

# Stereotypes cloud own view of world

TO THE EXTENT to which we stay within our own circles of contact we fail to see the whole world. I learned this as a visitor told me of life in her own nation, Czechoslovakia. A year ago I visited the third central European nation. I had told my son what to expect when he visited Czechoslovakia.

"Our friends will not have a car," I said. I was wrong. Almost every family has a car. "There is hardly anything you are allowed to bring into this country," I added. I was wrong. One may have to pay a customs duty, but outside of political matter, almost anything can be imported into the country.

I was surprised at my stereotype of life in Czechoslovakia. I had visited there three times, but things have changed. In a subtle way we are given the impression that all is still the same in Eastern Europe as it was under Stalin. Our impressions do not allow for change or progress among nations in the sphere of the Soviet



moral perspectives

Rev. David Strong

Union. Likewise in the mind of many over there, Detroit is a violent, terrible place. We are both wrong. Americans by and large do not travel to Europe. This is another surprising fact shared with me by my Czechoslovakian visitor. "Guess how many Americans currently have passports?" she said. The answer is 19 million Americans less than 10 percent.

WHY DO we believe that we have an accurate view of the world? How is it that we Americans believe that we have a balanced perspective? Does it not begin with the impression that truth and accuracy will result with a free press. We subscribe to a magazine, World Press in Review.

This journal gives us brief impressions of how other nations view current events through their press. Through reading this magazine I am constantly reminded that our press is as biased as any in the world.

The best way to understand others in the world is to be involved in people-to-people visits. I remember meeting a farmer in a small town who, back in the 1960s, had visited the Soviet Union with a farmers group. As an American farmer he had talked with Soviet farmers. In his small American community, he had a better understanding of the world than any person we met there. However, I discovered a strange phenomenon.

People in small town and country

communities were often more willing to learn about the world from a foreign visitor than were people in the city and suburbs. I believe that we city folks often "buy" the media. We believe that we know the truth about the world when in fact we are often poorly informed.

I believe that we are just around the corner from the most radical change in our perceptions. When satellite television will be available from all over the world to the average viewer, our understandings will suddenly grow. Still, the best way to understand the truth about others is to talk with them in person.

Our guest from Czechoslovakia says, "The most important things are those which are not sensational." I believe that this is correct in regard to our understanding of others. The greatest opportunity for people-to-people contacts is through our religious connections. Through church and synagogue we can visit others and correct the biases in our different nations. It is truly an opening through which God can work to further unity among his family here on earth.

whether our leaders are grasping world realities. We are fortunate that we can easily learn about conditions in other parts of the world. All that is too often lacking is our desire to know Americans, and particularly faith-rooted people here, will provide a great benefit for the future if we will become aware of the true nature of conditions particularly among peoples we officially oppose.

OUR OBSESSION with modern things also leads us astray. We "buy" the idea that real people are modern. "It's the real thing" means it is the most modern, popular trend. In contrast, it is often only with age and experience that we can discern the truth from the bogus.

We are currently passing through a phase in our national life when we wonder who is telling the truth. Can we trust the president or others who speak for our nation? Only by being informed about the world through sources beyond those in our own country will we be apt to discern

whether our leaders are grasping world realities.

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Our visitor from Czechoslovakia told us of a presentation by a Protestant bishop from China. Some 200 spaces are opened for Chinese Christians to prepare for the Protestant ministry in their nation. One thousand candidates applied. If we will make such contacts and listen we will find that the world is changing. We may be left behind in these changes simply because we did not desire to understand.

## Cities may regulate video parlors

A home rule city may license video game parlors and prohibit 16-18-year-olds from using them, Attorney General Frank J. Kelley has ruled.

A city also may regulate the hours of the day when minors may patronize video parlors and charge reasonable license fees, he said.

In an opinion requested by state Rep. Donald Van Singel, R-Grant, Kelley told the west Michigan lawmaker a state Court of Appeals decision in a Warren case clearly upheld the authority of cities to regulate video game establishments.

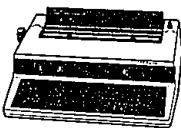
On the key question of whether cities may make video parlors off-limits to certain age groups, Kelley said yes — that such a local ordinance would not violate state civil rights laws. He wrote:

"The Elliott-Larsen Civil Rights Act prohibits a denial of the use and enjoyment of public accommodations, based upon age, except where the denial is permitted by law." The word "law" includes city ordinances.

Age regulations designed to protect children are not arbitrary, he said.

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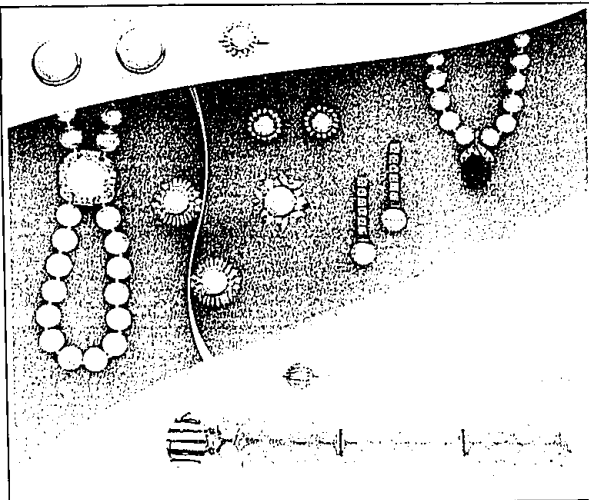
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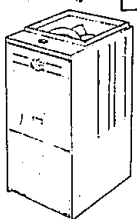
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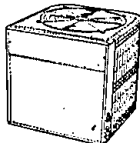
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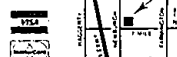


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