Saudis: "Given the importance of maintaining a friendly regime in Saudi Arabia, it is essential to consider what the United States should do to support Riyadh's goals, as well as the options the Saudis might exercise in the absence of adequate American cooperation."

With all the talk of the oil states' anti-Soviet inclinations, their "moderate" oil policies, and the critical importance of keeping them "cooperative," it has become common to view the security and friendship of the sheiks' regimes as a fundamental national interest of the United States. But that is not our fundamental interest. Washington has taken its eye off the ball.

Our interest in the Persian Gulf region is oil (that is, access to an affordable supply thereof). The United States has no interest in the stability or the well-being of the Persian Gulf autocracies as such. Indeed, we should promote their stability and well-being only if by doing so we advance America's primary interests. When such an interest—for example, defending the oil

‡ American Enterprise Institute, 1978.

fields against the Soviets—conflicts with the desires of the oil-producing regimes, we should recognize which U.S. goal is primary and act accordingly. This is not, however, the Carter administration's approach as it attempts, in the aftermath of the takeover of the U.S. Embassy in Teheran and the Red Army's coup in Kabul, to arrange for U.S. military bases in the Persian Gulf region.

There is much to recommend the establishment of such bases. Proximity to the Gulf affords the Soviets, especially since Afghanistan, an invaluable military advantage, the usefulness of which is increased by America's inadequate "lift" capability. Regional bases would help offset that advantage. Furthermore, by improving America's conventional military position, such bases would decrease the risk of nuclear war by minimizing our reliance on nuclear force to deter a Soviet attack.

Nonetheless, the oil states in the Persian Gulf have emphatically condemned the idea. "The defense of the Gulf is the concern of its peoples and they reject any interference in their affairs," Kuwait's minister of state for foreign affairs told a Kuwaiti newspaper. Abu Dhabi's newspaper, *Al Wahda*, attacked Washington's plans and urged Arabs to "confront any attempt to establish the kind of military presence in the area which will only shake the independence of our nations and threaten the stability and security of the area." The Saudis, in the words of the *New York Times*, "have been outspoken in insisting that they will not permit the United States to build new bases or military installations on their soil." Saudi Prince Fahd stated, "The major powers have their own interests.... When ties exist between a major power whose population is 200 million and a small power whose population is no more than one million, the possibility of the latter being overrun by force of arms, as has happened in Afghanistan, becomes a possibility that must be taken into consideration."

The Carter administration has decided to respect these sensibilities by abandoning plans for a broadly based U.S. military presence in the Gulf region. No attempts appear to have been made to pressure the oil sheiks on this matter. From among the Gulf states, only Oman, not an OPEC power, remains a candidate for U.S. military facilities. Kenya, over 1,700 miles from the Gulf, is likely to lend us a hand, as are Somalia and Egypt, both renowned for their flip-flops in and out of the Soviet camp. Israel, a militarily potent democracy, unwaveringly pro-American, has offered to assist but has been rebuffed. As the *New York Times* reported: "Administration officials said the United States would use bases there only as a last resort because it would antagonize the Arab world. Said one official: 'The obvious is obvious.'"



Administration officials explain the oil states' antagonism in various ways, among them, the "current controversy over the Saudis' Westernization program" (*New York Times*), the fear that U.S. bases "would isolate pro-Western governments and draw fire from radical Arab countries" (*New York Times*), the concern, regarding a possible U.S. base in Saudi Arabia, that "such a highly visible American presence would provoke Arab protests and hazard the existing Saudi government" (*Washington Post*), and the Saudis' belief that "as long as there is little progress toward solution of the Palestinian question, an intimate and open association with the United States can be seen as anti-Arab and thus dangerous" (*Washington Post*). At times, administration officials have made themselves look ludicrous trying to defuse resentment against the Saudis with suggestions like the following, which appeared in the *Washington Post*: "Saudi Arabia is now favorably disposed to U.S. facilities in the region *although it is not going to advertise the idea and may even criticize it occasionally*" (my italics).

The administration fails to realize that the oil-producing states are not about to be enticed into accepting U.S. bases, although they could conceivably be pressured to do so. The oil states view U.S. military strength in the region as a danger to them; they make no attempt to conceal this. Their bargaining power derives ultimately from the threat (albeit, to those who understand the economics of the matter, not a very credible threat) to do violence to the U.S. economy by cutting off oil.** A U.S. military presence on the ground in their countries would undermine whatever credibility this threat has and would, thereby, reduce their bargaining power.

The oil states are anti-Soviet, but this does not make them pro-Western. They do rely on U.S. military power to hold the Soviets at bay, but they are content to keep their region more vulnerable to the Soviets than it has to be so long as this (1) allows them to maintain the credibility of their oil threats against their customers, and (2) keeps us from enhancing our bargaining power with them through the stationing of U.S. troops. Sometimes your enemy's enemy is *not* your friend.

** Our fear of the Saudis' reducing oil production, raising oil prices, altering petro-dollar disposition policies, or perhaps even cutting off the flow of oil to America altogether is justified only if one assumes that Riyadh, at relatively small cost to itself, could do substantial harm to the United States. This assumption, in turn, requires one to assume that the Saudis are now doing the United States favors, but they are not. The Saudis produce and price oil strictly in accordance with the principles of profit maximization and are in no position to deviate significantly from these principles without doing themselves grave economic harm, and perhaps undoing themselves politically to boot. The notorious oil weapon is properly perceived as a bar of soap carved to resemble a gun.

The conflict between the United States and the oil sheiks over U.S. military facilities cannot be resolved without one side or the other losing something of fundamental importance. No external affairs, such as the negotiations on the West Bank, can realistically be expected to influence the oil regimes' commitment to keeping U.S. troops at a distance. So long as Washington does not threaten interests of these regimes as valuable to them as the interest that would be undermined by Washington's defense plans, cooperation will remain out of the question, and the oil fields of the Persian Gulf will remain excessively vulnerable to the Soviets.

The Carter administration acts as if it is without power to deal forcefully, let alone forcibly, with the oil states. There is no reason, however, why they cannot be made to fear American displeasure at least as much as America now fears their displeasure. The oil states know that the United States is militarily stronger than they. They appreciate that their regimes face dangers from the Soviets, domestic subversives, and aggressive neighbors. They understand that U.S. policy, which favors the survival of their regimes and stability in the region, represents insurance against those dangers. And they recognize that playing the "Soviet card" in earnest would expose their feudal regimes to more peril than it would mitigate. Were Washington less categorical about the desirability of preserving their regimes, it would be they, not we, who strain to be accommodating, and they, not we, who shudder at the prospect of deteriorating relations between them and us.

There is no need for the United States to threaten military invasion or even to threaten to facilitate the toppling of these regimes by others. What is needed is for Washington to hint—for example, through an Assistant Secretary of State at a Senate hearing—that under certain circumstances the United States may become indifferent to the fate of the sheiks' regimes. Specifically, the administration might suggest what thus far has seemed unthinkable: that securing the oil fields from the Soviets is more important than the full contentment of the local regimes. Though U.S. officials might disfavor the idea, it would not exactly be the end of the world if these regimes changed hands. After all, the "radical" oil states, such as Iraq and Libya, sell us oil just as the "moderates" do, and the "moderates" charge the same prices as the "radicals." In fact, it was the leading "moderate," Saudi Arabia, that devised the notorious retroactive price hike. What really is our stake in wooing "moderate" oil regimes that, on the economic front, treat us just as the "radicals" do, and on the political front, exploit their reputations for moderation to extract costly diplomatic and strategic concessions from us?

A "tough" policy of this sort cannot possibly succeed, however, if the administration's broad strategies remain defensive and "untough." It would be fruitless to face down the oil states were we not willing, for example, to make good the promise to bar, "by any means necessary," Soviet encroachments into the U.S. sphere of influence in the Gulf region. But if we are not willing to make good on that promise, we are forfeiting our interests in advance. □



Anne Crutcher

AFTER EASTERN LIVES

Soviet dissidents in the capitalists' paradise.

It seems a long time ago that Boris Pasternak's dubious masterpiece, *Dr. Zhivago*, was all most Americans knew about an indigenous Soviet literature differing from the official view of life in the Soviet Union. These days, the word "dissident" is in every decently sophisticated vocabulary and the reading list is already long enough to keep a generation of Ph.D. candidates busy.

Dissident writing is understandably popular with hawks who find it useful for beefing up the case against SALT II. And Solzhenitsyn for one gives hero-worshipping natures an icon in a period conspicuously short on noble qualities. But it is easy to see the wider attraction of dissident writing as well. Is it not reminiscent of the kind of thing that came out of Hitler Europe on the Holocaust and the other Nazi horrors? Certainly Auschwitz and the Gulag camps offer the same opportunities for observing the human spirit put to supreme tests. And certainly the art fashioned from this awesome experience is as wonderful and terrible as ever.

There are differences this time around though. There was, during and immediately after the Hitler period, a surprisingly broad international consensus about how fascism had come into being and what the remedies and preventives were. Even those who were skeptical about all-out socialism were inclined to make many concessions to the idea that fascism represented a kind of demented capitalism, to be obviated by hefty doses of liberalism, chiefly in the form of decolonization, elections, and new state controls over economic life. With regard to the Soviet regime, however, there is much less conviction, about the remedy or even about the diagnosis. Thus, although the dissidents do not doubt that there is something hideously wrong in their native country, they are by no means in agreement about what it is, and they are even less able to say what to do about it.

It is both their strength and their weak-

ness that they have been so cut off from the rest of the world. On the one hand, being untouched by the sophistries of Western political thought, they bring a special purity to their judgments of what they see around them. On the other hand, their ignorance of what has gone on in Western intellectual circles forces them to reinvent a certain number of wheels.

It also puts limits on their imaginative reach. As Georgie Anne Geyer pointed out in her extraordinarily perceptive and sadly neglected book, *The Young Russians*, many, if not most, Soviet dissidents, no matter how clear they are about the evils of socialism, cannot imagine a non-socialist society. Beyond getting rid of what they have, their objectives are vague.

Thus we have Roy Medvedev, who so brilliantly dissected the Stalin regime in *Let History Judge*. Medvedev is still in Moscow, trying one tactic after another to arrive at "socialism with a human face." Toward this end, he has worked with samizdat, the individually typed, personally distributed underground publications by which dissidents communicate in the Soviet Union, and has attempted, so far without success, to start above-ground

publications with some truthfulness in their contents.

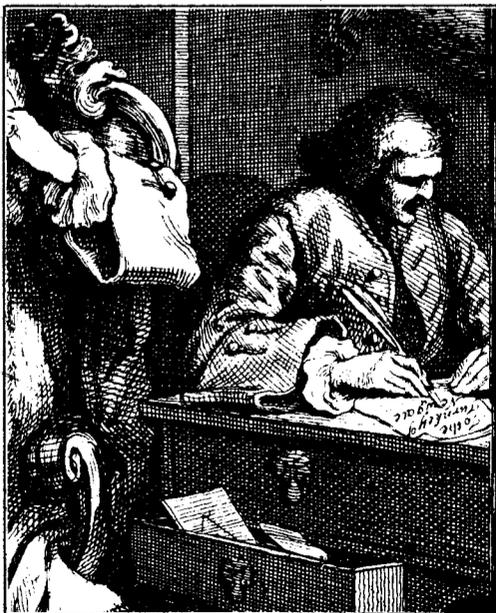
In *Let History Judge*, Medvedev described what he called the "enabling circumstances in the Soviet social structure" that permitted Stalin's reign of terror to occur. He is unwilling to call it cause and effect. The farthest he will go is to say that "socialism does not generate lawlessness as its enemies say, but it is no guarantee against lawlessness and the abuse of power."

Many dissidents, like Medvedev, are unwilling to blame the theory of the system for the way the system has turned out, but they differ over where to assign the blame. Excepting the outright apologists who, like the American enthusiast Anna Louise Strong, are willing to believe that Stalinism happened because Nazis penetrated the GPU, they offer a range of explanations: revolution betrayed, Stalin's private psychopathology, tradition of Asiatic despotism, price of rapid industrialization under conditions of external threat—pick one.

At the other end of the spectrum is Alexander Solzhenitsyn, who regards Marxism as intellectually contemptible as well as horrendous in practice and who feels that the only alternative is a Christian state. Many of the most intellectually gifted and personally impressive figures in the Soviet dissident movement are, if not with him all the way in his faith, at least convinced that socialism is an active evil and the key to the Gulag syndrome.

Vladimir Maximov, a novelist of Tolstoyan sweep, who is currently editor of *Kontinent*, the Paris-based magazine specializing in dissident writing for clandestine distribution in the Soviet Union and some circulation elsewhere, is one. He is a devout Christian who goes all the way in rejecting Marxism with his rejection of Stalin. Vladimir Bukovsky, who came to the West three years ago, exchanged for a Chilean Communist, is less explicitly religious but equally convinced that Lenin and socialist theory are as much to blame as Stalin for what has gone wrong in the USSR.

The disenchanting who do not go from



Anne Crutcher is an editorial writer for the Washington Star.