

discover the whereabouts of his mother, who died over a year ago and has been seated in her living room ever since. She and her son used to watch the commentaries of Bill Moyers together.

•Mr. Vyacheslav M. Molotov, the eponym for one of the most famous cocktails in the world, died of natural causes. He was 96. Samantha Smith's name was applied to yet another Soviet property. Her name already appears on

a species of nonlethal Soviet flower, a 12,000-foot mountain peak, and a babushka. Now it will appear on a minor planet somewhere near Jupiter. Soviet astronomer Miss Lyudmila Chernykh discovered the planet early

in November and just up and named it for Miss Smith. Finally, the press is no longer clamoring for President Ronald Reagan to make an effort to free hostages held in Lebanon, as will be explained in due course. —RET

CORRESPONDENCE

Count Me Out

In his "AIDS: A British View," which appears on page 29 of this issue, Christopher Monckton writes: "Every member of the population should be blood-tested every month to detect the presence of antibodies against [AIDS], and all those found to be infected with the virus, even if only carriers, should be isolated compulsorily, immediately, and permanently."

In reading this some of our more charitable readers might think they are being treated to a brilliant flash of Swiftian satire, or maybe a bit of outrageous leg-pulling from a budding Auberon Waugh. Alas, they would be wrong. Monckton was quite straight-faced in writing up his modest proposal, and the editors are quite serious in publishing it.

This grotesque but recently voguish hysteria is ludicrous on its face, or anyway it should seem so to someone who prizes the principles on which this magazine is supposed to be based—limited government, prudence, and individual responsibility, to name a few. It is simply the latest version of the totalitarian flim-flam that is forever drawing believers from the ranks of the weak-minded and the perpetually alarmed. Why the editors have seen fit to open their pages to it remains a deep mystery; but they have done so, and therein lies an insult and an embarrassment to all associated with *The American Spectator*.

—Andrew Ferguson
Assistant Managing Editor

Wladyslaw Pleszczynski replies:

So far as I can make out, Andy Ferguson is greatly upset by the cold-heartedness displayed by Christopher Monckton in his search for a solution to the AIDS crisis. However, in fairness to Mr. Monckton (and to our readers), it will not do to quote him out of context. Elsewhere in the piece Mr. Monckton also writes that "it is unlikely that a society which has been habituated to freedom since its foundation would yet be willing to accept the alternative to widespread death which isolation would offer." In other words, he is fully aware that a proposal as radical as his is essentially unthinkable. The reason for his concern is what he regards as

the nature of AIDS: a disease that continues to spread at a frightening rate and for which a cure is neither in sight nor likely. If Mr. Ferguson disagrees with Mr. Monckton on the science of AIDS, he should let us know. Until then, he will not have convinced us that Mr. Monckton's alarming proposal is nothing more than alarmism.

Venerable Harvard

This letter is about an article by P. J. O'Rourke in the November issue ("Crimson Cerebrations"). It calls for a "second opinion." O'Rourke writes in a juvenile, mocking fashion and exhibits no understanding either of the general significance of the 350th Harvard Anniversary celebration or of the individual seminars and programs. I was there as one of the representatives of the Class of 1935 and was most thoroughly impressed and pleased with the entire celebration. The calibre of participant and attendee and the breadth and depth of the sessions were extraordinary.

Perhaps I should write off O'Rourke as being a confirmed cynic as well as possessing an inferiority complex (and rightly so). I do appreciate he enjoys the right of free speech and your magazine certainly exemplifies that principle.

He evinces childish traits in commenting on the voices and accents of a number of people, and that seems pretty petty to me. He takes a cheap shot at a great university and at fabulous programming.

I hope his children (if he has any) enjoy a better education, a higher appreciation of the finer things in life, possess a decent sense of humor, and are more understanding of the values of a venerable institution. Finally, Secretary of State Shultz's speech was a gem. O'Rourke needs some "attitude readjustment pills." He seems to be a very unhappy and jaded individual, sad to say.

May *The American Spectator* progress and flourish!

—Sumner Rodman
Chestnut Hill, Massachusetts

Barnes Askew

In your September issue, Fred Barnes [in "Conservatives and the Democratic 10"] writes that, in the 1984 presiden-

tial campaign, "Every Democratic presidential candidate took himself out of contention for the conservative vote by a single act, criticizing the invasion of Grenada by American troops."

He adds about John Glenn, Fritz Hollings, and Reubin Askew that "without complaint, these three knuckled under on Grenada in hopes of placating the liberal, isolationist wing of the party that dominates the presidential primaries and caucuses."

Mr. Barnes owes Mr. Askew an apology.

Reubin Askew spoke out immediately, repeatedly, and vigorously in support of President Reagan's actions in Grenada. In fact, he was *roundly booed* for doing so at the state convention of the New Hampshire Democratic Party shortly after the rescue mission occurred.

Anyone in attendance at that convention, or any journalist who paid any attention to Askew's campaign, will confirm this. Unfortunately, Mr. Barnes, for all his current longing for a mainstream Democratic candidate, never even took the time in the last campaign to meet with Askew, a mainstream Democrat who has been widely hailed as one of the finest of recent American governors. Over a period of more than two years, Barnes repeatedly rebuffed letters and telephone calls in which Askew's staff tried to arrange a meeting between the two men. Little wonder that Barnes cannot recall Askew's positions on the issues.

For the record, far from coddling the "liberal, isolationist wing" of the Democratic Party, Askew challenged the left again and again—with his opposition to the nuclear freeze, with his opposition to abortion, with his support for merit pay for teachers, with his support for limits on middle-class entitlements spending, with his support for capital punishment, with his support for right-to-work laws and free trade, and so on.

It may be that Askew challenged too many entrenched party interest groups on too many issues. It may be that the candidate and his campaign were not as slick or as shrewd as they needed to be to win the nomination. Certainly the results in Iowa and New Hampshire

support such an argument. But what if Barnes and other prominent journalists had given Askew the attention and the coverage that his record and his views deserved? Would the results have differed then?

Mr. Barnes seems already to have anointed a candidate for 1988—Senator Bradley (interestingly enough, Askew's choice for the vice presidency had he won the nomination). Nevertheless, I urge Barnes this time to meet with and give equal treatment to all the candidates. If he can't find the time in his busy schedule to do that, then I urge him, at the least, to be accurate in his reporting.

—James L. Bacchus
Formerly, Press Secretary
Askew for President
Orlando, Florida

Fred Barnes replies:

I should have known I'd have to pay sooner or later for my sins in covering the 1984 Democratic presidential race. There were eight candidates, and I was one reporter for the *Baltimore Sun*. As you might expect, several candidates got short shrift from me, and poor Reubin Askew was one of them. Think of the consequence my lack of coverage had on the race; I tilted it away from Askew and toward the liberal isolationists.

Please excuse my sarcasm. Actually, Bacchus has a good point. The press, including me, dwells on the front-runners and largely ignores the rest of the field. This is bound to have some impact on the race. Still, candidates the press ignores sometimes surge anyway. Then, surprised reporters adjust instantly, treat them as front-runners, and ignore the fallen former front-runners. All this is a never-ending cycle. Brace yourself. It's coming again in 1988.

What about Askew and Grenada? I recalled that Askew was partially critical of Reagan's performance on Grenada, while endorsing the decision to invade. Bacchus assures me I am wrong, that Askew's support for the policy was unqualified. As a result, I do indeed offer Askew an apology for suggesting otherwise.

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EDITORIALS



REAGAN IS NOT REAGAN

by R. Emmett Tyrrell, Jr.

In America to be corrupted by bad impulses is relatively commonplace. To be corrupted by good impulses is apparently presidential. Jimmy Carter was brought low by an unscotchable impulse to do good when self-restraint would have been preferable and even morally unobjectionable. Now Ronald Reagan, swelled by his own good intentions, has suffered the same fate.

Jimmy Carter's libido for pious deeds was promiscuous. He would commit them anywhere, which explains the calamities that befell him practically everywhere. Only in his recent dealings with the Soviet Union and Iran has Ronald Reagan abandoned himself to goodness, and so it is that only now has his corruption set in. Blinded by a good impulse he has behaved arrogantly, deviously, and as the classic appeaser.

Some will consider it ironic that this President has come a cropper over a longing to reunite innocent victims of barbarism with their families. It seems so blameless. Yet it conduced him toward an arrogant disregard for the truth reminiscent of Lyndon Johnson and toward an ineptitude matched only by Jimmy Carter.

Adapted from RET's weekly Washington Post column syndicated by King Features.

The greater irony is that it should be the religious paradise of the Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini that corrupted the foreign policy behavior of this conservative President. Jimmy Carter's troubles with Khomeini's madhouse were the proximate cause of Reagan's election, and now Reagan's troubles there have rendered him at one with the hapless Jimmy. Are the powers and the principalities of the heavens at work here? Doubtless a mullah or two would believe it, but I lay the present presidential ineptitude, disingenuousness, and appeasement to Reagan's artless trust in the goodness of a good impulse. American Presidents need to learn that good deeds are not enough, and good intentions never preempt prudence.

Pursuing renewed diplomatic relations with post-Khomeini Iran is irreproachable, but the course followed by the Reagan White House was dreamy to the point of being preposterous and so perilous as to assure our failure and embarrassment.

This conservative Administration's foreign policy has been based on assessing the world as it is rather than as some ideologue dreams it to be. Thus, the President's secret emissaries should have borne in mind that the United States is not obliged to give Iran a sign of good faith, not through arms

shipments nor kisses blown from atop the Washington Monument. Iran has been the aggressor against us. Its friends and perhaps its agents hold our citizens and under conditions that are as inhumane as they are unjust. Furthermore, Iran, owing to its own excesses, is about to collapse. It needs our arms and our good will. Washington's policy toward terrorists and its embargo of arms shipments to a nation whose piratical behavior places it beyond the conventions of civilized nations have been sound. Aspiring Iranian leaders owe us a sign of good faith, such as the freeing of *all* Western hostages.

The President's emissaries might also have borne in mind that Iran is now a vast asylum of enraged factions, frequently illiterate. To expose oneself to the skittish mercies of any side was the path to certain betrayal. Yet these emissaries took that path. Now the President of the United States again looks pathetic before the world and cheap.

VIOLENCE IN THE SHEETS

As normalcy continues to refresh the land, leaving the vast majority of Americans free to live lives exempt from the gruesome melodramas that our progressives have imposed on us through the years, it becomes apparent that these progressives have a problem. They must find an outlet for their moral passions that is neither injurious to them nor to the public as a whole. They must occupy themselves in wholesome ways, avoiding desperate antics that nowadays could land them in a mental asylum or in some repressive house of detention even drearier than the great state universities that now rise up where once only harmless cow fields stood, or virgin forests. Is the socialization of the progressive, or of the liberal, as some are still called, feasible? What noble endeavor will absorb his prodigious energies?

I am happy to report that in the Age

In the end, as his multitudinous calamities weighed down on him, Jimmy Carter simply denied that the world had meaning. "There is nothing we can do about it," he and his assistant presidents would intone. President Reagan is more specific. He now denies that certain words have meaning. A shipment of weapons is not a shipment of weapons and a breach of our own arms embargo is not a breach of our own embargo. A hostage exchange is not a hostage exchange. This sort of dissembling has been going on since the Daniloff exchange was not an exchange and the Reykjavik summit was not a summit and our most authoritative source on that meeting became the eminent Mr. Mikhail Gorbachev.

This travesty has now gone too far. There is insufficient strategic discipline in the White House and insufficient respect for reality. The President should bring strategic thinking and principle back and rid himself of those sycophants who acquiesce when he follows sentimental impulse rather than principle.

of Reagan Normalcy citizens of progressive disposition have found activities that are only minimally harmful. But first fairness counsels that I explain how the noble deeds of the morally mobilized have created the present contentment with normalcy.

Despite thin boasts of personal saintliness the progressives, who have set much of the national agenda since the early 1960s, are a very violent bunch. To their credit, ideologues of the far left have been quick to note the fierceness of such progressive Americans as, say, Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr., and that is why it has been so easy for them to spin yarns about the misdeeds that supposedly emanate from American circles of power. Doubtless, in the privacy of their consciences, the Republic's Professor Schlesingers do indeed recognize their capacity for violence, which explains why they fre-

