

TURDAY, DECEMBER 18, 1971

Letters to the Editor

American Policy Toward India

To the Editor:

America's admirable economic assistance programs in India have been undermined by our military alliance with Pakistan and encouragement of a costly and now tragic arms race. This readiness to arm one side, against the advice of a series of unusually able Ambassadors to India, makes one wonder about our critical capacity in foreign policy.

How could Washington officials have deluded themselves for two decades with the notion that arms to Pakistan were a protection against Communism—Chinese or Soviet? Only our mesmerization by Communism can explain this blindness to what has been plain to most students of the subcontinent—that Pakistan's interest in arms has been vis-à-vis India. The final irony is that now we and China are giving aid and comfort to Pakistan while the Russians support the second largest power in Asia and the largest democracy in the world.

Even our self-interest narrowly conceived would suggest support for India. But we consistently underestimate the aspirations and political forces of Asians—witness all the mistaken judgments that led us into and kept us in Vietnam.

In view of twenty years of such miscalculation the least we can do now is to avoid statements of self-righteous condemnation. The worst thing we can do is a show of force in

the Bay of Bengal. Perhaps the best we can do is to try to understand our failures.

CLARE WOFFORD
Bryn Mawr, Pa., Dec. 8, 1971

To the Editor:

Most Americans felt a revulsion toward the genocide committed in Pakistan. Many of us also felt a profound admiration for India and felt a personal gratitude for the treatment accorded to the Pakistani refugees.

It is most painful that our President, who is supposed to represent us, gives an official expression to his personal admiration for Yahya Khan. It is painful enough to be made, as taxpayers, accomplices of the war crimes of our army. Is it necessary to beg for partnership in the crimes of others?

ALBERT SZENT-GYORGYI, M.D.
Woods Hole, Mass., Dec. 14, 1971

To the Editor:

Several years ago India stole Goa from Portugal in unprovoked aggression. The United States Government did not condemn this aggression although Goa was Portuguese even before India belonged to Britain.

If we do not like India's continued aggression in South Asia, let it not be said we did not encourage it.

H. F. ROMMEL
Newport, R. I., Dec. 7, 1971