

## WHITHER THE SPIRIT OF WASHINGTON?

Although hailed by both sides as "historic," this week's summit meeting between Ronald Reagan and Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev brought no surprises or "breakthroughs." Its real significance likely will lie in its implications and the processes it launches, which together may be called the Spirit of Washington--ranking with the 1955 Spirit of Geneva and 1959 and 1973 Spirit of Camp David.

At this week's Reagan-Gorbachev meeting nothing was done with regard to what certainly were among the most important items on the summit agenda: Soviet human rights violations and the relentless Soviet promotion of communist totalitarian regimes and terrorist movements around the world. Inside the Soviet Union, the cause of freedom has not advanced. In fact, immediately before and during the summit, Soviet secret police broke up peaceful demonstrations in Moscow and pulled from trains human rights activists on their way to a dissident human rights conference.

**Soviet Lodestar.** Outside the Soviet Union, as before, the Brezhnev doctrine is the lodestar of Soviet policy. This means that no relief is in sight for Eastern Europe. The Soviet war on the people of Afghanistan, as well as the Soviet support for the communist regimes of Nicaragua, Angola, Ethiopia, and Vietnam, and the Soviet support of terrorism around the world will continue unabated--if the summit communique, toasts, press briefings, and other statements are any guide.

The centerpiece of the summit, a treaty to eliminate Intermediate Range Nuclear Forces (INF), is a minor arms reduction agreement. Moscow's elation is easy to understand: the treaty has removed systems that, because of their accuracy and the 12-minute flight time to the Soviet heartland, have been the Soviet military planners' nightmare for the last four years. At least for the moment, removal of the American missiles weakens credible West European deterrence at the time when the overwhelming Soviet conventional force advantage remains intact. To make matters worse, the Soviets are retargeting their new SS-25 intercontinental ballistic missiles on West European areas previously covered by the SS-20 INF missiles that they will be dismantling.

For the West, the treaty poses important challenges. If the INF accord is to enhance the security of the U.S. and its NATO allies, it must be followed by

reduction and restructuring of Soviet conventional forces in Europe and deep cuts in the Soviet first-strike heavy intercontinental nuclear missiles. The treaty must also be followed by what NATO commander John Galvin calls "buttressing measures," such as the modernization of the 3,250 nuclear artillery shells, gravity bombs, and other tactical weapons which the new treaty allows Western Europe to keep in its arsenal.

**Ignoring Advice.** If there is anything "historic" about the treaty, it is Reagan's successful negotiating technique based on perseverance, patience, and military strength. Gone are the Roosevelt-Nixon-Ford-Carter kind of preemptive concessions used as inducements for the Soviets. The INF treaty has proved once again that tenacity pays and that the Soviets respect strength. Ignoring the advice of the liberal foreign policy establishment, Reagan from 1981 to the present was willing to risk ending up with no agreement with Moscow rather than a bad agreement. Recognizing this, Reagan in his post-summit address to the nation told Americans: "Your support over these last seven years has laid the basis for these negotiations...your support for our foreign policy goals...has helped bring the Soviets to the bargaining table." The road to the INF agreement is a legacy that Reagan's successors will find very difficult to ignore, let alone discard. In addition, it establishes relatively strict verification procedures, until recently rejected by the Soviet Union.

Gorbachev had three objectives in coming to Washington: 1) derailing the U.S. Strategic Defense Initiative; 2) igniting a spirit of detente to gain massive transfers of capital and technology to the Soviet Union, and 3) denuclearization of Europe and decoupling of U.S. and the NATO countries. He advanced significantly on all three and shows no sign of abandoning these goals.

**Solemn Denials.** In his farewell press conference, the media savvy Gorbachev hailed a "new phase in Soviet-American relations"--code words for detente. A few hours before, he pushed hard for this "new phase" by appealing to American business leaders for a thaw in economic relations between the superpowers. And playing on the euphoria surrounding the INF treaty, the Soviet leader predicted that the denuclearization of Europe would be the "first step on the path to a nuclear-free world."

Despite solemn denials by the Reagan Administration, arms control has again moved to the center of the U.S.-Soviet agenda. This means that again the symptom of the U.S.-Soviet conflict is upstaging the causes of this conflict: Soviet totalitarianism and expansionism. As a result of the Washington summit, the world will contain 4 percent fewer nuclear weapons. But it is uncertain that the world will be any safer from Soviet aggression. The lesson of the summit is that Gorbachev's rhetoric so far has not been paralleled by a change in Soviet policies. When they change, only then can it be said that the Spirit of Washington will be different than the false hopes of the previous Spirit of Geneva and Spirit of Camp David.

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