

PROFESSOR'S CORNER

Reagan's People

By R. L. Watson

If it is true that Ronald Reagan is in fact the amiable though simple-minded fellow he appears to be, then we must look carefully at his advisers; they will exert upon him influences that will shape the direction of United States policy. Since a major interest of mine is the so-called Third World, particular Africa, I offer here some observations about the future of our foreign policy there. I would not label these "predictions"; that's too risky. But the signs thus far are not encouraging.

The people around Reagan who will deal with Third World policy are General Haig, the secretary of state, James Allen, the national security director, Jeane Kirkpatrick, the United Nations ambassador, and Peter Duignan, a scholar at the Hoover Institution.

The problem is that, with the exception of Duignan, none of the people around Reagan have the least experience or, it seems, real interest in the Third World. The region is but a pawn in the competition with Soviet Russia. This is largely the case with Duignan as well.

Haig's experience has been in the military, in Europe, and in the Nixon White House. He is a protege of Henry Kissinger, whose interest in Africa developed only when he discovered that the Soviets were interested also. Haig's major concern (after, of course dispensing with any taint of Watergate and avoiding moral judgments on Nixon) is also Russia. There is no evidence that he has a Third World Policy, except insofar as those regions relate to our competition with the Soviets. The same seems to be true thus far of Allen.

Professor Kirkpatrick is

best known for her endorsement of support for "moderately repressive regimes" if they follow United States policy. Thus the Shah should have been propped up and Somoza in Nicaragua supported. This seems to be her Third World policy.

How to define a "moderately repressive regime" remains unclear (Art Buchwald wanted to know how you torture someone moderately), but there are no doubt some in Africa. The United States has strongly supported, among others, Mobutu in Zaire--a repressive regime if there ever was one. Perhaps Kirkpatrick's advice will be to continue some of what we've been doing.

Peter Duignan is the Africa expert, and his views are quite controversial. He has supported white colonialism and argues that, although he personally feels that its racist policies are "wrong", the United States should tolerate and support the repressive white government of South Africa. He shares with Kirkpatrick, Haig, and Allen a deep fear of Russia "expansionism" and believes that it should be countered by supporting "friendly" governments, such as South Africa.

What about Soviet "expansionism"? The Soviet leaders, if they have time for such diversions, must watch our hysterics with some amusement. In the past several years they have been thrown out of Egypt and Somalia and backed the wrong candidate, Joshua Nkomo, in Zimbabwe. One of their former clients, Sekou Toure of Guinea, is now making overtures to the West, as is Angola's Eduardo dos Santos. Julius Nyerere, despite being falsely labelled a "Marxist" by the popular

press, remains studiously neutral, and Algeria, without whose aid the hostages could not have been freed, was once thought to be in the Soviet camp. Elsewhere, Russia's adventure in Afghanistan becomes increasingly embarrassing, as their troops seem unable to subdue the rebels. And they have not yet invaded Poland; hostile world opinion and their difficulties elsewhere are the major reasons.

In short, while "expansionism" may be the Russian policy, it has proved exceedingly difficult for them to practice.

Here is the problem: Haig believes that we should use nuclear weapons to protect our "vital interests" against the Soviets. The Persian Gulf, with its twenty or thirty years of oil, is considered one of these. The Reagan policy advisers have argued that we should have intervened to keep the Shah in power (as though that were possible). What other "moderately repressive regimes" is it in our "vital interests" to protect, even to the point of nuclear war?

The threat to these vital interests, and our national obsession with "standing up to the Soviets", are based upon, not a mythical view of Soviet intentions, but a mythical view of Soviet success in carrying them out. Where we have gotten into trouble in the Third World is where we have ignored our own standards of racial and social justice. In short, even under Carter, we have not practiced a respect for human rights. We helped overthrow the lawfully elected Allende government in Chile, and have had too cozy a relationship with vigorously repressive regimes like South Africa and the Shah. When the Shah was overthrown, we were justifiably linked to him. Other than that, there is little that causes the Iranians to hate us so. When the Apartheid regime of South Africa is destroyed, we will be linked to it also. Situations like these cause us to lose our influence in the world. It is United States principles, not United States Machismo, that the world respects. The Reagan advisers seem all too willing to deny those principles.

FROM THE EDITOR

In an effort to make The Decree more accessible to you, I have decided to establish office hours three or four days a week. This will enable you to bring any announcements, ideas, suggestions, or complaints to me.

The Decree is for you, the student body. Anything dealing with academics,

convocations, clubs, sports, student life--all areas of the college are for publication in The Decree.

Office hours will be posted on the door of The Decree office. If the office hours conflict with your schedule, I can be contacted at 977-6298 or campus box no. 17.

Martie Barbour
Editor-In-Chief

The Decree

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UNTITLED

The lamp is shining low on my table top.

The snow is softly falling

The air at its still moment

casts silence upon my room

I see the smoke in my

fireplace rising, casting a

vision of you

I hear your voice softly calling

and

I see your face shining like

stars above.

I poured myself a glass of

wine to chase away the

loneliness I feel

My glass is almost empty

Again from the letter you sent

to me.

How I wish to have you near

on this winter night to hold

the hands I love.

I have never seen the night so

cold, where time goes

slowly by

I only wish to be with you

My fire is dying now, and my

lamp is growing dim and my

body has grown tired.

OPINION

The movie syndrome

By Tony Pierce

A young girl thinks that her friends are playing hide and seek with her in a bathroom on a rainy night at a camp resort. As she walks around pulling back curtains to look for who she thinks is her friend, we see the shadow of an ax rise slowly. She turns and screams along with the movie audience as the ax sinks into her face and we are shown a clear close-up shot.

If you think that this scene from the movie "Friday the 13th" is unusually gross, then it's clear that you are not a follower of the new wave of horror movies.

Angie Dickenson's favorite color becomes red when she gets her throat split in "Dress to Kill." Jamie Lee Curtis literally watches a man lose his head when her brother takes revenge in "Prom Night," and there are more gruesome murders in movies such as "Terror Train," "Horror Hotel," "He Knows You Are Alone," etc. Whatever happened to the good old days of horror movies in which you were scared by what you couldn't see?

Now don't get me wrong. I

like scary movies just as much as the next guy, but I also want to see quality movies. When I find out that movies such as "Ordinary People," and "My Brilliant Career" won't be coming to Rocky Mount due to a wave of popular cheap blood and gore movies, I wonder what has become of this area.

When I asked movie theatre managers when some of the above mentioned movies might be coming to this area, they replied that they didn't think they would be coming. Instead, the next two "biggies" they're expecting are "Fade to Black" and "The Boogiemans."

It's a shame to have to travel to Raleigh in order to get a chance to see some of the better movies. But I think the thing that really frightens me is that art (and film as an art) reflects the ideas and interests of the people in a particular area.

If our generation continues to dish out thousands of dollars to see people decapitated and murdered in different forms, one must sincerely ask, "Where are we going?"

North Carolina Wesleyan College

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