

world calamity, but today it seems more like the annoying fuming of a has-been.

Mrs. Thatcher, a lady rather admired on these shores, quite vehemently scolded the U.S. for its actions. Grenada is formally a member of the British Commonwealth, so it would be natural that, when the Queen's own governor is practically imprisoned by Marxist-Leninist gangsters, the kingdom would do something about it—not to mention that the neighboring islands, also Commonwealth members, implored Britain for protection. But Britain, a sclerotic lion that knows the limits to which she can taunt a very robust and equally unpredictable bear, chose to do nothing. Once Reagan had made it clear that he is not overly concerned about the bear's sensitivities, some British conservatives made snide remarks that his move was intended to boost his domestic political fortunes—a stance that deserves moral censure. Suddenly, what happened in elections subsequent to the Tories' own little war in the Falklands was conveniently forgotten, as was our not-so-tacit support for our British "cousins" that has cost us a lot of Latin American good will.

The London press scornfully reprimanded us on the freedom-of-the-press issue: no correspondent was allowed to accompany the American task force in the Caribbean. No mention was made of the fact that Mrs. Thatcher, during the Falkland enterprise, permitted the British media to photograph only the Union Jack flying proudly from the warships and smiling faces of embarking patriotic paratroopers. Anyone who lived through Vietnam will recall how *our* media interviewed enemy propagandists and how much footage, or column inches, *they* were given in our press.

For many years prior to World War I, Britain and her royalty projected a most tender love for the Kaiser's Germany. Then it went to war on the side of France and Czarist Russia, and angry Germans carried placards that read "God Punish England!" during street demonstrations.

We do not ask God for retribution. But we do suggest that, having lost an empire, Britain could now relax a bit and afford both a sense of shame and a sense of fairness. □

Ship of Fools

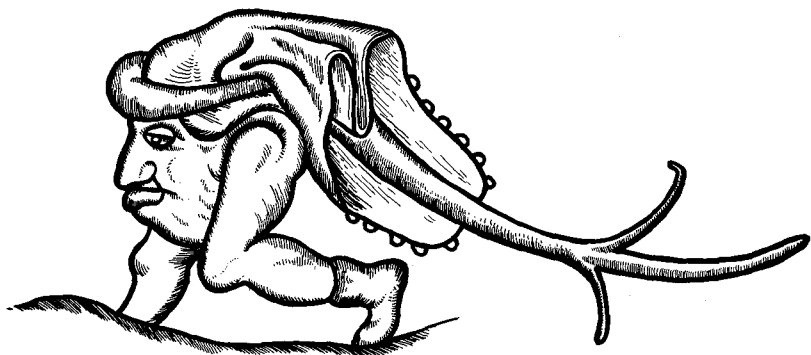
The debate on how to render America impotent has reached orgasmic intensity. Suddenly, everybody sees atomic war just around the corner; the conventional liberal media are organizing giant scare campaigns (in the name of the people's right to know), while the radicals, the professional freezeniks, the regular pro-Moscow troops, and all the incorporated communist-front enterprises accuse the liberal media of anti-internationalism—that is, of an inability to play in a Soviet-orchestrated arrangement as they do so successfully.

Faced with the news that the Russians had hydrogen bombs, Winston Churchill said that henceforth the very concept of defense was fundamentally altered. True enough, but this keen insight did not obliterate Clausewitz's more venerable truth—that war is politics by another means. Only the acceptance of the theorized, calculated, and conjectural premise that an atomic war is unwinnable under any circumstances negates Clausewitz's principle and eliminates war as a means to defend the basic institutions on which America was erected and still stands as a superior social entity. For if it is true that no war in our epoch can actually end in a

victory, then America is doomed. This verity means that a democracy, a pluralistic state, and a free society must perish. The reasons for this gloomy inference are pure, simple, and mercilessly unequivocal.

The idea of détente, as it was crystallized in the supersmart minds of its conceptualists, was quite optimistic in nature. It assumed that, during a historically protracted period of nonbellicosity, our moral superiority, political attractiveness, and economic efficiency would impress the Soviet society to such an extent that that society would eventually begin to exert pressure on its leadership, and that such a process could positively shape the world's future. Thus, any concession short of appeasement and surrender made sense. Such cheerful credulity resulted in the unleashing of Soviet-sponsored terrorist activities on an unheard-of scale, then in an open invasion of Afghanistan, then in the massacre of a nascent freedom in Poland. We now confront a behemoth totalitarian and military power committing outrages that once would have qualified as acts of war, but we cannot respond properly for we may trigger a war, which is a priori unwinnable. So—if we are disallowed from waging even a justified war in defense of our very existence—what are our other options?

One is that an armed conflict with the Soviet Union will be replaced with a propaganda war, which we would certainly lose. In such a war, lies are the most potent weapon. For example: the Soviet Ministry of Truth could tell Russians that



canned pet food in America is made out of shredded black South African babies. We would have no means to refute this, as *theirs* is a closed totalitarian society—and the Soviet citizens have believed even more aberrant fabrications. What's worse is that we cannot even convince our own citizens of the factual horrors of communism. We have a free press whose major goal seems to be demolishing anything—right or wrong—our government has to say. To reach the Soviet citizenry in order to tell them what's real and true via our communications media is about as feasible as setting up a *New York Times* bureau on Venus. Our press, in fact, does everything possible to persuade us that the nuclear war is unwinnable, but it is unable to convey the same message behind the Iron Curtain. Russian citizens are at the mercy of their leaders' pronouncements: that the Korean airliner was on a spy mission, that any imperialist violation of their sacred frontiers will be crushed by the invincible atomic rocketry that is so proudly displayed each year in Red Square. A vision of the Stars & Stripes flying over the Kremlin as a result of a propaganda war would seem ridiculous to Americans; the idea of a hammer and sickle banner over the White House is, to many Russians, a conceivable possibility, maybe just a matter of time. And otherwise rational Western societies are willing to accept the assertion that we are feeding babies to pets rather than risk Soviet wrath and an "unwinnable" nuclear exchange.

A democratic society is by nature an informed and debating society. As such, it can be indoctrinated by even the flimsiest efforts. It can, therefore, be *convinced* about the need for personal sacrifice, but never coerced into it. The more doubt and reflection that takes place, the less likelihood of sacrifice—regardless of all persuasive exertions. In contrast, all of Soviet society is structured on enforced sacrifice. The word "sacrifice" is synonymous with the very process of living. In such a reality, the winnability or unwinnability of atomic war is mean-

ingless. In our pluralistic and individualistic reality it somehow looks as if we are aboard Sebastian Brant's *Ship of Fools*: its crew endlessly pursues a miraculous, utopian "agreement" that would eliminate the specter of unwinnable war from global political affairs so that everybody would rejoice in peace. No one thinks about the reality of other struggles. Do we have a contingency plan for confronting the Soviets in a war of ideologies, systems, ways of life—a war that will not disappear from our forced coexistence? May we rest assured that an overwhelming majority of our nation would approve such a plan to talk and act in unison, in order to lend credibility to our resolve?

In a well-meant but rather simplistic utterance at a recent press conference, President Reagan expressed the thought that we should invite here as many representatives of the new nations as possible: they would see how democracy works and how representation through the ballot makes societies better. He wanted to teach them about elections. But they know about elections. What the President seems not to realize is that a society ordered according to a communal principal is not a teachable concept: it must grow out of civilizational

tradition. Japan or Taiwan or Singapore could accept our political mechanisms (but not sociocultural ways) because deep down within the cultures of those nations the philosophical preconditions for those mechanisms existed. Tanzania, Saudi Arabia, or the Andean republics—that's something else. Teaching them democracy is not the same as acquainting their populations with refrigerators. Besides, there is still that bizarre warp in our own public opinion: liberal congressmen and the media, so eager to train a Somoza, or a Shah, somehow keep mum about the idea of educating an Andropov or a Jaruzelski. They would deem such a notion both ridiculous and improper. This is why if proper understanding of current affairs fails us, we will lose the world struggle. In the end, we will take our ship of fools apart, with our own hands, when cruising over the deepest and most turbulent abyss. □

Methodology

Once again (though it is only the second time), there is a black contender for the Presidency—and it is a glorious moment, for it shows that we are true to ourselves in that we are living up to the most intrinsic promises of our free society, pluralistic democracy, and the Constitution—the sources of all our strengths. The momentousness of this moment, however, is slightly marred by a feeling that, perhaps, Rev. Jesse Jackson is ill-suited to bear the standard of the last stage of emancipation. Rev. Jackson belongs to that breed of social activists which was engendered by the 1960's; as such he confuses rage with strength. But rage is *not* strength. Historically, candidates for the American Presidency have based their bids on the force of their ideas, arguments, reasoning, explication. Thus, we think that it's unfortunate that blacks may see as their spokesman, one anointed by hope and extraordinariness, a person who believes more in the power of the scream and frenzy than in that of clear statement and calm judgment. □

