



Dr. Fred Schwarz

The Schwarz Report



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Our 51st Year!

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Ronald Reagan

by Dr. Fred C. Schwarz

I did not convert Ronald Reagan to anti-Communism. The Communists had already done this. As president of the Screen Actors Guild, he had discerned their duplicity and been subjected to their venomous attacks. He attended the Southern California School of Anti-Communism, held in Los Angeles on August 28 to September 1, 1961, and expressed appreciation for the clarity of the messages exposing the pathological nature of Communist doctrines.



I take pride in recounting that the man who later became president of the United States, and who enacted programs that led to the downfall of Soviet Communism, once served as a substitute speaker for me. It was in 1962 when he was a lecturer sponsored by the General Electric Corporation. I was scheduled to speak at a luncheon in Omaha, Nebraska, but bad weather delayed my arrival. The meeting was chaired by the mayor of Omaha, and Ronald Reagan held the fort until I arrived.

In due course, he became president of the United States of America, and the rest is history. His outstanding role in formulating the programs that led to the downfall of Soviet Communism is undeniable. His place in the pantheon of history is secure.

The influence of my message on his thoughts, statements, and programs was both direct and indirect. The indirect influence resulted from our numerous Schools of Anti-Communism, and Anti-Subversive Seminars. In due course many of the students came to occupy responsible positions in government, education, and religion.

Three of them became speechwriters for President Reagan. They were Dana Rohrabacher, Tony Dolan, and Jack Wells.

President Reagan was a great orator. Two of his outstanding speeches were to the British Parliament and to the National Association of Evangelicals in Fort Lauderdale, or the "Evil Empire" speech.

I congratulated Tony Dolan, the speechwriter who helped prepare these speeches, and he replied, "You should have like it. I took it all from you." He sent a copy of the "Evil Empire" speech with this note: "I thought you might like to see the oak tree that has grown from the acorn which you planted so many years ago."

As the Bible says, "Cast thy bread upon the waters: for thou shalt find it after many days" (Ecclesiastes 11:1).

The same thought is expressed in Henry Wadsworth Longfellow's poem, "The Arrow and the Song."

Dwell on the past and you'll lose an eye; forget the past and you'll lose both eyes." Old Russian Proverb

I shot an arrow into the air,
It fell to earth I knew not where;
For, so swiftly it flew, the sight
Could not follow it in its flight.

I breathed a song into the air,
It fell to earth, I knew not where;
For who has sight so keen and strong,
That it can follow the flight of a song.

Long, long afterward, in an oak
I found the arrow, still unbroke;
And the song, from beginning to end,
I found again in the heart of a friend.

As previously noted, on January 11, 1990, Lillian and I celebrated our golden wedding anniversary in the Ballroom of the Beverly Wilshire Hotel in Los Angeles. We heard messages from President Reagan, Bill Buckley, Roy Rogers and Dale Evans, Congressman Bob Dornan, Congressman Dana

Rohrabacher, Supervisor Mike Antonovitch, Reed Irvine, Eleanor Schlaflay, and numerous others.

Our son John has never been a public speaker. He takes after his mother and excels in private conversation. He surprised me by asking if he could be the speaker on behalf of the family.

In his speech he told me something I had not fully realized. He said how much he had missed my presence during his adolescent years and how he had wondered if my absence due to my work as an Anti-Communist Crusader was really justified. He proceeded to say that the harvest reaped proved beyond question that it had been well worthwhile.

He is passionately devoted to his own family and still takes time off from his exceedingly busy medical practice to tutor his children as they confront their examinations.

Did the years spent in analyzing Communist doctrines and deeds, and publishing the results, make a contribution to the termination of the Cold War? Many whose judgment I respect claim that my influence has been significant indeed. I hope this is so.

—*Beating the Unbeatable Foe*, p. 467ff

Ronald Reagan, R.I.P.

by Joseph J. Sabia

The greatest American President of the 20th Century is gone. Ronald Wilson Reagan — the man who revitalized America's spirit, shaped modern conservatism, and won the Cold War — is now in God's arms. Jesus told his followers, "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the sons of God." Ronald Reagan was the greatest peacemaker of our time. We shall never see his kind again.

The mid-late 1970s saw a malaise engulf the American people. A president self-destructed, communism advanced around the globe, inflation ravaged the economy, and a humiliating hostage crisis raged. America's best days were behind us, the intellectuals said. The presidency was too big for one man. Our problems were too complicated for simple solutions.

In the midst of these crises, a warrior from California entered the political scene with a few simple ideas — defeat communism, cut taxes, and rebuild the military. The elites laughed. He was an "amiable dunce," the liberals said. He wouldn't make it. Even the Republican Establishment privately made fun of the old man. They wanted a moderate policy guy — a George H.W. Bush or a Bob Dole. Reagan was a nut and a lightweight who could give a nice speech, but shouldn't be trusted with the presidency.

In 1977, Reagan sat down with foreign policy advisor Richard Allen to discuss his philosophy on relations with the Soviet Union. Allen expected Reagan to describe a nuanced

version of détente, the policy adopted by all Republican and Democratic presidents for 25 years. Instead, Reagan told Allen, "Here's my strategy on the Cold War: We win; they lose."

"We win; they lose." So simple, and yet so revolutionary. Allen says that Reagan's words changed his life forever. No politician in either party had ever advanced the notion that we could, should, and would defeat communism. That was crazy talk. We could peacefully co-exist with Communism, hopefully contain it, but not actually defeat it.

In Dinesh D'Souza's biography of Reagan, he shows that experts on both sides of the aisle were sure that Soviet Communism was here to stay. In 1982, Dr. Seweryn Bialer, a Sovietologist from Columbia University, proclaimed, "The Soviet Union is not now, nor will it be during the next decade, in the throes of a true systematic crisis." Later that same year, historian Arthur Schlesinger, Jr. indicated that "those in the United States who think the Soviet Union is on the verge of economic and social collapse (are) wishful thinkers." Richard Nixon and Henry Kissinger insisted that "the Soviet system will not collapse."

They were all wrong. Ronald Reagan was right.

Reagan believed that America's policy of mutually assured destruction to secure world peace was both dangerous and immoral. He did not believe that America's best defense against Soviet threats was to threaten to kill millions of Russians. Reagan thought that such a philosophy was insane. He likened it to two men sitting in a room pointing pistols at each other, hoping that the other would not fire.

Instead, Reagan wanted to build a world where nuclear weapons were eliminated and where we had a defense against missile attack. He wanted to build a world where those who lived under Communism would enjoy their God-given right to be free.

In a 1981 speech at the University of Notre Dame, Reagan announced his policy loudly and clearly: "The West won't contain Communism. It will transcend it. It will dismiss it as some bizarre chapter in human history whose last pages are even now being written."

And so Reagan began the process of rebuilding America's military, installing Pershing missiles in West Germany, funding the Strategic Defense Initiative, and negotiating — from a position of strength — with the Soviets for arms reduction. He called on Soviet Communist Party leader Mikhail Gorbachev to tear down the Berlin Wall.

And in 1989, the wall came down. By 1991, the Soviet Union dissolved itself. We won; they lost. It was just as Reagan had said. Millions who lived in tyranny were free. And Ronald Reagan was the reason. As Rudy Giuliani said on Saturday, "Ronald Reagan changed the map of the world." And he did it, in Margaret Thatcher's words, "without firing a shot."

Ronald Reagan believed that there were no easy answers, but that there were simple ones. And Reagan's simple solutions were bold, courageous, and moral.

With intense media coverage surrounding the death of Ronald Reagan, Americans are getting a sustained look at the president's heroic record. And many young people who were not alive during his presidency are learning about him for the first time. Let us hope that they will be inspired by his great achievements and by his extraordinary character.

Ronald Reagan embodied love — love for his wife, love for his country, and love for his Lord and Savior. He was humble, principled, optimistic, and deeply devoted to America. In his final speech to the Republican National Convention, Reagan said:

"And whatever else history may say about me when I'm gone, I hope it will record that I appealed to your best hopes, not your worst fears, to your confidence rather than your doubts. My dream is that you will travel the road ahead with liberty's lamp guiding your steps and opportunity's arm steady-ing your way."

Ronald Reagan brought peace to America and to the world. He brought comfort to those who grieved, inspiration to those who doubted, and freedom to those who were oppressed. He served others, living as the Gospels had taught him.

May God bless Ronald Reagan as he enters the Kingdom of Heaven. We miss him already. And we shall be grateful forever.

—FrontPageMagazine.com, June 7, 2004

The Place of Faith in the Political Order

by Ronald W. Reagan

Thank you, ladies and gentlemen, very much. And, Martha Weisend, thank you very much. And I could say that if the morning ended with the music we have just heard from that magnificent choir, it would indeed be a holy day for all of us.

It's wonderful to be here this morning. The past few days have been pretty busy for all of us, but I've wanted to be with you today to share some of my own thoughts.

These past few weeks it seems that we've all been hearing a lot of talk about religion and its role in politics, religion and its place in the political life of the Nation. And I think it's appropriate today, at a prayer breakfast for 17,000 citizens in the State of Texas during a great political convention, that this issue be addressed.

I don't speak as a theologian or a scholar, only as one who's lived a little more than his threescore ten—which has been a source of annoyance to some—[laughter]—and as one who has been active in the political life of the Nation for roughly four decades and now who's served the past 3 ½ years in our highest office. I speak, I think I can say, as one who has seen much, who has loved his country, and who's seen it change in many ways.

I believe that faith and religion play a critical role in the political life of our nation—and always has—and that the church—and by that I mean all churches, all denominations—has had a strong influence on the state. And this has worked to our benefit as a nation.

Those who created our country—the Founding Fathers and Mothers—understood that there is a divine order which transcends the human order. They saw the state, in fact, as a form of moral order and felt that the bedrock of moral order is religion.

The Mayflower Compact began with the words, "In the name of God, amen." The Declaration of Independence appeals to "Nature's God" and the "Creator" and "the Supreme Judge of the world." Congress was given a chaplain, and the oaths of office are oaths before God.

James Madison in the Federalist Papers admitted that in the creation of our Republic he perceived the hand of the Almighty. John Jay, the first Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, warned that we must never forget the God from whom our blessings flowed.

George Washington referred to religion's profound and unsurpassed place in the heart of our nation quite directly in

his Farewell Address in 1796. Seven years earlier, France had erected a government that was intended to be purely secular. This new government would be grounded on reason rather than the law of God. By 1796 the French Revolution had known the Reign of Terror.

And Washington voiced reservations about the idea that there could be a wise policy without a firm moral and religious foundation. He said, “Of all the dispositions and habits which lead to political prosperity, religion and morality are indispensable supports. In vain would that man (call himself a patriot) who (would) labour to subvert these...finest [firmest] (White House correction) props of the duties of men and citizens. The mere Politician...(and) the pious man ought to respect and to cherish (religion and morality).” And he added, “...let us with caution indulge the supposition, that morality can be maintained without religion.”

I believe that George Washington knew the City of Man cannot survive without the City of God, that the Visible City will perish without the Invisible City.

Religion played not only a strong role in our national life; it played a positive role. The abolitionist movement was at heart a moral and religious movement; so was the modern civil rights struggle. And throughout this time, the state was tolerant of religious belief, expression, and practice. Society, too, was tolerant.

But in the 1960s this began to change. We began to make great steps toward secularizing our nation and removing religion from its honored place.

In 1962 the Supreme Court in the New York prayer case banned the compulsory saying of prayers. In 1963 the Court banned the reading of the Bible in our public schools. From that point on, the courts pushed the meaning of the ruling ever outward, so that now our children are not allowed voluntary prayer. We even had to pass a law—we passed a special law in the Congress just a few weeks ago to allow student prayer groups the same access to schoolrooms after classes that a young Marxist society, for example, would already enjoy with no opposition.

The 1962 decision opened the way to a flood of similar suits. Once religion had been made vulnerable, a series of assaults were made in one court after another, on one issue after another. Cases were started to argue against tax exempt status for churches. Suits were brought to abolish the words “under God” from the Pledge of Allegiance and to re-

move “In God We Trust” from public documents and from our currency.

Today there are those who are fighting to make sure voluntary prayer is not returned to the classrooms. And the frustrating thing for the great majority of Americans who support and understand the special importance of religion in the national life—the frustrating thing is that those who are attacking religion claim they are doing it in the name of tolerance, freedom, and openmindedness. Question: Isn’t the real truth that they are intolerant of religion? [Applause] They refuse to tolerate its importance in our lives.

If all the children of our country studied together all of the many religions in our country, wouldn’t they learn greater tolerance of each other’s beliefs? If children prayed together, would they not understand what they have in common, and would this not, indeed, bring them closer, and is this not to be desired? So, I submit to you that those who claim to be fighting for tolerance on this issue may not be tolerant at all.

When John Kennedy was running for President in 1960, he said that his church would not dictate his Presidency any more than he would speak for his church. Just so, and proper. But John Kennedy was speaking in an America in which the role of religion—and by that I mean the role of all churches—was secure. Abortion was not a political issue. Prayer was not a political issue. The right of church schools to operate was not a political issue. And it was broadly acknowledged that religious leaders had a right and a duty to speak out on the issues of the day. They held a place of respect, and a politician who spoke to or of them with a lack of respect would not long survive in the political arena.

It was acknowledged then that religion held a special place, occupied a special territory in the hearts of the citizenry. The climate has changed greatly since then. And since it has, it logically follows that religion needs defenders against those who care only for the interests of the state.

There are, these days, many questions on which religious leaders are obliged to offer their moral and theological guidance, and such guidance is a good and necessary thing. To know how a church and its members feel on a public issue expands the parameters of debate. It does not narrow the debate; it expands it.

The truth is, politics and morality are inseparable. And as morality’s foundation is religion, religion and politics are necessarily related. We need religion as a guide. We need it

The Schwarz Report Bookshelf

To see a complete list of books recommended by the Christian Anti-Communism Crusade please check out our website at www.schwarzreport.org. This site also has back issues of *The Schwarz Report* as well as other great resources.

because we are imperfect, and our government needs the church, because only those humble enough to admit they're sinners can bring to democracy the tolerance it requires in order to survive.

A state is nothing more than a reflection of its citizens; the more decent the citizens, the more decent the state. If you practice a religion, whether you're Catholic, Protestant, Jewish, or guided by some other faith, then your private life will be influenced by a sense of moral obligation, and so, too, will your public life. One affects the other. The churches of America do not exist by the grace of the state; the churches of America are not mere citizens of the state. The churches of America exist apart; they have their own vantage point, their own authority. Religion is its own realm; it makes its own claims.

We establish no religion in this country, nor will we ever. We command no worship. We mandate no belief. But we poison society when we remove its theological underpinnings. We court corruption when we leave it bereft of belief. All are free to believe or not believe; all are free to practice a faith or not. But those who believe must be free to speak of and act on their belief, to apply moral teaching to public questions.

I submit to you that the tolerant society is open to and encouraging of all religions. And this does not weaken us; it

strengthens us, it makes us strong. You know, if we look back through history to all those great civilizations, those great nations that rose up to even world dominance and then deteriorated, declined, and fell, we find they all had one thing in common. One of the significant forerunners of their fall was their turning away from their God or gods.

Without God, there is no virtue, because there's no prompting of the conscience. Without God, we're mired in the material, that flat world that tells us only what the senses perceive. Without God, there is coarsening of the society. And without God, democracy will not and cannot long endure. If we ever forget that we're one nation under God, then we will be a nation gone under.

If I could just make a personal statement of my own—in these 3½ years I have understood and know better than ever before the words of Lincoln, when he said that he would be the greatest fool on this footstool called Earth if he ever thought that for one moment he could perform the duties of that office without help from One who is stronger than all.

I thank you, thank you for inviting us here today. Thank you for your kindness and your patience. May God keep you, and may we, all of us, keep God.

Thank you.

—Dallas, TX, Prayer Breakfast, August 23, 1984

Langston Hughes' “Goodbye Christ”

by William F. Buckley, Jr.

John Kerry has been in search of a line or two of American poetry to suggest the challenge ahead. His staff finally came up with what they were looking for. According to Kathleen Hall Jamieson, “an expert on political messages” quoted by the *New York Times*, the line the Kerry campaign was searching for had to have resonance with Americans who believe the country is being taken in the wrong direction. As Ms. Jamieson analyzes the line, “It suggests someone’s hijacked the country, without being a frontal attack.”

The line was first tried out by Kerry in Topeka on the 50th anniversary of *Brown v. Board of Education*, and it seemed to glimmer on the candidate’s lips, auguring a robust future. The line is, “Let America be America again.”

That phrase has something going for it. It was written by an American Negro poet, Langston Hughes (1902-1967). It is thought, in Kerryland, to be at once celebratory, poignant, and galvanizing.

But research on the phrase is not enjoined for the community that will sing it forth. The reason is that Langston Hughes wrote the poem “Let America Be America Again” in 1938, and it is not easy to summon to mind which America he was calling on his countrymen to restore. There was little about America for the American Negro to celebrate in 1938—unless you are willing to accept the proposition of George Washington Carver. Mr. Carver, scientist and philosopher, the son of a slave, said that American blacks had this to celebrate: that they had been plucked from African forests, brought to America, and baptized into the liberating faith of Christianity, which was the springboard for their emancipation. But Carver is not widely hailed by black Democratic progressives, the judgment on him being that he was too submissive to a culture that still practiced Jim Crow.

Langston Hughes, if he is to emerge as the poet of the Democratic party, will have to be bowdlerized. “Let America

be America again” is a line from one poem Hughes wrote, and its vagueness is useful. But Hughes was not vague. And as for Carver’s celebration of Christianity, Hughes was, well, skeptical, as in the poem “Goodbye Christ” (1932):

Listen, Christ,
You did alright in your day,
I reckon—
But that day’s gone now.
They ghosted you up a swell
Story, too,
Called it Bible—
But it’s dead now.

That exegesis of Langston Hughes would puzzle Democratic delegates in Boston in July, vibrant with life and mission. And it wasn’t just that Hughes had had a one-night stand with skepticism. No, Hughes had a very specific view about history and on the question of which historical road

America should travel:

Goodbye,
Christ Jesus Lord God Jehovah,
Beat it on away from here now.
Make way for a new guy with no religion at all—
A real guy named
Marx Communist Lenin Peasant
Stalin Worker ME.

Langston Hughes was asking America to “be America again,” meaning, not an America that history had known and chronicled, but an America realizable in a new and different vision. The land of Marx and Lenin and Stalin. Mr. Kerry’s campaign team is going to have serious homework to do before introducing Langston Hughes as the poet laureate of the Democratic party in 2004.

—*National Review*, June 28, 2004, p. 54, 55

Harry Dexter White

by Joseph C. Goulden

Upwards flare one’s arms in frustration at the latest ploy by the academic left to excuse work done by high officials of the Roosevelt administration—some of it surely meeting the definition of espionage—on behalf of the wartime Soviet Union.

All save the more diehard (i.e., foolish) defenders of such figures as Alger Hiss have finally shut up about the basic issue of guilt, especially since the 1996 release of the Venona papers, intercepts of 1943-45 Soviet intelligence messages.

The same papers directed a condemning finger at Harry Dexter White, a high Treasury department official who, as R. Bruce Craig writes in *Treasonable Doubt* (University of Kansas Press, \$34.95, 496 pages, illus.), “was numbered among the most powerful and influential men in the government.”

As de facto deputy to Treasury secretary Robert Morgenthau, White played an enormous role in shaping both domestic and foreign economic policies through the end of World War II. Concurrently, according to Soviet spy couriers Whittaker Chambers and Elizabeth Bentley, White supplied sensitive Treasury documents for transmission to Moscow.

White denied all in dramatic congressional testimony in 1948, then dropped dead of a heart attack several days later, achieving lasting leftist martyrdom as “yet another victim of anti-Communist hysteria.”

Mr. Craig labored in archives for a decade seeking to

prove the spy charges false, only to have the Venona bombshell detonate beneath his feet. And although he haggles over details—sounding at times like a magistrate-court defense lawyer badgering a police sergeant—he is left with no choice but to acknowledge the core truth of the Bentley-Chambers allegations.

White’s use of Soviet tradecraft, as revealed by Venona, “leaves little question that [he] knowingly conveyed information to the Soviet underground over an extended period of time.”

Further, Mr. Craig acknowledges “hard circumstantial [sic] evidence linking...White to what the Soviets termed ‘informational work’ (political information) for their underground.” Mr. Craig concludes that White engaged in “a species of espionage.”

Then comes Mr. Craig’s somewhat astounding explanation as to why White’s giving secrets to the Soviets was excusable: “Left-of-center, progressive thinking fellow travelers, the New Dealers saw no disconnect between being loyal Americans and, at the same time, Soviet collaborators....

“[I]n his meeting with [Soviet intelligence officers] White probably believed that, by answering questions posed by representatives of the Soviet underground and in offering to provide his perspectives on American policy and world events, he would be able to provide America’s present and future

friend with an insider's view of the American bureaucracy and thereby advance the goal of a Soviet-American partnership."

Mr. Craig also defends White's prevarications in his testimony before the House un-American Activities Committee (HUAC) in 1948.

He writes, "In keeping silent, if not committing perjury when questioned by the FBI, by grand jury prosecutors, and by HUAC investigators about what he actually may have known about the past and present Communist Party connections of the Economist [slang for Red economists] White invoked and applied his own moral standards relating to personal loyalty, and made a conscious decision not to play into the hands of those who were out to destroy the Rooseveltian internationalist legacy."

Mr. Craig further justifies White's silence because, in his words, "Radical-right fringe groups have alleged the existence of an internationalist Communist conspiracy since the Bolshevik Revolution."

The right was not alone in this belief, and one would think that a scholar who bears the title of "executive director of National Coalition for the Promotion of History" would be familiar with the Communist International, or Comintern, which was the physical embodiment of "an internationalist Communist conspiracy" from 1919 until Stalin dissolved it in 1943. I refer Mr. Craig to a useful new book, *The Diary of Georgi Dimitrov*, edited by Ivo Banac. Dimitrov ran the Comintern from 1935 to 1943.

Mr. Craig's main achievement in defending White is his debunking of a claim that Bentley made years after her initial interviews with the FBI: that White was instrumental in shipping printing plates for German occupation currency to the Soviets. Moscow benefited by literally billions of dollars via the printing press.

By the time she made this charge Bentley was a pathetic figure who had lost her moment of fame—a souse and a sleep-about who made life miserable for her FBI handlers. Mr. Craig convincingly demonstrates that the currency-plates story was concocted by a Bentley ghostwriter.

An important book published last year by historians John Earl Haynes and Harvey Klehr, *In Denial: Historians, Communism and Espionage*, lamented the "dishonesty, evasion and special pleading and moral squalor" that marks much academic writing about communism and espionage. *Treasonable Doubt* certainly advances their thesis.

Understandably, many of the intelligence books on the Pacific phase of World War II have concentrated on signals intelligence—the code-breakers who tracked the Japanese fleet over waters covering almost half the world. Now comes a look at the intelligence behind the "island hopping" phase of the campaign in Jeffrey M. Moore's *Spies for Nimitz: Joint Military Intelligence in the Pacific War* (Naval Institute Press, \$29.95, 336 pages, illus).

Planners of the island campaign—by war's end, there had been eight fiercely contested beach landings—realized early on their ignorance of the targets. What were beach gradients? How sturdy were Japanese defenses? How about the tides?

Given that amphibious assaults are highly dependent on surprise, Adm. Chester Nimitz knew that answers to these and other questions must be found. So he created an interservice office, the Joint Intelligence Center, Pacific Ocean Areas (JICPOA), to make up for the lapses.

To me, the fascinating part of Mr. Moore's book is his comparison of pre-invasion estimates with what actually happened, a rare instance of a report card on intelligence operations. To be sure, there were glitches: For instance a shift in Japanese tactics from coastline stands to redoubt defenses was detected only after a frightful cost of lives.

But as Mr. Moore writes, "Although severely bloodied at times, the United States never lost a Central Pacific battle, and that was in large part because Nimitz and his lieutenants had either a very good picture of the enemy situation, or a fair picture of it." The JICPOA experience led ultimately to creation of the Defense Intelligence Agency.

So why have naval historians ignored JICPOA for half a century? Secrecy. JICPOA personnel "were forbidden even to mention the organization's real name and managed to keep Nimitz's most secret weapon hidden for the entire war."

Members of JICPOA wore no insignia to designate their specialty. "As far as Nimitz was concerned," Mr. Moore writes, "the outside world had no 'need to know' about JICPOA's activities."

However belatedly, Mr. Moore now gives the men and women of JICPOA their just due, in a well-documented book that should interest both the lay readers and the intelligence professional.

—*The Washington Times*, May 9, 2004, p. B6

Whining About Winners

by Peter Huessy

Did Ronald Reagan win the Cold War? CNN's Wolf Blitzer says such a view is "simplistic." And Robert Kaiser of *The Washington Post* claimed Mr. Reagan changed, not the Soviet Union. In short, all American presidents starting with Harry Truman contributed to the collapse of the Soviet Union. Small policy differences were eclipsed by common goals and strategies.

Let's look at the record. During the 1970s, the proponents of détente urged "restraint" on U.S. weaponry deployment, as we were assured it would be reciprocated by the Soviets. Sen. J. William Fulbright and then-President Carter were disciples of this creed. But as Mr. Carter's Secretary of Defense Harold Brown explained: "They build, we build. We don't build. They build."

Regarding the notion that all "experts" saw the Soviet Union collapsing in good order, again the facts are otherwise. George Kennan, the author of containment, saw little prospect of such an event. Arthur Schlesinger believed the Soviets could not be bankrupted, no matter the pace of U.S. military deployments. (A later CIA analysis also concluded the Soviets could withstand a U.S. military buildup.)

Mr. Carter admonished Americans for their fear of Communism. He gave away the Panama Canal, pushed for the Ayatollah Khomeini to return to Iran as a boost to "democratic reform," foresaw the Sandinistas as "moderates," canceled the B-1 bomber and stopped improvements to our strategic nuclear Triad. He refused to sell Tridents to Great Britain even after the Soviets invaded Afghanistan, saying "it would be an overreaction."

The Committee on the Present Danger predicted these trends would spell disaster for the United States. Mr. Reagan shared their views. His election in 1980 kicked off a ferocious fight within the U.S. security community. The Soviet proposal for a nuclear freeze was adopted by most of the Democratic Party and its media and academic allies. It would have frozen a rapidly aging U.S. strategic force compared to a much-modernized Soviet missile force, including 1800 SS-20 Intermediate Range Nuclear Force (INF) warheads in Europe and Asia.

The Reagan INF zero-zero option and START proposals for deep reductions were rejected out of hand by the Soviets, as well as by most of the U.S. media and Democrats. The Soviets said the proposals were "a joke," a point echoed by John Kerry. When we pushed for a Conventional Forces in Europe agreement that would end the lopsided Soviet advantage in Central Europe, Mikhail Gorbachev countered with "naval arms control."

These fights were not a debate over tactics. The disagreements were about outcomes. For example, Reps. Ed Markey, Thomas Downey, Henry Waxman and Barney Frank, and Sens. John Kerry, Christopher Dodd, Joseph Biden and Edward Kennedy fought tooth-and-nail Mr. Reagan's successful efforts to aid El Salvador and defeat the Communist FMLN guerillas. Similarly, the Nicaraguan resistance was the one effective lever for open elections, but many openly advocated a victory for the Ortega brothers while simultaneously trying to strangle the contras. FMLN operatives were openly portrayed as "reformers."

Mr. Reagan decontrolled the price of oil to pick the Soviets' foreign-exchange pockets, and the United States deliberately sabotaged their gas pipelines to Europe to do the same. He aided Poland's Solidarity movement almost immediately upon taking office, using the great offices of the Vatican and its Catholic allies in Poland. Their emergence as the new leaders of Poland at the end of the decade led to the collapse of the Warsaw Pact, the roots of which were planted in those courageous actions of Mr. Reagan in 1981.

The reforms of perestroika and glasnost were to make Communism more efficient, not to end it. As Margaret Thatcher wrote, "Gorbachev remained a Communist to the end." The claim that it was Mr. Reagan who changed gets everything backward. It was Mr. Gorbachev who accepted the INF deal in December 1987 just as Mr. Reagan had proposed it.

As we took some \$50 billion annually in foreign exchange from the Soviets, they were forced to withdraw their support for communist regimes in Nicaragua and Angola and Communist guerillas in El Salvador. Said Mr. Gorbachev to the Politburo: "They are on their own...To save the USSR we have to give up eastern Europe." It was a strong, not weak, NATO that compelled the Soviets to refrain from invading Poland, unlike 1968 in Czechoslovakia and 1956 in Hungary. The Brezhnev Doctrine was defeated in Grenada and Afghanistan, and by 1989 was in full retreat.

Mr. Reagan liberated the people of the former Soviet Union and of Eastern Europe. They adopted a policy of rollback, a policy explicitly denounced by the architect of containment, Mr. Kennan, and by liberals everywhere. But some Democrats supported Mr. Reagan. Two stand out. Les Aspin and Norm Dicks repeatedly supported the deployment of the Peace-keeper. For his courage, the Washington State Democratic Convention censored Mr. Dicks. Mr. Aspin was stripped of his HASC chairmanship, after which I asked Rep. Barney Frank whether the Democratic Party had decided to become "a carbon copy of the Chinese Politburo."

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