

Three or 4 years ago, when I was in the Government, I initiated a series of talks with the French and British Governments in an endeavor to persuade them to phase out their preferential systems and move toward a regime of nondiscrimination. Those talks met with lukewarm response and their failure led me to conclude that the issue of American policy could not be resolved on any doctrinal basis; but that, sooner or later, if the European Common Market continued to increase the geographical scope of its preferences to Africa, we would be faced with serious problems in other parts of the world. Those problems would become even more acute if Britain should join the Common Market and the preferences now enjoyed by African members of the British Commonwealth be extended so as to give them favored access to the whole Common Market.

To my mind these trends, while undesirable, can scarcely be ignored, and if they continue we shall have to accept them as political facts and shape our policies accordingly. If Europe is not prepared to accept responsibility for the third world on a universalist basis then perhaps some regime of closed systems may be necessary. But in that event should we not go the full way? Should we not seek the benefits of a geographical division of responsibilities?

Should we not insist, in other words, that arrangements for commercial preferences carry with them substantial obligations on the part of the industrialized partner? Thus, for example, if the European Economic Community continues to expand its system of preferences for Africa, should we not make it clear that we will look to the nations of the community to carry the burden of economic assistance, and where necessary political tutelage for those African countries that enjoy such preferences? In practice this would mean an American recognition of the primacy of the European interest in Africa, and consequently the primacy of European responsibility for providing foreign aid, and looking after the education, health, and defense of the African people. We would, in other words, recognize that Africa was a special European responsibility just as today the European nations recognize our particular responsibility in Latin America.

I do not raise this question in the belief that the division of the world into a series of north-south slices is the best solution. I would much prefer to see the other advanced nations take a generalized responsibility toward the poor nations in the south, but if they are not going to do so—and the reason that they are not going to do so is because they haven't gotten their own political structure in modern form—then perhaps we should settle for some sectionalizing of the world that would involve and agreed concentration of effort by particular advanced nations of the north for the benefit of particular poor nations in the south within the framework of preferential trading systems. Such an approach has obvious disadvantages since it would not contribute to the best use of resources, but at the end of the road we may well find that this is the most effective way to share our burdens with the other advanced nations.

III

I shall not attempt this morning to deal with the problem of East-West trade, since that raises a special set of questions bearing on our present and prospective relations with the Communist world. I urge