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## Research on Enemy Images: Present Status and Future Prospects

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*This paper comments on the approach and findings of the preceding papers on the psychology of enemy images, and presents numerous suggestions about needed and feasible research. The research cited mostly used the approaches of attitude measurement and of social-cognitive theories, including attribution and social identity theories, and it employed various research methods, including survey, quasiexperimental, and experimental methods. The main empirical focus of these studies was recent U.S. attitudes toward the USSR, which were found to bias the attitude holders' information processing, mostly in predicted ways. Nevertheless, available evidence suggests that most of the American public do not have extremely stereotyped, diabolical enemy images of the Soviet Union, its people, or its leaders, and furthermore, that U.S. attitudes toward the USSR are softening rapidly under the impact of events of the last few years. Determinants of anti-Soviet attitudes are discussed, and hypotheses and speculations are presented about the motivations and sources of enemy images generally, how they may be changed, and their larger implications from the standpoint of cognitive and ego-developmental theory.*

What can be said about the current state of knowledge and theory concerning images of the enemy, with particular reference to U.S. opinions about the Soviet Union? In this concluding article, we try to pull together the diverse threads of this issue's research contributions and point out the main gaps in our present knowledge of the topic, which has turned out to be a complicated one.

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(Studies cited below without the inclusion of a publication date are papers in this issue.)

### Conceptual Approaches

The studies included here use the two conceptual approaches—attitude measurement and social cognition/information processing—that have recently been the most popular among social psychologists investigating beliefs and opinions. Yatsani and Bramel, Holt, Irost et al., and Koopman et al. (all in this issue) measured attitudes concerning the Soviet Union and international relations. Silverstein and Flamenbaum, Burn and Oskamp, Sande et al., and to some extent Koopman et al. (this issue) drew on several social-cognitive/information-processing traditions, including attribution theory, stereotype theory, balance/consistency theories, and ingroup-outgroup/social identity theories. Implicit in the latter papers is the assumption that assimilative cognitive processes may be rooted in anti-Soviet attitudes and may subsequently feed back to affect them further. Some of the papers contain indications that attitudes and cognitive processes interact—most notably the Koopman et al. finding that elite respondents were relatively unaffected by (purported) information regarding Soviet intentions and military capabilities, and the Sande et al. finding of a relationship between attributional biases and political party affiliation. Much work remains to be done on the interrelationship between attitudes and information processing as it affects the formation and functioning of enemy images in various demographic segments of the population, and in persons with different cognitive styles and motivational patterns.

### Are Anti-Soviet Attitudes Enemy Images?

It seems, in summary, that among the many Americans who view the Soviet Union as an enemy there may be considerable variation in what the characterization implies. Although a very large majority, if directly asked, would undoubtedly agree that the USSR is an enemy of the United States, that does not mean that they harbor diabolical enemy images of "the Russians." Enemy image research has now matured to the point where it should be evident that there are great individual differences among people in the degree to which they consider any given nation an enemy, what they mean by that, and what other attributes they believe go along with that. The time is ripe for combined psychometric—experimental designs of the interactive type called for by Cronbach (1957, 1975), in which attitudes are measured and also treated as independent variables in research that studies their effects on cognitive-affective processes.

Even within a single individual, attitudes toward the Soviet Union are complex. Holt's study indicates that many Americans are capable of thinking

about an enemy in a graded and differentiated way. Not only do they distinguish between the Soviet people and their leaders, but the images of the leaders are becoming differentiated also. Mikhail Gorbachev's recent popularity in this country (arising after the time when most of the data reported in this issue were collected) is an extraordinary and unprecedented phenomenon, but it is uncertain how far it generalizes to the rest of the Politburo. It seems likely that, for the first time, the American people are giving up the old monolithic image of the Soviet leadership and are accepting the widely reported view that there are two important schools of thought among Soviet elites—one (apparently led by Yigor Ligachev) more conservative and resistant to change, and the other (led by Gorbachev) strongly reformist. Despite these changes, indications are that the U.S. citizenry remains strongly opposed to the Soviet ideology or system, variously known as communism, socialism, or Marxism-Leninism. Future enemy image research on the Soviet Union must take all of this differentiation into account if it is to avoid confusion.

No research of which we are aware has provided evidence that categorizing a country as an enemy is an important watershed of some kind, as a number of authors on the subject imply. "Enemy" may be merely one of a number of negative attributes a nation may have in the minds of outsiders. Nevertheless, we still suspect that for at least some people, reaching the decision that a country like the USSR is "our enemy" has special importance, and we urge researchers to explore this seemingly obvious but unstudied issue. Does dislike or disapproval have to reach any critical level for the attribute "enemy" to come into play? Does fear play a crucial role? Is it necessary for a person to believe that other specific attributes like "untrustworthy," "anti-American," or "hostile" apply? Is it critical that the respondent see the other nation as a military threat, as a competitor for international power and preeminence, or simply as adhering to an ideology and value system in sharp conflict with our own?

### Complexity and Determinants of Anti-Soviet Attitudes

Yatsani and Bramel discuss the contradictory conclusions regarding attitudes toward the Soviet Union resulting from questions that differ slightly in wording or that are open-ended vs. structured. A striking example is the remarkable degree of inconsistency in attitudes toward the Soviet Union revealed in the impressive study done by the Public Agenda Foundation (1984). Its authors point out an important implication: When attitudes are so conflicting, they tend not to be crystallized—they are less consensual, more volatile, and differ more in different strata of the population.

There has been little discussion, however, of the surprising lack of crystallization of attitudes toward the USSR in this country; the tendency in many papers has been to emphasize the strength of enemy images of the Soviets.

However, the view that anti-Soviet attitudes are largely stereotyped enemy images would lead us to the incorrect prediction of strongly crystallized, consistently hostile opinions. The reality is a good deal more hopeful than our theories might have suggested.

Although a majority of U.S. citizens have been more or less negatively disposed toward the USSR since shortly after the end of World War II, it is not certain how far the psychology of stereotypes is relevant in conceptualizing their attitudes. Stereotyped attitudes are conceived of as relatively rigid and resistant to being corrected by disconfirming information. The prejudiced person who holds stereotypes feeds off news that members of a disliked group do admirable things, or even that they are ordinary human beings, by reinterpreting input in procrustean ways—as Piaget (1952) put it, by assimilating new information to their previous views. The implication of this is that once attitudes toward the Soviet Union turn decisively sour, they should continue to get even more extreme.

However, in their survey of public opinion poll findings of the four postwar decades, Yatani and Bramel paint quite a different picture. True, residents of the United States generally evaluate the USSR negatively; indeed, in 1953 over 90% of Americans had unfavorable opinions—which would seem to imply that stereotyped enemy images were quite widespread and that they would grow ever more negative. Instead, Yatani and Bramel's graph shows no consistent negative trend; it begins with a major decline in dislike over nearly two decades, followed by another rise and fall, and it shows considerable fluctuation, apparently in response to events. This long-term aggregate curve rather strikingly disconfirms two expectations based on the theory of stereotypes (that attitudes toward the USSR would be rigid and would grow more unfavorable over time), in spite of the frequent support for that theory in smaller psychological studies over shorter time spans, as reviewed by Silverstein and Flamenbaum.

At the least, then, some addendum is needed to the theory of perceptual and cognitive bias presented by Silverstein and Flamenbaum to help it fit these facts, and they supply it in their final pages. When Piaget introduced the concept of assimilation, it was in conjunction with a compensatory and countervailing tendency, accommodation. Moreover, Piaget (1952) emphasized that in normal development there is a tendency toward adaptive, accurate perception, so that as the child matures accommodation tends to play a larger role relative to assimilation. Assimilation is essentially a positive feedback system, a closed loop. Without the occurrence of accommodation, once a party was categorized as an enemy, assimilative processes would tend to polarize matters; thus friends would be seen as constantly better, enemies as increasingly worse. An important task for future theory, therefore, is to specify conditions that prevent accommodative negative feedback from counteracting this automatic escalation and to specify conditions that promote accommodation.

Various responses of U.S. leaders and media to actions taken by General Secretary Gorbachev demonstrate both the assimilative and accommodative aspects of information processing. Soon after he took office, Gorbachev instituted a nuclear test ban. Not only was the cessation of testing unilateral, taking effect in the Soviet Union whether or not the United States also agreed to cease testing its nuclear weapons, but Gorbachev offered to make it permanent if the United States agreed to join in.

That was arguably one of the most important peace offers of the nuclear era. But the American response strongly suggested the effects of an enemy image. President Ronald Reagan and Secretaries Caspar Weinberger and George Shultz discounted the offer, attributing it to temporary circumstances, namely that the Soviet Union was ahead in testing and was seeking a brief respite after a recent spate of nuclear tests. The U.S. press paid very little attention to the offer. Most major newspapers and news magazines gave it little coverage and devoted much of that to the statements made by the Reagan administration, thus according more credibility to the negative response than to the offer. The U.S. accusations without evidence against the Soviets were taken at face value—none of the reporters from the *New York Times*, the *Washington Post*, *Newsweek*, *Time*, or *U.S. News and World Report* saw fit to mention that the United States had made more nuclear tests than the Soviet Union in total as well as in the previous year. One of the few major news sources that devoted more than a single day of coverage to the offer was the *New York Times*, but the second day of coverage consisted of a scathing editorial attacking Gorbachev for his propagandistic game playing and failure to pursue peace seriously. This assimilation of new information to an image of the Soviet Union as enemy led the United States to miss a possible chance to end the testing of nuclear weapons and thus to halt the arms race.

On the other hand, in subsequent years, Mr. Gorbachev has managed to break through the enemy image to impress the U.S. public, press, and leadership favorably. Since his selection as General Secretary in 1985, the advent of *glasnost*, the freeing of Andrei Sakharov and many other political prisoners, the moves toward democratization as part of *perestroika*, Gorbachev's triumphant visits to Washington and New York, his apparent success in making friends with Ronald Reagan at their summit meetings of 1987-1988, the Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan, the finally ratified INF Treaty, and his epochal speech to the United Nations in December 1988, all have gotten him a much better press in the United States. In October 1987, 72% of a national sample had a generally favorable impression of Gorbachev (Dooie, 1988, Table 2)—a level of popular approval exceeding that of the American president. Thus it is possible that one of the findings of Burn and Oskamp, Holt, and Sande et al.—that attitudes regarding the Soviet leadership are more negative than those regarding the Soviet people—may already be anachronistic. (Incidentally, it seems a mistake to refer

to this familiar finding, which Sande et al. extend to their respondents' own country, by White's, 1969, catchy but misleading term, the "blacktop illusion"—it is not demonstrably an illusion at all.)

At the same time, old U.S. attitudes of suspicion and distrust of the Soviets have diminished but have not disappeared. In 1984, the Public Agenda study found that 56% of U.S. respondents endorsed the statement, "The Soviet Union is like Hitler's Germany—an evil empire trying to rule the world," whereas three years later only 38% agreed (Doble, 1988, Table 1). Nevertheless, in March 1988, 65% agreed that "the Soviets lie, cheat and steal" to further the cause of communism, and only 15% said that if the Soviets actually withdrew their troops from Afghanistan, it would make them more likely to trust the USSR. Simultaneously, 59% endorsed a "live and let live" policy (Yankelovich Group, 1988). Thus there are still marked inconsistencies despite the more positive contemporary image of the former "evil empire."

#### Explanations of Changes in U.S. Attitudes

Several theories might be invoked to explain the change in American responses to the actions of the Soviet chief of state. One is the simple proposition that attitudes are responsive to real events. In this view, if a leader consistently acts in a peaceable, nonthreatening way long enough, even opponents who have long been accustomed to discount, rationalize away, or otherwise deny any deviation from an existing enemy image may begin to change. And if the leader is able to change the policies and actions of his country toward greater cooperation and friendliness, sooner or later evaluations of antagonistic peoples will become more favorable. As anti-Soviet attitudes are softened in these ways, the perceived attributes of the target nation may no longer fit the implicit criteria that lead people to consider the leader and/or his country an enemy. Alternatively, Holt's findings might be extrapolated to yield the prediction that many Americans will continue to call the USSR an enemy, but that the connotations of that term will soften to the point where it means little more than "a competitor."

Another possible explanation is that factors other than the actual hostility or cooperativeness of Soviet actions influence how far the American public turn toward viewing the USSR as an enemy or a friend. As we have seen, the American mass media strongly influence the images of the Soviet Union held by the public, both by limiting access to the facts and by the evaluative characterizations put upon them. Access to the American media, as well as the amount of credibility the media accord to another nation, are not simply functions of who is saying something but also of how they say it. Gorbachev, along with other Soviet figures who have attained prominence under him—notably Foreign Ministry spokesperson Gennadi Gerasimov and news commentator Victor Posner—ex-

hibit new styles, including the use of humor, slang, and colorful metaphors, the ability to make their points concisely, and increased availability to the media. The U.S. press finds it easier to accommodate to these styles than to those of previous Soviet representatives. (See Mannheim & Albritton, 1984, for a demonstration that public relations campaigns can improve the images of foreign nations held by the U.S. public.)

The needs of the U.S. political leadership also appear to affect U.S. images of the Soviet Union in similar ways. The paper by Koopman et al. demonstrates that even experts may fall prey to enemy images (see also Herrmann, 1986; Plous, 1985). It is difficult to analyze recent changes in U.S. reactions to the Soviet Union without emphasizing the role played by President Reagan. Sophisticated use of the methods of political psychology is called for in analyzing both the causes of Reagan's stunning reversal from promulgating the "evil empire" label to becoming friendly toward Gorbachev, and the effect that this shift in his responses had on the U.S. media and public.

Despite the vagaries of the media, a good deal of realistic information has been getting through to the U.S. public, including occasional positive stories like the whale rescue used by Sande et al., and the far better publicized joint U.S.-USSR effort to save four gray whales trapped in the Arctic ocean in the late fall of 1988. The tempo of citizens' visits back and forth between the two countries has picked up markedly in recent years, providing another source of realistic information. Finally, the role of the peace movement in attempting to correct misinformation about the "Soviet threat" should not be underestimated; but all these hypotheses need to be checked by controlled research.

Political psychology is inevitably an historical discipline, and all of its findings should carry tags that date them. The work done here was carried out mostly between 1984 and 1987, during the first years of the Gorbachev era. No one knows how long this era will last, or how successful his farsighted plans may be. If he remains in power and continues his present policies, there may be the same kind of basic change in U.S. public opinion that occurred with respect to mainland China: a steady drop in negative feelings, with a growth in friendliness and neutrality. Democratization, liberalized human rights policies, and the introduction of market mechanisms in what had been a wholly centralized, planned, "command economy" could reduce the perceived antithesis between the two systems. Gorbachev's consistent efforts at disarmament, changing Soviet military policy and its structure of forces from offensive to defensive, and his explicit renunciation of any intent to use force against other nations could greatly reduce the U.S. perception of military threat, and of the Soviet Union as a dangerous competitor in the power struggle for planetary preeminence.

We are thus in the midst of an exciting natural experiment in the massive modification of attitudes, and of cognitive structures more generally, by changes

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in the real world. Perhaps the present group of studies will be particularly useful as benchmarks, standards of comparison from a more enemy-haunted era, against which future shifts can be evaluated.

#### Sources of Enemy Images

Turning now to the general question of the origins of enemy images, much of the information we have summarized concerning the attitudes of U.S. citizens toward the USSR is applicable. Overall, the determinants of attitudes form a system of many interacting influences. Threatening actions by a country or by groups of its citizens, the destructive capacity of an adversary's armamentarium, and real conflicts of interest between pairs of countries clearly affect people's perceptions and beliefs. Of course, relatively few people have the firsthand opportunity to count ICBMs or to observe such an event as the shooting down of a civilian airliner. As Silverstein and Flamenbaum demonstrate, the public receives information about nations' actions primarily from reports in the mass media, which themselves are probably often affected by enemy images. It is also possible that reporters and editors assume the public to hold and to expect confirmation of more extreme and demonic enemy images of other nations than in fact it does hold. The images and assumptions of media workers may derive from those held by elites, which exhibit their own biases, as demonstrated by Koopman et al. and by some of the studies that Silverstein and Flamenbaum cite. Several of the papers in this issue speculate that political leaders may intentionally manipulate enemy images for their own ends, and Chomsky (1985) and Wolfe (1983), among others, do present data to support this accusation. To complete the cycle of influences on attitudes, Yatani and Bramel cite one study (see also Page & Shapiro, 1983) showing that elites may be influenced by public opinion, which is affected by the lack of information and biases demonstrated by most of the studies included here. Thus, a more complete understanding of how enemy images originate and spread awaits future research on each part of the system and on the mutual interrelationships of the parts.

The mediated nature of perceptions of other nations not only emphasizes the importance of the mass media and of political leaders, but also has additional, far-reaching implications for the psychology of enemy images. For example, Piaget and Weil (1951; see also Jahoda, 1962, 1964; and Middleton, Tajfel, & Johnson, 1970) have pointed out that as children develop they are increasingly able to take the points of view of people from other nations. Thus, from an individual cognitive perspective, adults should be able to overcome the simplistic tendency to see nations as either good (friends) or evil (enemies). Yet in cognitive-attitudinal systems that are highly mediated, individual cognition can be distorted by socialization—leading children, even as they become more cognitively sophisticated, to be nevertheless increasingly socialized into accepting

relatively unsophisticated enemy images. Piaget and Weil refer to this process as the overwhelming of decreasing egocentricity by increasing sociocentricity.

This process is not a simple case of mistakes made by insensitive parents. Before a child has had significant contact with groups or persons who might become her/his enemies, s/he receives much acculturation—learning myths, attitudes, values, alleged facts, and typical scenarios (or scripts) about what the world is like. Even parents who try to raise children to be maximally loving and trustful must, for the child's own protection, impart some sense that there are dangers to be avoided, including persons who may do the child harm. Typically, the child learns that members of the ingroup (the family, the school homeroom, and other primary groups of which the youngster is a member) are safe, while strangers and other members of outgroups are or may be dangerous. American children's literature, television programs, comic books, and folktales all tend to portray the world in stark blacks and whites; they are filled with evil witches, monsters, machines, sorcerers, wicked stepmothers, giants, and the like, who are almost never portrayed as having any redeeming features. These villains seize innocent heroes and heroines of these tales, threatening to eat them, torture, maim, or kill them without mercy unless they get what they want. Likewise, religions supply ideal images of an all-good God and a totally evil Satan, as extremely polarized as imaginable, each surrounded by allied angels or demons, and often portrayed as being locked in a state of war. Indeed, one of the devil's sobriquets is "The Enemy."

Even if an American child grows up in a time of peace and in a family without strong fears of prejudices against other countries, the mass media (especially television) teach him/her that people are either good or bad, and that the bad ones are to be avoided or destroyed if possible (Hesse & Simpson, 1988; Huesmann & Malamuth, 1986). Whether the child receives this message through direct experience or more vicariously, it readies her/him to construct an inner, social world of friends and enemies. The specific (and testable) implication is that the more a child is exposed to polarized black/white images of the world, the more likely s/he will be, as an adult, to hold extreme enemy images.

As we noted in the introduction to this issue, there have been some studies of children's images of the enemy (Hesse, 1988; Fessler, 1987), but no systematic studies of their genesis and development, either longitudinal or cross sectional, have as yet been completed. Clearly, this is a large research gap. The existence of subpopulations in many parts of the world where children have been exposed to direct experience of war, while other ethnically, economically, and culturally similar subpopulations have not, makes it feasible to conduct quasiexperimental research of great potential value.

As to our specific focus on images of the USSR, it is easy to verify the complaint of many liberals that the mass media in the United States have been feeding us a steady diet of anticommunist and anti-Soviet news, features,

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movies, television shows, and the like—not to mention that the stock villains of children's animated television, comic books, and other lowbrow media all seem to work for the KGB. Developmental studies could usefully compare the images of the USSR held by children who have had much vs. little of such exposure.

Other interesting hypotheses are suggested by the mediated nature of images of nations. (1) On the basis of ideas drawn from the work of Carol Gilligan (1982), it is possible that reactions to nations that are not based upon personal experience may be different for males than for females. (2) Images of foreign nations may be more open to quick alteration than are ethnic or "racial" prejudices that are reinforced by day-to-day conflicts or competition over jobs or other resources, etc. (3) It is possible that the level of analysis focusing on the psychology of individual members of the public is relatively unimportant. Although many studies have been done (including ones in this issue) to demonstrate that American subjects respond significantly more negatively to the Soviet Union than to other nations, these studies tell us little or nothing about how much of this disapproval, fear, etc., can be accounted for by idiosyncratic attitudinal, motivational, and cognitive processes (e.g., cognitive styles). An alternative possibility, which seems very likely, is that a great deal of it is attributable to the negative interpretations of Soviet actions presented by governmental figures and the media. It would be an important challenge to design research that could disentangle these determinants.

This question is further complicated by the fact that people mean different things by the term *enemy*. Holt reports the striking finding that students used very different criteria in defining personal and national enemies—stressing evidence of hostility and intent to do harm in the former case, while mainly relying on ideological and value differences to decide that any nation—such as the Soviet Union—is an enemy.

By contrast, Yatani and Bramel argue that anti-Soviet attitudes are primarily rooted in U.S. nationalism and the competition for world dominance. A reader might easily get the impression of a sharper contradiction between the data and interpretations of these two studies than is warranted. Notice that Yatani and Bramel's data and citations deal with *dislike* of the Soviet Union and reasons for that, rather than explanations for thinking of it as an enemy. Moreover, Yatani and Bramel subsume military threat under the heading of competition for power, while Holt uses three categories, sharply distinguishing the threat of war from competition. In the end, the remaining interpretive differences can only be settled by fresh research—research that combines the use of large national samples with a differentiated approach distinguishing several shades of anti-Soviet attitudes (from moral disapproval to fear of being conquered) and at least three internally consistent groups of reasons for them.

In addition, the role of nationalism needs further study, and new measuring instruments will make such work easier. Kotterman and Feilbach (1989) have

recently provided reasonably independent measures of two aspects of preference for one's own country: the tendency to value one's own country highly for its intrinsic qualities, which they call *patriotism* (and which is uncorrelated with anti-Soviet attitudes), and the tendency to consider it superior to other nations, which they call *rationalism* (and which they found to be correlated with anti-Sovietism). Their concepts and instruments may help clarify some problems in this area, including the role of patriotism and nationalism in the explanation of various kinds of anti-Soviet attitudes and enemy images.

### Motivation

Oddly enough, the study of motives behind hostile and distrustful attitudes toward the Soviet Union has been neglected in recent years. The concept of an enemy as a threat implies fear as a corresponding motive, yet we know of no attempts to test the hypothesis that a fearful person is especially prone to enemy images, or that a measurable increase in a nation's apprehensiveness precedes or accompanies a rise in the stereotyping or demonization of its main adversary.

Another motivational concept, about which a fair amount of theorizing has been done, is the need to have enemies (Volkan, 1985, 1988). So far, we know of no attempts to measure such a need.

Burn and Oskamp, Trost et al., and Sande et al. all allude to the hypothesis that the self-esteem gained by people through belonging to an ingroup such as "citizens of the United States" may underlie ingroup biases in attitudes and information processing. So far, however, research that attempts to measure self-esteem directly and to study its variations in relation to political events seems lacking. Sande et al. add a complication with the finding that their respondents' biases were not so much pro-U.S. as anti-Soviet. Perhaps people who are high in nationalism and are political partisans of the party in power (as in the Sande et al. study) are more likely to believe the enemy images put forth by leaders of their nations. Morse and Allport (1952), in an analysis of anti-Semitism, and Christensen (1959), in an analysis of hostile attitudes in international relations, both suggested that projection works most strongly on those people who most strongly identify with their nations. Smith, Bruner, and White (1956, summarized in Smith, 1958) offered a functional analysis of attitudes toward the Soviet Union, suggesting that one of the functions served by holding particular opinions of the USSR was to increase feelings of group belonging. By professing enemy images of the Soviet Union, highly nationalistic people may increase their sense of belonging to a group that they highly value (U.S. citizens), thus raising their sense of self-esteem.

In summary, the role of identity and self-esteem in enemy-image formation constitutes a widely shared assumption, for which there is some evidence but not as much as would be desirable. We need to know much more about how self-

esteem and identity are strengthened by having a declared and explicit enemy, and in what kinds of people this occurs.

#### Enemy Images of Persons, "Races," and Nations

Another issue common to several of the preceding studies is the relationship between the images of individuals, of ethnic groups, and of nations as the enemy. Holt focuses directly on some differences between individual and national enemies, whereas Silverstein and Flamenbaum, Bum and Oskamp, Sande et al., and Trost et al. implicitly focus on similarities between individual, "racial," and national enemies in the literature they cite as bases for the hypotheses they test. It is noteworthy that there has been no explicit and systematic attempt to see how far the considerable body of data on ethnic prejudice in the intergroup literature may be generalized to national enemies. Holt hypothesizes that the enemy images of Nicaraguans held by some of his interviewees were so extreme because ethnic prejudice interacted in some way with national images, a possibility that warrants investigation.

#### Ways to Change Enemy Images

Silverstein and Flamenbaum discuss the possible role of knowledge in moderating enemy images, but few data are available on the issue. Given the entirely reasonable assumption that people who are more positive toward a nation will be more open to information about that nation, while those with negative attitudes will resist the intake of disconfirming data, it remains to be seen how far mere exposure to accurate information will affect enemy images. Since some of the most obvious suggestions for moderating enemy images are to improve education, disseminate information, and promote intergroup contact, the answer to this question may have great practical import. As Trost et al. warn, however, good intentions are no protection against unwanted effects of interventions. Their work also suggests the need for further trials of novel ways to induce shared, superordinate group membership as a way of decreasing outgroup bias, and the value of testing other hypotheses from the literature on intergroup relations as applied to the reduction of anti-Soviet bias.

The implications of Trost et al.'s study are clearly pessimistic. Nevertheless several researchers have been trying to use psychological techniques and the knowledge generated by research on enemy images to reduce the biases that have entered conceptions of the Soviet Union held by Americans. A number of these workers believe their efforts have been somewhat successful (e.g., Mayton, 1988; Nelson, 1988). Clearly, a great deal of evaluation research remains to be done on these attempts at change, but the outlook is not entirely negative.

#### A Speculative Conclusion

From our reflection about the papers presented here and other relevant literature, we have come to feel the image of the enemy is not an isolated phenomenon, but is best understood as part of a theory of war. There are at least three such theories we must understand and deal with:

1. The *folk or Rambo* theory: war is a contest between good and evil—the white hats (us) vs. the black hats (them, The Enemy). This is the point of view of the ordinary citizen and soldier, the ones who bear the brunt of wars.
2. The *Realpolitik* theory: war is part of the political power game, in a condition of international anarchy. This is the point of view of national and military leaders, those who plan and direct wars.
3. The *scientific or systems* theory: an emerging attempt to understand wars as disturbances of a complex international system. This point of view is that of an impartial, objective observer, attempting to study and understand wars as accurately and dispassionately as possible.

Let us stress that there is some truth in all three views, even the first. There have been a few wars that pretty well fit the ideal conception of the folk theory. In these wars the leaders of the aggressor nation wanted something possessed by the innocent and inoffensive victim, and they attacked in an attempt to seize it. The situation of the victim nation is morally secure and certain to arouse the sympathy of most third parties. When it fights back, its violence is seen as valiant and heroic; its defensive war is considered just, even by many sects of the originally pacifist Christian church. Ironically, imperial wars of conquest typically fit this description, but since the more "civilized" nation has always been the aggressor, special feats of rationalization have been necessary to paint it as innocent and to claim moral justification for the resulting wars (e.g., "the white man's burden").

In the folk theory, there is only this one type of war. There is always one right, justified, and innocent side—ours, even if we are committing unprovoked genocide—and the other side is always actuated by evil motives. Not only their leaders, but the whole nation and its people are ruthless, treacherous, cruel, power mad, full of hatred for us, and deserving to be hated in return and killed at every opportunity. The stereotyped or demonic image of the enemy is thus a central feature of this theory.

Lying just behind this folk theory is a worldview of the most primitive kind, a world of dichotomous moralistic certainty without ambiguities—ruled by split parental figures, in psychoanalytic jargon. It seems to be a world of Oedipal and pre-Oedipal childhood, peopled by heroes and villains, knights and dragons, various princesses and evil sorcerers.

Readers will recognize that President Reagan invoked many of the tenets of the Rambo theory in discussing foreign policy. He differed from previous presidents only in being slightly more blatant about it and in openly invoking the stereotyped enemy image for a nation with which we were not at war and which was not threatening to attack us. It is therefore easy to get the impression that top national leaders subscribe to the folk theory. By and large, however, they are too sophisticated to do so.

Political leaders almost always develop a style of political thinking first formulated by Machiavelli, sometimes known as "power politics," and today termed the "Realist" school of thought. Not accidentally, its proponents typically speak of politics as a *game*: hardball, the superpower game, and the like. This aspect has been formalized in game theory, which is a respectable mathematical discipline. No implication is intended that its practitioners are all Machiavellians, only that the very conception is a cynical one. If politics is a game, war the sport of kings, in which all is fair, then winning is the goal, not justice, and certainly not truth.

The metaphorical reference to sports has great influence on the thinking of politicians and the media alike. It is no wonder that the media report politics in the same way they do sports, with primary emphasis on who's ahead. Political issues are seen as window dressing, symbols with which special interest groups may be manipulated; hence, reporters and editors show little interest in them—that would be naive. Likewise, the Rambo theory of war and its icons are useful tools for manipulating the masses who believe it; hence they are given extensive lip service by politicians. Recognizing that the political pros take such stuff seriously, the media report it with a straight face.

The implied worldview of the *Realpolitik* or Machiavellian theory of war is that of the authoritarian personality: The world is divided into the strong and the weak, so clever people "look out for number 1" as shrewdly as possible, and winning is everything. This is the amoral world of the Wall Street insider and all other cynical manipulators.

The folk theory of war is part of what William Perry (1970) called "Basic Dualism"—the simplistic, dichotomous world view of adolescents before they encounter the intellectual challenges of college. It is also the embodiment of the low end of the cognitive scale of integrative complexity used by Philip Tetlock (e.g., 1985), and it is evident that Machiavellian thinking is somewhat higher on that scale, as it is in Perry's developmental scheme. In Jane Loevinger's (1976) developmental conception, the folk theory clearly fits the world of her Stage I-2, the Impulsives, while the Machiavellian theory is the embodiment of the Self-Protective stage (Delta).

The triad of theories described above is, therefore, a developmental series in disguise, and the scientific or systems theory is an attempt to apply the most highly developed level of cognitive capacities we possess to the most serious

problem that confronts us. War is, of course, the greatest threat to all our values, and an all-out nuclear war would threaten the continuance of all life itself. Hardly an appropriate topic for thoughts about games and sports, this is the most serious business on the human agenda: learning how to abolish war. That goal demands the greatest maturity we are capable of, not only maximal integrative or cognitive complexity, but what Holt (1984) calls "systems-thinking."

The developmental perspective on these three theories of war has obvious implications for the problem of the image of the enemy. Since stereotyped thinking characterizes the lowest developmental stage found in adults of any known society, most people can be expected to have transcended it, and in peacetime we should not expect to find full-blown enemy images in many people, surely not in many college students. Yet one of Freud's permanent psychological contributions is the demonstration that all of us retain the capacity to regress, under stress, to earlier developmental stages, however fully we seem to have outgrown them. Unfortunately, international crises and domestic crises like severe recessions put citizens and especially their leaders under just such regressive stress. Here is one of the dilemmas of democracy, for the most maturely democratic citizenry retain the tendency, when they feel under an external threat, to lapse into the folk theory with its stereotyped image of the enemy, and to accept or even demand dictatorial leadership. This hypothesis is testable and worthy of being investigated (see Osgood, 1962, for some relevant evidence).

There is also an optimistic implication, however: Granted reasonably good economic and social conditions, people in a democratic society committed to peace, freedom, and justice do naturally tend to develop more autonomy and more socially responsible, farsighted, and empathic attitudes. Mature people are more capable of and more desirous of participatory democracy; they are likely to vote for and support leaders whose horizons are not limited by narrow nationalism. In a sense, then, one can see ways in which both war and peace tend to be self-perpetuating. That realization should motivate us to do all we can to promote peace and to resist the cynical view that war is inevitable so we had better be well prepared for it. The latter view is essentially the position of the establishment, not only in American politics but in academic political science and international studies. It is high time we outgrew the *Realpolitik* view and replaced it with a new theory at once more empathic and more objective, based on systems thinking.

#### Epilogue

Although the psychology of enemy images is not a new topic, it is undergoing a welcome renaissance. This journal issue presents a selection of representative research, summarizes much of the published work concerned with the Soviet Union as a specific focus of U.S. attitudes, and demonstrates, we believe, that

there are many topics needing further research. The prospect is particularly exciting, for this area offers a chance for psychologists and other scholars to do work that is simultaneously theoretically interesting and relevant to the most pressing social issue of our lifetimes: the prevention of nuclear war and the building of a cooperative, constructive international order.

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