The Phyllis Schlafly Report

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Reaffirming the Monroe Doctrine

A group of distinguished persons from the North American continent gathered in the U.S. State Department Diplomatic Rooms on April 28, 1987 to proclaim the lasting vitality and relevance of the Monroe Doctrine. It was an event of political, historical and social importance.

Grenada's Prime Minister Herbert A. Blaize told how grateful his country is that Ronald Reagan used the Monroe Doctrine to liberate Grenada in 1983. Prime Minister Eugenia Charles of Dominica reinforced this gratitude. She was the one whose 3:00 a.m. telephone call, appealing for help for Grenada, was taken by President Reagan, who then moved immediately into action (without consulting Dan Rather or Sam Donaldson).

Secretary of State George Shultz told of the threat to the Monroe Doctrine posed by the Communist regime in Nicaragua, and he urged us to hold fast to the policy that bears Monroe's name. Then he unveiled to the public a magnificent Rembrandt Peale portrait of James Monroe, which has been privately held until now by Monroe's descendants.

"Monroe Doctrine" awards were presented to opinion makers whose words and actions "support the continuing validity of the Monroe Doctrine." Some of those who were honored by these awards were John R. Silber, Boston University president, for his article on "Central America and the War Powers Act" in the *New Republic; Time* Magazine for its cover story on the Monroe Doctrine on September 21, 1962; Armando Valladares, the Cuban who spent 22 years in Castro's prisons, for his book *Against All Hope;* and the *Chattanooga News Free Press* for its editorial "Where Shall We Stop the Reds."

The mainspring for this unusual State Department event was the Honorable Helen Marie Taylor, current president of the 60-year-old James Monroe Memorial Foundation, and former U.S. delegate to the United Nations and also to UNESCO. She had the vision and the determination, the appreciation of history and the sense of drama, to bring together an unusual group of leaders in government, media, and scholarship to dramatize the current timeliness of the Monroe Doctrine. The Honorable Clement E. Conger, Curator of the State Department Diplomatic Reception Rooms, called the Monroe Doctrine Dinner "the most successful and exciting event that I've been associated with in my 26 years with the State Department."

Monroe's Message

The Monroe Doctrine was proclaimed in President Monroe's message to Congress on December 2, 1823. It was a response to an attempt by Imperial Russia under Czar Alexander I to colonize our Pacific coast, from Alaska to San Francisco. History teaches that sometimes, the more things change, the more they remain the same.

The essential part of the Monroe Doctrine is contained in these words: "The political system of the allied powers is essentially different from that of America. We should consider any attempt on their part to extend their system to any portion of this hemisphere as dangerous to our peace and safety." The "allied powers" were defined as Russia and other European governments.

President Monroe's courageous statement was made at a time when America had no standing army and only five sailing ships in our navy. But we had a proud sense of national identity. His statement was enthusiastically supported by Congress and the American people. His Secretary of State, John Quincy Adams, advised: "There can, perhaps, be no better time for saying, frankly and explicitly, to the Russian government that the future peace of the world cannot be promoted by Russian settlements on any part of the American continent."

The Marquis de Lafayette immediately called the Monroe Doctrine "the best little bit of paper that God ever permitted any man to give to the world." Daniel Webster later called it a bright page in our history.

The Monroe Doctrine was never limited to preventing territorial aggression. The key word is "system" — it prohibits extending the "system" of Russia or other European powers to the Western Hemisphere. Furthermore, Monroe said, we can't believe that our friends to the south would ever voluntarily adopt the Old World system. The Monroe Doctrine thus declared the fundamental difference between our republic and

Old World empires or dictatorships.

The Monroe Doctrine does not define our relationship with Latin America, but states our policy toward aggressive governments of the Old World. It originated as a policy of U.S. national security, and this rationale of self-defense has been reaffirmed many times in the 20th century.

Throughout the 19th century, the Monroe Doctrine was successful as a deterrent. Even though we were a small nation of only ten million people, European nations didn't want to tangle with us.

Before Soviet boss Nikita Khrushchev moved his offensive nuclear missiles into Cuba in 1962, he taunted us: "Now the remains of this Monroe Doctrine should best be buried, as every dead body is, so that it does not poison the air by its decay." News of its death was premature, as Mark Twain would have said.

The support the American people gave to President John F. Kennedy in removing those missiles is evidence that the Monroe Doctrine is not only part of our national heritage, it is part of our national honor. That's the same reason why the American people supported President Reagan's dramatic rescue of Grenada so overwhelmingly.

The Symms Amendment, passed by big majorities in Congress in 1982 and again in 1984, reaffirms our commitment to the Monroe Doctrine. President Reagan recognized this in his 1987 State of the Union Message when he reminded us that his commitment to stop Communism in the Western Hemisphere did not start by spontaneous generation on the day he took office. "It began," he said, "with the Monroe Doctrine in 1823 and continues today as our historic bipartisan American policy."

James Monroe established a cornerstone of American foreign policy, and he planted it so firmly in our national consciousness that it still evokes an enthusiastic response from modern audiences. The posh audience at the State Department dinner in April 1987 applauded vigorously when reminded that a good model for support of the Contras in their fight to win back freedom in Nicaragua occurred in 1954 when President Dwight Eisenhower authorized American support for an anti-Communist force which overthrew a Communist regime in Guatemala.

President Monroe once said that "national honor is national property of the highest value." He bequeathed to us a property that is part of our national honor. The Monroe Doctrine is a doctrine for all seasons. May it live forever.

Lessons of Grenada

Historians will probably look back on Ronald Reagan's rescue of Grenada in October 1983 as a turning point in official American policy toward Communism. Using a minimum of force, the United States prevented the establishment of another Communist state in the Western Hemisphere.

Two years later, the U.S. State Department published a selection from the 35,000 pounds of documents captured when our Marines landed in Grenada. They provide important insight into Soviet actions and plans in the Caribbean. It's clear from these documents that the Soviet Union was arming Grenada to function as a Soviet base supplied by weapons going through Cuba.

The Grenada Documents clearly show the deceitful behavior that is part and parcel of Communist strategy and tactics. The captured documents prove again (as if anybody needed any proof) that the Soviets consistently mislead us about treaties. In the captured military treaty documents, the Grenadian Communists promised the Soviets that they would lie about the existence of secret agreements to ship arms from the U.S.S.R. to Grenada via Cuba.

The captured documents show that Grenada was becoming a major Soviet-aligned military fortress complete with Soviet military personnel. Grenada was being prepared to be an airbase for Soviet military jets, a port for Soviet ships, and an "invisible aircraft carrier" for the Soviets in the Caribbean if war ever broke out. The documents show that the Soviet master plan includes exporting revolution by guerrilla movements from every base they can acquire and maintain.

Grenada was a key player in Soviet plans to get other beachheads in the Western Hemisphere. One captured message quotes Soviet military chief Marshal Ogarkov as saying, "Nineteen years ago we had only Cuba. Today we have Cuba, Nicaragua and Grenada, and the battlefield is El Salvador — we are making progress."

The captured documents prove that (to paraphrase Gertrude Stein) a Communist is a Communist is a Communist. The Grenada Documents, which include thousands of internal memoranda of a Communist regime in power, detail a police state just like Cuba, Nicaragua, Afghanistan, Angola, Vietnam, and every other satellite country. The documents describe how to repress political opponents, the press, the clergy, and the private sector.

The captured documents confirm that the Communists have not changed their ways; they are still a major threat to the Free World, and that what is at stake in this confrontation is freedom itself. Reagan's rescue of Grenada gives hope to anti-Communist freedom fighters all over the world that they, too, may someday defeat Communism.

The Grenada invasion broke the mystique of the Brezhnev Doctrine that, once a country goes Communist, it must always remain Communist. Grenada exposed this for what it really is: just the impudent boast of a bloody dictator. The Grenada invasion not only proved that Communism is reversible, but it legitimized the use of force to liberate the captive peoples. Grenada demolished the notion that it isn't appropriate for a Western democracy to use any but "political" or "negotiated" means to resolve conflicts.

One final lesson of Grenada was to expose the anti-Reagan and pro-appeasement bias of the national media elite. They thought the invasion would enable them to use Ronald Reagan as a whipping boy, but the media got their comeuppance when public opinion overwhelmingly backed President Reagan.

A Voice from Castro's Prisons

Armando Valladares is a very brave man. He survived 22

years in Castro's prisons. When he tells the world what it was like, it sounds very similar to Alexander Solzhenitsyn's descriptions of the Soviet Gulag. Only Cuba is a lot closer to America.

A one-time supporter of Castro, Valladares was imprisoned in 1960 because he criticized the dictator's growing dependence on the Soviet Union. He was released in 1982 as a result of French and Spanish intervention in his behalf.

Some of the most interesting of Valladares' revelations are his descriptions of the "new class" in Castro's Cuba which lives "a way of life completely unknown to the Cuban people." The "new class" is a favored group of government and police officials and Communist Party dignitaries.

The "new class" has access to "special" stores and products, exclusive homes which were confiscated from the middle class in pre-Castro Cuba, travel privileges, and a favored brand of justice. For example, a professional boxer, Jose Gomez, got away with committing murder without any punishment, but the possession of a Bible can land an average citizen in jail. In Communist Cuba, he says, "equal justice does not exist."

"In the first days of the Revolution," Valladares said, "Castro promised that the beaches would become the property of the people and that he would abolish private beaches. However, he has done nothing about this." Valladares says that the Club Biltmore, where the well-to-do gathered in prerevolutionary Cuba, is today exclusively reserved for colonels of the political police and other officials of the Ministry of the Interior. Other beaches are similarly barred to the Cuban people, notably Jibacoa, where access is limited only to Soviet personnel and other foreigners.

Valladares says that there are 24,000 to 30,000 Soviet personnel in Cuba. He says that Soviet officials control the Cuban economy and industry (including the sugar industry), as well as the military. He says that "the Soviets have total control of the Cuban equipment, weapons, and transportation systems. The Cuban military does not even have access to its own bases."

Essentially, all important decisions and operations are controlled by Soviet officials. Soviet "specialists" run the prisons with an iron hand. When political prisoners chanted "Soviets, go home!" in an incident known as "Black September," they were given "the harshest of floggings."

Castro has 140,000 political and criminal prisoners in 68 Cuban penitentiaries. Havana province alone has 48,000 prisoners out of two million residents. For a quarter of a century, Castro has used the penitentiary system to carry out a ruthless system which he calls political and social "rehabilitation." It is quite different from anything in American prisons.

Valladares and his fellow prisoners were encouraged to "reform" by such inducements as systematic beatings, mutilation, starvation (in his case, for 46 days), and hard labor. Those who refused to cooperate with this rehabilitation program were gagged and murdered.

The strictest penal institution is located on the Isla de Pinos, an island south of Cuba made famous as *Treasure Island* by Robert Louis Stevenson. Valladares says that the conditions there are "identical to those of the Soviet concentration camps under Stalin." Castro and the Communists have converted *Treasure Island* into what Valladares calls the "Siberia of the American continent."

For the "free" citizens of Cuba, the Castro regime has restructured the work week. "Occupational work" is required on Mondays through Saturdays, while "voluntary work" is expected from all on Sundays. Those who choose not to "volunteer," or who attend church services, are subject to public humiliation and investigation as revolutionaries.

The Castro regime enforces its work demands on all starting at any early age. Some young students are taught manual labor at youth "camps" before entering the factories, and uncooperative youths are sent to specially designed adolescent concentration camps.

Cuban officials apparently thought that, if they released Valladares, he would drift into obscurity among other Cuban refugees. Although he must know how vindictive the Communists are against defectors who tell the truth about Communism, he has chosen to give the world his authentic, first-hand information.

"After almost a quarter of a century of Communism in Cuba," he says, "no one can continue to excuse its crimes by talking of the immaturity of the political process. No philosophy, no symbol, can justify the impunity with which Castroism kills its enemies."

Mistakes in Nicaragua

After the Sandinistas overthrew Anastasio Somoza in 1979 and captured Nicaragua, I asked a friend living in that country, "Are they Communists?" She replied, "only 100%."

But somehow the liberal intellectuals and politicians were fooled. In 1979 the Sandinistas wrote a letter to the Organization of American States promising free elections, freedom of religion, free trade unions, a free press, civil rights, human rights, and a just judicial system. The liberals believed, or pretended to believe, that the Sandinistas were merely agrarian reformers or democratic do-gooders.

So the OAS expelled the government of Somoza. The Carter Administration withdrew U.S. aid from Somoza, and gave economic aid to the Sandinistas while the Soviet bloc armed them with weapons.

During the first year and a half after the Sandinistas took over, the Carter Administration sent them $118 million in U.S. aid. In addition, the Carter Administration actively supported loans to the Sandinistas from international lending institutions, helping them to get $262 million from the InterAmerican Development Bank. The Sandinistas received three times the economic assistance that Somoza got in the previous 40 years.

So the Communist Sandinistas grabbed the power, the police, the military, the radio station, the information ministry, and the foreign ministry. They filled all positions of power with Communists and squeezed out the non-Communists. The Sandinistas persecuted the church, wiped out the Jewish religion, attacked the Indian tribes on the northeastern coast and

relocated them, closed down the trade unions, suppressed the newspapers, and carried out a methodical murder campaign.

Whereas Somoza had maintained a little army of 15,000, Nicaragua now has an army of more than ten times as large and trained by the Soviets, Cubans, Czechs, Bulgarians, and East Germans. Their arms are supplied by Vietnam, Libya, the U.S.S.R., and their allies. "We are a Marxist-Leninist revolution without boundaries," the Sandinistas proclaimed.

The Nicaraguan army now has every type of weapon for the next Soviet-Cuban move in the Caribbean. Of course, the Sandinistas have never held the elections they promised. The newspapers are heavily censored. The media get their news-publishing orders from the Ministry of the Interior.

President Reagan has asked the fundamental question: "Must we sit by while Central Americans are driven from their homes like the more than a million who have sought refuge out of Afghanistan, or the 1-1/2 million who have fled Indochina, or the more than a million Cubans who have fled Castro's Cuban utopia?"

If we do nothing, and Nicaragua is allowed to function like another Havana, exporting Communist revolution throughout Latin America, we had better get prepared for at least five million refugees to flood into Texas, Arizona, New Mexico, California, Louisiana, and Florida. They won't have to come on boats like the Vietnamese; they can just walk north.

Hope for the Freedom Fighters

When individual Americans, who enjoy our freedom, security and comforts, voluntarily risk their lives and fortunes to help valiant Freedom Fighters in a foreign country to win their freedom, those Americans should be honored for their sacrificial efforts.

The United States won its freedom in our seven-year Revolutionary War in significant part because valiant men from other countries (notably Lafayette) were noble and generous enough to travel across the Atlantic and risk their lives fighting with the colonial Freedom Fighters.

When the Communists were trying to capture Spain in the 1930s, some U.S. citizens voluntarily joined what they called the "Abraham Lincoln Brigade" in order to fight and die for Communism in Spain. Most of us would judge their goals as wrong, but their motives were sincere and they certainly placed their lives on the line to prove it.

We don't hear any more about American citizens joining Communist military operations abroad. The evidence of Communist inhumanity to man, from the U.S.S.R. to Poland to Afghanistan to Cambodia, is too massive.

But there are valiant Americans who, from our abundance of freedom and plenty, voluntarily undertake dangerous missions to try to light the lamp of freedom in other lands. Americans have helped in Nicaragua, Afghanistan, Cambodia, Mozambique and Ethiopia. That role is too risky and too costly for most of us, but we can salute the few who show such courage.

Others manifest their concern and caring by donating funds to help the Freedom Fighters, and they too, should be honored. Others have helped in smaller ways. Across America, small groups have gathered in homes to stuff and ship "Freedom Fighter Friendship Kits" to the Nicaraguan Contras.

These are small pouches that contain a dozen or so items that we would consider necessities of life, but which to the Contras, fighting under primitive jungle conditions, are otherwise unavailable luxuries. These include soap, toothpaste, toothbrush, shaving cream, razors, aspirin, insect repellent, comb, candy bar, handkerchief, and a Spanish-language Bible. One of the leaders of the Contras said, "You can't imagine how much these little necessities mean to men who haven't had them in many months and have no hope of getting them."

About 8,000 of these Freedom Fighter Friendship Kits have been made, filled and shipped by members of Eagle Forum as a tangible gesture of caring for the Contras and support of their struggle for freedom. The American people, officially and unofficially, want to roll back the tide of Communism in the Western Hemisphere.

Most important, however, is the military aid that only Congress can give, and which is essential to our national security. Congress approved $100 million in aid to the Contras last year, and President Reagan is seeking $105 million this year.

On May 3, 1987, President Reagan said, "Make no mistake —the Soviets are challenging the United States to a test of wills over the future of this hemisphere." He pointed out that the Soviet bloc assistance to Nicaragua last year totaled more than $1 billion.

President Reagan warned that, "If we cut off the Freedom Fighters, we will be giving the Soviets a free hand in Central America, handing them one of their greatest foreign policy victories since World War II." He said that, "without the pressure of the Freedom Fighters, the Soviets would soon solidify their base in Nicaragua, and the subversion in El Salvador would reignite."

President Reagan urged the Congress to continue the bipartisan consensus on foreign policy of the last 40 years, saying, "This is no time for either party to turn its back on that tradition or on the cause of freedom, especially when the threat to both is so close to home."

Nicaragua presents Americans with the choice: American-style freedom or Soviet-backed tyranny. The Monroe Doctrine still is the lamp by which our policy should be guided.

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