Democracy's Hall of Fame

Anti-Communist Heroes of the Third World

Michael S. Warner

One of the supreme ironies of our times is that Marxists are so shameless in their hero worship. For all their talk of the dialectic and laws of history, Marxists understand that in practice revolutions are by no means inevitable; they must be waged and won by *revolutionaries*. Lenin, Mao, Ho Chi Minh, Sandino—Communist movements everywhere have erected cults of personality. They recognize the power of heroes, even dead heroes, to crystallize popular hopes and resolve.

We might do well to take a page from their book. Democracy has heroes of its own, and not only Western leaders such as Washington, Lincoln, and Churchill. The Third World also can boast of democratic men and women who have defeated Communism, or are valiantly fighting it now. Ramon Magsaysay of the Philippines, General Sir Gerald Templer in Malaya, Romulo Betancourt of Venezuela, Jonas Savimbi of Angola, and Eugenia Charles of Dominica have successfully fought for freedom and human dignity, and their stories can provide both instruction and inspiration for anti-Communist democrats everywhere.

Ramon Magsaysay: Huks on the Run

After World War II and the Communist seizures of China, North Korea, and North Vietnam, Marxist insurrections threatened nearly every country in Southeast Asia. The Philippines, newly independent from the United States in 1946, were particularly vulnerable. Stalinist agitators fanned the grievances of Filipino peasants in the late 1940s, and soon bands of rebels, the Huks, were wreaking havoc on the dominant island of Luzon.

Huk guerrillas seemed to be everywhere in central Luzon—attacking police posts, ambushing vehicles, kidnapping, killing, and otherwise terrorizing their enemies. The Huk politburo brazenly operated in Manila itself, the capital city. By the summer of 1950, 10,000 guerrillas were fighting the Filipino army, and because of the war in Korea, little American aid could be spared. The lackadaisical government of President Elpidio Quirino appeared ineffectual in dealing with the threat.

But in September 1950 President Quirino appointed a new secretary of defense. Ramon Magsaysay, a former bus mechanic, had been a hero in the resistance against the Japanese occupation, and after independence served as chairman of the armed services committee in the Filipino House of Representatives. His impact as defense secretary was almost immediate. On the night of his inauguration Mr. Magsaysay met secretly with a member of the Huk politburo, who wanted to defect. Shortly afterwards, a series of raids in Manila netted six politburo members, almost 100 other Huks, and thousands of valuable documents.

Mr. Magsaysay was determined to smash the Huks, and in the following months he seemed to be everywhere. Roaming the countryside in a jeep, oblivious to the danger of ambush, and often accompanied only by American adviser Colonel Edward Lansdale, he checked on the progress of the war and ferreted out corruption. His portly figure and loud Hawaiian shirts were soon familiar to the troops and people of "Huklandia," as the Manila press dubbed the battle zone, and his surprise inspections became legendary. So did his hot temper. Colonel Lansdale recalled that the possibility of a visit from Mr. Magsaysay reformed many petty criminals both in the military and outside it. "Every time I have the drawer open with all that stamp money in it and start getting tempted to help myself," remarked one postal clerk, "I get to thinking that that damn guy would take that moment to show up and catch me."

Mr. Magsaysay emphasized two ideas, both basic to successful counterinsurgency operations.

First, the military had to be made a reliable antiguerrilla force. Mr. Magsaysay improved discipline and morale, reorganized the army into 1,200-man Batallion Combat Teams, created special reconnaissance and raiding patrols, and promoted officers on the basis of their combat performance rather than their desk-top diligence. He told commanders in his ungrammatical but effective way, "Take officers who could lead and yank out those who are inefficient in your outfits, and I will back you." Realizing that in Mr. Magsaysay they had a

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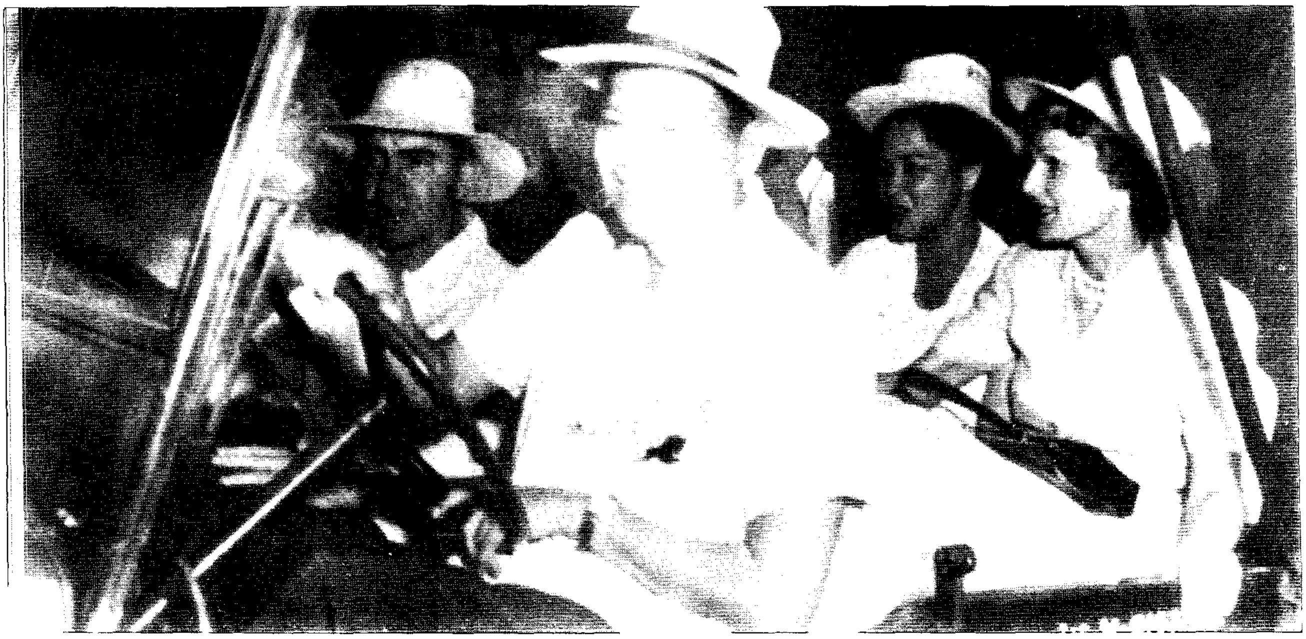

Ramon Magsaysay defeated the Huks and in 1953 was elected president of the Philippines by a landslide.

leader who wanted to win, his soldiers began to fight.

Second, Mr. Magsaysay convinced the people of Huklandia that their government cared more about them than the Huks did. He made his soldiers treat peasants with respect, and he listened to the complaints and information provided by villagers. Perhaps his best-known measure was the Economic Development Corps program (EDCOR), which gave land and a chance to start anew to Huks who surrendered. Mr. Magsaysay explained his strategy in terms no one could misunderstand: "With my left hand I offer the Huks the way to peace, the way that will give them a home and economic security; with my right hand I shall crush all of those who wish to destroy our democratic institutions."

Secretary Magsaysay's energy and charisma soon had the Huks on the run, and by the end of 1952 their remaining cadres were little more than isolated bandits. The *Philippines Free Press* named him "Man of the Year" in 1951, noting, "His efforts in fighting the Huks have been crowned with success, resulting in the breaking of the 'spinal column' of the Communist movement." Almost as many Huks surrendered as were killed or captured, a sure measure of his political as well as military victories. In 1953 Mr. Magsaysay ran for president and won by a landslide. Unfortunately, he died in an airplane crash in 1957. The Philippines have not remained a liberal democracy, but thanks to Ramon Magsaysay they were spared Communist rule and thus still have hope for the future.

Winning Hearts and Minds in Malaya

While Mr. Magsaysay was beating the Huks, British General Sir Gerald Templer was combatting guerrillas in Malaya, then under British rule. The Communists were capitalizing on unrest among Malaya's ethnic Chinese. Led by Chin Peng, they mounted a bloody campaign of terror in the late 1940s. By 1951 they had frightened and demoralized the entire colony, and even assassinated the British high commissioner in a roadside ambush.

Happily for all but the Communists, the man Prime Minister Winston Churchill picked to replace the murdered Sir Henry Gurney was a courageous soldier and proved a surprisingly skillful politician. "Every inch the soldier," General Templer was the son of a colonel. Schooled at Wellington and Sandhurst, he fought in the trenches in the First World War, made the Olympic hurdles team in 1924, and 12 years later was decorated for gallantry in Palestine. In World War II he became Britain's youngest lieutenant general, and commanded an armored division in Italy. Appointed a military commissioner in occupied Germany, General Templer at one point sacked an obscure burgomaster named Konrad Adenauer for alleged laziness and incompetence.

Like Mr. Magsaysay, the intense and deceptively frail-looking General Templer had a near instant effect on the war. His fiery temper and ceaseless energy were soon the talk of Malaya. As high commissioner and director of operations (no man had ever held both posts), General Templer wielded more civil and military power than any British officer since Cromwell. He grasped the importance of the war's political facets; indeed, he coined the famous maxim that to beat guerrillas one must win "the battle for the hearts and minds of the people."

General Templer was an exponent of independence and an opponent of racism. As he put it, "You can and should have independence if you help me to get rid of these Communists." He also made no secret of his disgust for the polarizing racism of the colony's contentious factions, especially the persecution of the ethnic Chinese, whom he sought to make equal partners in Malay society. Sir Gerald did not simply run the government, he inspired its citizenry.

The general's first concern was implementing the Briggs Plan (named for the former director of operations,

Deceptively frail-looking General Sir Gerald Templer brought hope and resolve to beleaguered Malaya.

General Sir Harold Briggs). Thousands of poor Chinese squatters farmed the jungle's edge and furnished supplies and recruits to the Min Yuen, a Communist front. Templer resettled half a million Chinese in "New Villages," trained and armed them as Home Guards, and gave them the chance to own the land they farmed. This proved a mortal blow to the Communists. Suddenly bereft of their support, the guerrillas retreated deeper into the jungle, only to be hunted relentlessly by the British army and Malay police.

With the help of Sir Robert Thompson he used psychological warfare against the guerrillas. Information that led to the capture of rebels earned informants huge cash rewards. Half a billion "safe conduct" passes scattered over the jungle urged guerrillas to surrender. And the secret but deadly Special Branch—a cloak-and-dagger team including female double agents—hounded the Communist leaders.

Where there was once despair General Templer brought new hope and resolve, and by 1953 the rebels' isolation and dimming prospects were clear to all. But before leaving, the general warned against overoptimism with characteristic bluntness, vowing to "shoot the bastard who says this Emergency is over."

General Templer resigned his post in June 1954, confident of victory but fearful his presence would overshadow the upcoming Malay elections. Promoted to field marshal, he later served four years as chief of the Imperial General Staff. He died in London in 1979. The Malaya he fought for is now part of Malaysia, a democratic bulwark in Southeast Asia, while Singapore, which split off from the Malay peninsula to form its own independent nation in 1959, is one of the most prosperous nations in Asia.

Saving Democracy from Castro

After conquering Cuba in 1959, Fidel Castro immediately began to support Communist insurgencies in such countries as Colombia, Peru, Bolivia, and Nicaragua. His primary target for subversion was the fledgling democracy of oil-rich Venezuela. But that country was to be Mr. Castro's first major disappointment, largely because of the skill and tenacity of one of Latin America's greatest democratic leaders.

President Romulo Betancourt spent all his adult life working to reform his country. Three times he had fled into exile (the first when he was only 20), each time eluding a different dictator. In Costa Rica in the 1930s he briefly flirted with Communism, but rejected it when he realized it offered little to Venezuela. By his 30th birthday Betancourt was a household name, known for integrity and commitment to democratic reform. He was a warm, scholarly man, and Venezuelans adored him. After the ouster of dictator Perez Jimenez in 1958, Mr. Betancourt returned from exile for the last time and won the country's first presidential election in a decade.

Venezuela soon faced dangers from left and right. General Jimenez's sympathizers in the army mutinied twice, in 1960 and 1961, but loyal troops quickly suppressed both uprisings. Having seen Venezuelan democracy stifled by renegade officers in 1948, Mr. Betancourt as president took pains to cultivate the military's good will. He improved their pay and living conditions, praised their loyalty, and quietly weeded out untrustworthy officers. He strengthened the army with American counterinsurgency training and better intelligence, and he overhauled the country's police force, recruiting and retraining it from the ground up.

These reforms proved fortunate when Communist subversion began in earnest. Mr. Castro recognized that the success of Venezuela's democratic example was inimical to the spread of Marxism in Latin America. "At the top of their lungs," Mr. Betancourt wrote, the Communists "proclaimed that the Venezuelan experiment had to be destroyed." His administration returned this enmity, taking a strong anti-Cuban stance from the outset.

Open unrest flared in October 1960 when the Movement of the Revolutionary Left called for revolution. Riots at the Central University and elsewhere resulted, and policemen and troops battled protesters in the streets of Caracas (the riots also precipitated a huge demonstration of popular support for the Betancourt government that dwarfed the student protests). More riots erupted after the administration broke relations with Cuba in late 1961. Early the next year leftist guerrillas holed up in caves in the Sierra del Coro and began a sporadic insurgency that smoldered for the rest of the decade. Still more riots in Caracas left 39 dead. And in the spring of 1962 two more mutinies, of leftist marines, had to be crushed.

Throughout this ordeal Mr. Betancourt's faith in democracy and the Venezuelan constitution never wavered. He never stooped to the Communists' level by fighting them outside the law. "Democracy cannot defend itself by adopting the methods of dictatorship," he wrote. Mr. Betancourt, and the army, knew that the terrorists sought

"Democracy cannot defend itself by adopting the methods of dictatorship," wrote Venezuela's Romulo Betancourt.

to provoke massive repression, and recognized that a military takeover would inflame popular grievances and help bring the left to power.

Accordingly, Mr. Betancourt fought strictly by the book. Though he suspended constitutional guarantees more than once, he did so in accordance with the emergency powers vested in his office. Only after an apparent assassination attempt in 1963 did he outlaw the "pro-Castro extremists," and not until that October did Betancourt strip the immunity of the Communist senators and deputies in the National Congress. Venezuela's Supreme Court upheld both actions.

A patriot, reformer, and "man of the people," Mr. Betancourt knew the importance of winning and holding popular trust. Land reform, growth, and prosperity defused the Communists' major propaganda weapons. Mr. Betancourt made the army and police protect the law-abiding Venezuelan, and the citizenry repaid these efforts with information and support. His methods worked, as he saw in 1964 when he wrote, "It would be difficult to find another country as immune as Venezuela to the totalitarian virus that Cuba exports." In December 1963 Mr. Betancourt became his country's first elected president to complete his term and peacefully relinquish his office. He died in New York City on a vacation in 1981. The democracy he guarded has flourished, and today Venezuela is perhaps the most stable country in Latin America.

Rollback in Angola

Marxist guerrillas have long been lionized as freedom-fighters. But today, the tables of insurgency have been turned, and popular figures are waging guerrilla wars against Marxist regimes in Cambodia, Afghanistan, Angola, and Nicaragua. The most successful struggle so far has been Jonas Savimbi's fight to liberate Angola.

The son of a native railroad worker and patriot who died in a Portuguese jail, Jonas Savimbi decided while still young to fight Portugal's rule. After studying in Lisbon and Lausanne (he holds a Ph.D. in political science), he joined Holden Roberto's pro-Western National Front for the Liberation of Angola (FNLA). He rose quickly, becoming the front's foreign minister before his 30th birthday. But clashes with Mr. Roberto angered Mr. Savimbi, and he resigned in 1964. For over a year he traveled, meeting Che Guevara (whom he thought rather stupid) and Mao Tse-Tung, and training at China's Nanking Military Institute. Returning to Africa in 1965, he founded the National Union for the Total Independence of Angola—UNITA—and installed himself as president of its central committee.

With help from China and Egypt, Mr. Savimbi's men fought the Portuguese until the signing of a peace treaty (the short-lived Alvor Agreement) in January 1975. But despite the agreement's provisions for a coalition government and elections, Angola's rival factions were soon fighting each other. The Marxist Popular Front for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA) with 11,000 hastily deployed Cuban soldiers, seized the capital (Luanda) and easily fended off a small force of UNITA, FNLA, and South African units.

Unhappily for Angola's new colonizers, however, neither Mr. Savimbi nor UNITA was broken. Rejecting a Marxist offer to "share" power, Mr. Savimbi led a handful of loyalists on a grueling "long march" deep into the country's interior. In the wilderness the Portuguese called the Land at the End of the World, UNITA regrouped and launched a new guerrilla war. Today Mr. Savimbi bides his time, slowly expanding UNITA's territory and harassing the Cubans and the MPLA with his audacious sabotage and wide-ranging attacks.

Western journalists return from "Free Angola" astounded at Mr. Savimbi's miracle. Expecting a ragged handful of musket-toting natives, they instead find a professional army with high morale despite shortages and no pay. Mr. Savimbi's more than 10,000 soldiers have fought, and beaten, the Cubans in pitched battles. "Free Angola" is larger than many countries, and reporters tell of UNITA hospitals, machine shops, command bunkers, churches, and even a secretarial school.

Mr. Savimbi's charisma, intelligence, and drive are responsible for UNITA's success. "If he were killed, I don't know what would happen to UNITA," said one soldier to the *Washington Post*'s Leon Dash. A big, imposing man with a wide beard and a liking for silver-tipped walking sticks, Mr. Savimbi speaks seven Western and African languages. His appeal transcends tribal lines and commands an "almost mythical allegiance." His own philosophy is vaguely social democratic. He is not a capitalist, and he told Henry Allen: "I have no capital.

No one in Angola has any capital." But neither is he a doctrinaire socialist. A recent UNITA document speaks of national recovery and planned development, but adds that the country's "move into entrepreneurship" will ensure "the attainment of economic prosperity more rapidly and more surely" than concentration of economic power in government or in "giant-sized enterprises."

Mr. Savimbi has been called an opportunist for taking aid from sources as diverse as China and South Africa. He trades with Pretoria and gets some aid from Mr. Botha's government, but claims he has no choice and that he loathes apartheid. "When a man is drowning in a river filled with crocodiles, he does not ask whose hand pulls him to shore," he told correspondent Richard Harwood. It is difficult, especially for Mr. Savimbi's critics on the left, to remain consistent in condemning him for these ties. Other African leaders who trade with South Africa, notably Zimbabwe's Robert Mugabe, are not censured.

Mr. Savimbi cannot beat the estimated 20,000 to 35,000 Cubans in Angola on his own, but he can and will continue to make life miserable for the Communists. By all accounts UNITA has thwarted their attempt to dominate and remold Angola. In last year's offensives, Mr. Savimbi's army seized and briefly held a town only 100 miles from Luanda. In February they took the diamond-mining center Kanfunfo. The only way Angola's ruling Marxists can stop these inroads is to bow to Mr. Savimbi's demands—expulsion of the Cubans, negotiations, and popular elections.

Yves Guy Berges/Sygma

Jonas Savimbi's charisma, intelligence, and drive are responsible for UNITA's inroads against Communism in Angola.

Liberating Grenada

Early on the morning of October 25, 1983, President Reagan stood in a White House briefing room and told a stunned world that American troops were at that moment liberating Grenada. By his side was a dignified black woman in her sixties.

They each read their own short statements, and in the flurry of questions that followed, one reporter asked Mr. Reagan: "Do you think the United States has the right to invade another country to change its government?"

He hesitated a second, but before he could speak the woman beside him stepped to the microphone.

"And I don't think it's an invasion, if I may answer that question," she said. Surprised but obviously pleased, the President nodded his agreement.

"What is it?" the reporter fired back.

"This is a question of our asking for support," she answered in a lilting Caribbean accent. "We are one region. Grenada is part and parcel of us in organization, and we don't have—we don't have the capacity ourselves to see to it that the Grenadians get the freedom that they require to have to choose their own government."

She was Mary Eugenia Charles, prime minister of Dominica. Granddaughter of a slave, she studied in Toronto and at the London School of Economics, then returned to Dominica to launch her career as a lawyer and businesswoman. In 1968 she founded the Dominica Freedom Party, and after helping lead the island's drive for independence from Britain (granted in 1978), she spearheaded the Freedom Party's opposition to the corrupt Patrick John, the country's first leader. In 1980 she won the prime ministry with a landslide victory.

The island of Dominica is tiny and very poor—it exports mainly bananas—with few resources and no beaches to draw tourists. But Mrs. Charles won't take help from just anyone. Among her first acts as prime minister was stopping a Cuban-sponsored scholarship program for Dominican youths: "Too militaristic. Too revolutionary," she told the *Miami Herald*'s Beverly McFarland. In December 1981 a savage band of Rasta-

UPI/Bettmann Archive

In 1983 Eugenia Charles moved decisively to stop the spread of Communism in the Caribbean when she requested American help to liberate Grenada.

farians, ex-soldiers, and mercenaries (some with ties to the Ku Klux Klan) attempted a putsch that ended in two bloody gunfights with Dominican police.

Mrs. Charles and her Caribbean neighbors watched with horror as Mr. Bishop began to militarize Grenada. "It didn't take a genius to figure out what was going on," she said. "You get little snippets of information," such as reports of Cubans, Russians, and other tourist types "with no visible means of support driving around in fancy cars."

The arms buildup, Mrs. Charles told an audience last December, made her fear those weapons were "meant also for the other countries which had shown quite clearly that they were not and would not adopt the philosophy that was being spread in Grenada."

"What could happen to us in a couple of hours in an island like ours?" she asked.

In October 1983 the Grenadian pot boiled over. Marxist hardliners toppled and later murdered Bishop. On October 21 a hurriedly called meeting of the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States, chaired by Mrs. Charles, convened in Barbados to decide how to meet this new danger. Governor-General Paul Scoon, the only legal authority still alive on Grenada, requested their help, and they "knew something had to be done. We could not have gone on living like this."

Together they could only muster about 300 men—hardly enough to invade Grenada. "We looked for someone who could help us," Mrs. Charles said in December. Britain, France, and Canada were sympathetic but refused to send troops. So they turned to America: "They had the capacity." She had visited the aircraft carrier USS *Independence* earlier that year, "and I knew that boat alone could do the job that was going to be done in Grenada."

With no dissenting votes the organization moved to request American help. The appeal was sent to Washington on October 23, and two days later Communism lost its first country in 64 years.

Grounds for Hope

What links these five leaders—Magsaysay, Templer, Betancourt, Savimbi, and Charles—is their shared effort to stem the advance of Communism in the Third World. Each leader and each case is different from the others in important ways, to be sure. Yet their very diversity highlights an essential fact: that the leaders and the common people of the Third World, if instilled with the desire to preserve their freedoms and given the means to do so, can prove more than a match for their Communist enemies. In these violent times that is good news indeed, for it is grounds for hope.

How Jimmy Carter Fooled the Arabs

And Other Oil Shockers

S. Fred Singer

Over the past 11 years the world has witnessed two spectacular increases in the world price of oil, a quadrupling in 1973, from $3 to $12 per barrel, and a tripling to $36 in 1979–80. Most experts predicted the price would rise ever higher.

Today, however, we have an oil glut. The price currently stands at $29 and is falling, despite a worldwide economic recovery and fears that the Iran-Iraq war will continue to interfere with Persian Gulf tanker traffic. The price could drop below $20 shortly (in real terms, less than the 1974 price), but it should then rise slowly as low-cost oil is gradually depleted.

These oil trends are not a mystery, but a proof that economics really works. The price rises have encouraged conservation and the substitution of oil by cheaper, competing energy sources. Today less than 10 percent of U.S. electricity is generated by oil. In France, Japan, Taiwan, and South Korea, nuclear power is growing at a spectacular rate. Other countries are switching to coal or gas, or are developing hydroelectric power. OPEC's oil output has fallen in half, from 32 million barrels per day in 1979–80 to 17 mbd in 1984, and Saudi Arabia's has fallen by nearly two-thirds.

Three Lessons

To understand a variety of puzzling events in the oil business and to demolish many popular myths, one needs to remember only three related facts:

- Oil is a fungible substance. In spite of differences in quality, sulfur content, and specific gravity (weight per unit volume), one barrel of oil is essentially interchangeable with any other.
- There is one world oil market, and therefore one world price. The only variation, a matter of a dollar or less, is due to differences in transportation costs to Rotterdam, Singapore, Houston, and other major transshipping ports and refinery centers.
- In spite of appearances and pronouncements to the contrary, the price of oil is set by supply and demand—like any other commodity.

These three principles will be useful in analyzing a number of policy issues: the price of oil, the "need" for strategic stockpiles, and the international oil-sharing agreement.

Oil Price Mania

How does OPEC set the price of oil? The question is predicated on just one of many myths. OPEC does not set the price of oil. Contract prices follow the spot market price, which is set by free bargaining. OPEC's only means of affecting the spot price is to adjust its oil output and thereby influence world supply. If OPEC cuts output, for example, it can reduce supply and raise the price (or keep it from falling). But OPEC cannot influence demand; only consumers control demand, based on their buying decisions, which depend on the price of oil and on other factors such as income.

An interesting point arises. If OPEC wants the price of oil to be extremely high, it must reduce its output toward zero—but then its revenues also drop toward zero. Conversely, too high an output would flood the market and drive prices down, again lowering revenues. One can see that there must be an optimum price for OPEC that maximizes revenues and profits.

The "core" of OPEC, consisting of Saudi Arabia and the other Arabian producers of the Persian Gulf, has an interest in maximizing profits over the long term: Its reserves are sufficient for 50 years or more; and, because of sparse populations, the financial needs of these countries have historically been small and they can afford a long view (although their budgets have now climbed to match and exceed oil income).

I estimate that the 1973 price increase to $12 per barrel was close to the OPEC optimum. That price rise came about only after OPEC countries nationalized the oil concessions held by multinational oil companies and restricted the growth of oil production. In the years preceding 1973, prices had been held down by a continuous boom in oil production, which had been doubling

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