

Editorial

Patriot and world citizen

Tune into any discussion of the U.S. presidential elections this year, and you are likely to hear homage from every participant to something like the following: After all these years of the Cold War, it's time we spent our money and paid attention to the problems here at home. In concrete terms, this appeal usually leads to calls for cuts in "foreign aid," the military budget, and the space program.

Nor is this point of view simply expressed by the "middle class." You will find it just as frequently in poor communities.

Granted, we do have to deal with our problems here at home. But the reason we have not done so is not a consequence of some massive foreign aid budget, or the space research program. And the change required in our policy approach toward the U.S. domestic economy, is precisely what is required to rebuild a peaceful and prosperous world community of nations.

The United States has not been impoverished by a lavish commitment to either foreign aid, or defense alliances. And the media that tells you it has, are simply lying. The only area where a meaningful case for overflowing largesse could be made is in the case of Israel.

In general, what is labeled foreign aid is an advance to a foreign nation, tied to the necessity that that nation purchase a certain kind of equipment, or intangible "assistance," from a U.S. corporation. Built into that agreement are inevitably massive fees for middle-men, and other arrangements which lead to a lot of money being made by bankers, if no one else.

In cases such as food aid, the profits are made by the grain cartels, who get special prices from the U.S. government for providing food to poor countries, while impoverishing U.S. farmers by paying prices below parity.

An overview of international financial relations, in fact, shows that the rest of the world, and primarily the poor sections of the world, are massively subsidizing the United States and other industrialized nations.

In other words, they are paying more debt service and principal that they are receiving in monetary aid. And, if the inequities in currency valuations and com-

modity pricing were taken into account, the subsidy of the so-called North would be even greater.

As to the defense question always raised by Ross Perot, it is a blatant fraud. U.S. military bases in Japan and western Europe have been run, and continue to be run, in the strategic and economic interest of the United States—not for those countries. And, over the past few years the U.S. government has actually insisted on remaining in Germany at a level which the Europeans don't want.

An additional hobbyhorse for these "America First" types recently has been the space program. They obviously don't realize that it was the "wasteful" space program that gave us the last substantial boost in productivity which this country's industrial base got, during the Apollo program, returning eightfold to the economy every dollar that was spent by NASA.

The debacle of the U.S. economy, and any other, will not be reversed by a policy of beggaring our neighbors. As a result of monetarist policies which have dominated the world monetary system over the past 35 years, world resources have been looted and depleted so that at present there is not enough to go around. We are going to have to adopt a new system which embarks us on creating new wealth, in this country and everywhere else.

As soon as the U.S. nationalizes the Federal Reserve Bank, for example, it will delink from the International Monetary Fund. That will create the basis for new nation-to-nation arrangements based on long-term, low-interest investments in the necessary infrastructure for long-term progress. That will provide necessary jobs and material goods for both the U.S. and other nations. (The kind of project we mean is typified especially by the "Paris-Berlin-Vienna Productive Triangle" discussed in our cover *Feature*.)

Once you understand the fact that the physical economies of all nations either decline, or prosper together, there is no difficulty in breaking free of a chauvinist "America First" view. A intelligent, moral person is a patriot, and a world citizen.