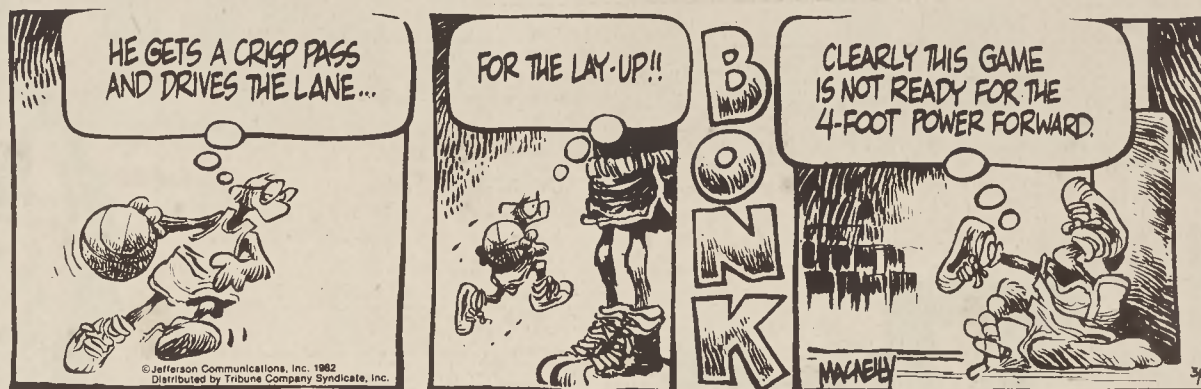


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Commentary

The editorial page of The Foothills View

The Humble Farmer

One morning in early spring I saw Gramp Wiley working in his garden. He made neat furrows for his corn, threw something in them and then covered each row with dirt.

"It's too early to plant," I observed later as he warmed his fingers over my kitchen stove. "Your corn will come up, look around, and then not grow another inch until the ground gets warmer. You can't get ahead by planting early."

"I know it," said Gramp. "But it's not too early to pretend to plant. Look at all them crows out there pecking and scratching where I was

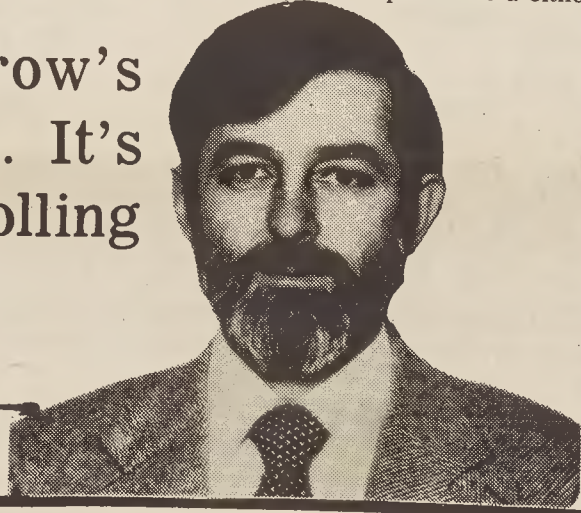
his name.

"One morning he had hopes of seeing his name at the top of the court record but his lawyer showed up late and two speeders and an armed robber got in ahead of him."

"One morning he had hopes of seeing his name at the top of the court record, but his lawyer showed up late and two speeders and an armed robber got in ahead of him."

"Woodland had a struggle with school," Gramp continued. "He even failed at sports. He'd either

"Controlling a crow's mind is a challenge. It's harder than controlling the mind of a man."



By Robert Skoglund

working. It will take them three weeks to figure out that I've fooled them by planting pebbles. By the time it's warm enough to plant corn every crow around here will be laid up with nervous prostration."

"Mind control is a terrible thing. I don't believe in it."

"Last spring two schizoid crows split every stick in my woodpile. They thought they were woodpeckers looking for bugs."

"It would be more humane to shoot crows than to mess up their minds."

"But controlling a crow's mind is a challenge," cried Gramp. "It's harder than controlling the mind of a man. Crows are independent and think for themselves, but anyone can predict a man's behavior."

"Ask any of your friends why they plant their gardens so early. Smith will tell you that he noticed Jones had already planted. Ask Jones and he'll say it's because he saw Fitch planting, and on it goes. You can count on it."

"But someone has to be first," I protested.

"I made it my business to find out who planted first last year," he replied. "Woodland had his garden in before anyone. Claimed he'd never been first at anything before he discovered gardening."

"The governor is still waiting to meet the first person who has never complained about taxes," I volunteered.

drop the ball or get trampled while he was holding it. He finally quit school after he learned to write

"He sounds like a loser."

"The National Environmental Council was considering Woodland as their one enemy, but a family in Minnesota beat him out by having chemicals on their lawn that polluted the town's water supply."

"It's heartbreaking when you can't be number one sometime."

"Now everyone around here takes a cue from him a month before planting time."

"Don't people get suspicious when Woodland's seeds rot in the ground?"

"Oh, he doesn't really plant," said Gramp. "He puts in pebbles to fool his neighbors like I did the crows this morning. Then he sneaks out at night and sets out a couple of rows of that plastic spinich that they make in Hong Kong."

"Is it worth the expense of buying plastic leaves just to be number one?"

"His garden doesn't cost any more than one that is raised from seeds a month later when planting time finally arrives. He saves a barrel of money on bug spray."

The View invites all townspeople to express their opinions in letters to the editor. Letters are subject to editing for space, but the author's thought will not be misrepresented. Preferred length is one page, typewritten, double spaced. Anonymous and libelous letters will not be printed. Address all correspondence to Editor, Box 982, Boiling Springs, 28017.

It is correct that two estimates of the current threat posed by the Soviet Union are at war with each other. They are, however, reconcilable, if only one would take the trouble. One school says the Soviet Union's might is decisive. The other says the Soviet Union is falling apart.

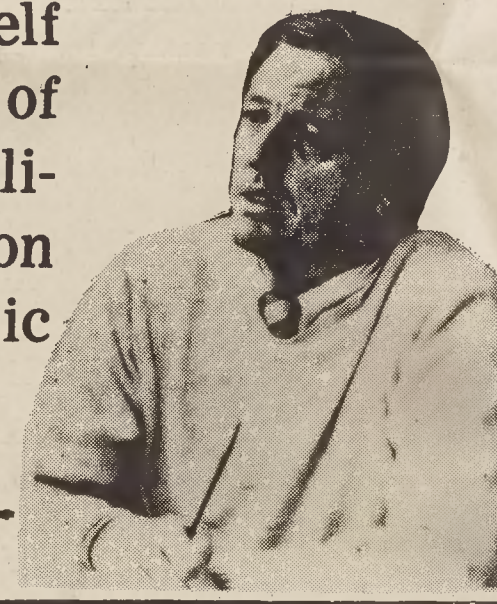
Years ago James Burnham, the retired strategist and philosopher, said about the Soviet Union that we chronologically overestimate its strength and underestimate its menace. Those were the days when the Soviet Union was not strong in international missilery, and now of course it is. But its weakness as a thermonuclear superpower in the '50s are replaced now by a weakness of a different order.

The Soviet Union is on its knees economically. And just as in the '50s, by reason of a failure of resolution we stood by while the Soviet Union acquired its massive nuclear artillery, so now we

On The Right

behalf. Even through, just because a communist said it, it is not for that reason contaminated. If a Soviet doctor were to discover the cure for cancer, we would not hesitate to adopt it. But we have refused to run our finger around the perimeter of the communist world, to strike where we find a weakness.

"If every Russian were tomorrow to find himself free to purchase a bottle of Pepsi-Cola, the probability that the Soviet Union would march to economic democracy is slight."



By William F. Buckley

are standing by while it wrestles with its economic weakness. In the '50s, Soviet sympathizers in America dispatched to Russia the secrets necessary to get on with its nuclear development. Today, American businessmen and a Republican administration stand by passively while the Soviet Union takes such measures as are necessary to survive its economic ordeal.

We have now the head of the Chamber of Commerce, no less, taking issue with Mr. Reagan on the subject of economic sanctions. Mr. Donald Kendall has for years argued that vigorous trade with the Soviet Union would benefit the West. This position has a noble lineage in free-market analysis. It is assumed that the exchange of goods has the effect of loosening internal rigidities and arguing along the benefits of liberalization. This is true in classical analysis. If a backward economy desires to trade, it comes soon to discovering the uses of capital, of division of labor, of organization, of market testing and all the rest. But in a society closed like the Soviet Union's, there are overarching methods by which the economy can be kept closed; and even if every Russian were tomorrow to find himself free to purchase a bottle of Mr. Kendall's Pepsi-Cola, the probability that the Soviet Union would march to economic democracy is slight.

It is wise at least once a year to remind oneself of Trotsky's response to the inquisitive revolutionary seminarian who wondered how the little communist state would set about to achieve world socialism. "We run our finger around the perimeter of the capitalist world," Trotsky replied, "and where we feel a weakness, there is our salient."

Characteristically the West has persistently refused to apply Trotsky's doctrine in its own

Ours has been a doctrine of coming up with a countersalient. The Russians blockade Berlin? We mount an air operation. They strike in Korea? We defend Korea. They press in North Vietnam, we press back in South Vietnam. They now reintroduce bacterial weapons, we call for reintroducing them. We appear to be incapable of acting decisively on distinctive Soviet weaknesses. These are, of course, economic and spiritual.

The Soviet Union would have a most difficult time arranging credit sufficient to take care of indispensable problems at home, let alone the problem of continuing as a primary military power. And to whom does the Soviet Union then turn for credit? The West. The Soviet Union has yet another bad harvest and needs bread: and to whom does it turn for bread? To American farmers. The Soviet Union fears above all things emergent native disloyalty and insipient separatism; and the United States discourages the dissemination of appropriate news and analysis over our broadcasting facilities.

It is this fear of striking our own salient that commits us to that perpetual defensiveness under which a country that has presided over the cultivation of misery for its own people and for all other people over whom it exercises dominion, emerges as the overpowering alternative to freedom and abundance. That is the problem in the absence of the discovery of which Mr. Reagan's foreign policy will suffer the incoherence of its antecedents.