Republicans are unapologetically misanthropic and sneer at the Third World for not pulling itself up by its own bootstrap. Democrats tend to want to save the world; Republicans fear being contaminated by it. Democrats have often preached to the Soviets, and the homilies make the Kremlin as queasy as a gallon of skid-row bums forced to endure a sermon in order to get a free bowl of soup. The Republican approach has been to consign them to the perdition reserved for unbelievers. From the Soviet perspective this is refreshing and straightforward. John Foster Dulles they could understand; John F. Kennedy made them uneasy.

Accordingly, when he took office in January, 1981, Reagan had a great deal going for him in terms of U.S.-Soviet relations. What the Soviets did not reckon with was the fact that Reagan was unlike any other Republican president in memory. Eisenhower read Zane Grey, not Willis Carto or Stefan Possony. Nixon was no ideologue either, and in company with Henry Kissinger fashioned détente, the only foreign policy worthy of the name to come out of Washington in recent years. Gerald Ford persisted with Kissinger and détente and got a bear hug and a seal coat from Brezhnev. These were Republicans of a recognizable stripe. The Soviets were inclined to suffer Carter's didactic lectures on human rights in the hope that life might yet be breathed into the cadaver of détente. When they invaded Afghanistan, they were treated to the truculence that can come only from an affronted Democrat. Ultimately, they looked forward to the election of another Republican and the old-fashioned Realpolitik they had come to know and love. Their hopes were raised when Reagan appointed Alexander Haig, a Kissinger votary, to the post of secretary of state. They were known to be cheering discreetly on the sidelines as he pulled the rug out from under Richard Allen, the deep-dyed ideologue.

What the Soviets got in Ronald Reagan was a man whose view of foreign policy suffered from an acute case of arrested development. They anticipated the diplomacy of state-of-the-art plutocrats, and what they received was the political wisdom of dead America. They were prepared to deal with the caparisoned ranks of finance capital, and what they got was the ghost of Joe McCarthy decked out in jodhpurs. The liberal, Eastern, internationalist wing of the GOP had been packed off to Kenilworth and Saddle River or bought off in the 1981 Tax Bill—all of them gone without a trace save Charles Percy, sitting in feckless isolation on the sidelines as he pulled the rug out from under Richard Allen, the deep-dyed ideologue.

But one might have expected from a president so doctrinaire and so well-nourished on the red meat of Human Events a full-dress, right wing foreign policy. What has emerged is less a foreign policy than something that Marxists would label a “tendency.” Defying the dictum of Frederick the Great that “he who attacks everywhere attacks nowhere,” Reagan has sprung for the whole nine hundred-ship Navy; the M-1 tank; and even the MX missile, despite the absence of any sensible basing mode. The Pentagon is awash in money but only dimly aware of how it is being spent or for what general purpose. When asked to what overall end this extravagant weaponry is being directed, we hear such Delphic utterances as “to have an American military second to none” or, more succinctly, “to prevail.”

We apparently have embraced a “war-fighting” capability because in President Reagan’s mind strategic conflict is of little more consequence than the Schweinfurt raid or the siege of Buna—important but not cataclysmic episodes in the only sort of war that has any reality for him.

So here we have the greatest nation on earth entangled in a time-warp that is the product of an old man’s mind. It is not the dangerous and unruly world of today, full of nihilistic terrorists just itching to get their hands on fissionable material or of economies sagging under the weight of military budgets or even of an aging Kremlin leadership with its own mind mired in the Great Patriotic War. It is, rather, a world of wantl young B-17 pilots wearing jaunty twenty-six-mission crush caps who stand around the piano singing lusty renditions of “Don’t Sit Under the Apple Tree.” It is good to have a remembrancer of those days of loyal and submissive allies, enemies who were the devil incarnate, and of a brash nation willing to deal with the world only on its own terms. Unless, of course, he happens to be president of the United States.

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**EXCURSUS 2**

**Juliet London on**

**SRI LANKA: DEMOCRACY IN CHAINS?**

Democratic elections, relatively free and fair polls, are a declining phenomenon in the Third World. The retreat of democracy has been so extensive in these regions that a whole school of political analysis has developed around the thesis that democracy, as it is conventionally defined, may be culturally unsuited to many Third World nations.

Thus, when a Third World nation has a long tradition of fully democratic elections, it becomes much more than an object of academic curiosity. Such a rare situation prevails in the small Indian Ocean island republic of Sri Lanka—geographically about one-half the size of New York State and with a population of fifteen million. Between 1947, when it obtained independence from Britain, and 1977 this nation held eight general elections and saw several peaceful transfers of power from one political party to another. So, when another major national election was held on October 20 of this year, the Western press and many observers hailed the continuity of democracy. Sri Lanka, we are told by the news media, bucks the trend; democracy is alive and well and carries on in a Third World state.

These observations are dangerously superficial. In fact, Sri Lanka may well be the harbinger of another type of Third World politics, where the forms of democracy, apparently intact, mask a subversion of the process. A pre-determined result is obtained, exterior appearances are preserved, the world press cheers, and burial of real freedoms takes place in a democratic shroud. This is what probably happened on October 20 in Sri Lanka.

In 1977, when the last election took place, the United National Party was returned to power after seven years. It defeated the Sri Lanka Freedom party led by Sirimavo Bandaranaike. Everyone in Sri Lanka and abroad agreed that this was a truly democratic election, run as all preceding elections in Sri Lanka. Mrs. Bandaranaike, celebrated as
the world's first woman prime minister when initially elected in 1960 and for her leadership of the Third World's Non-Aligned Movement, went into opposition and was replaced as head of government by United party leader Junius R. Jayewardene. At this election the United party also obtained a huge parliamentary majority sufficient to change the national constitution at will. And this it did.

During the last five years major constitutional changes have been made. A presidential system was imposed on the parliamentary framework and Jayewardene assumed extraordinary executive powers as the new president—without being elected to the office. Laws were modified, new local and national government systems were introduced, judicial changes were made—all through the parliamentary process and with the aid of the huge majority obtained at the '77 election. A penalty for political defections was introduced, so that a member of the National Assembly could be expelled instantly if he decided to quit his party. This was obviously an intimidating measure, since the bulk of Assembly members belonged to the governing party. Replacements are appointed, and no by-elections take place.

Apart from structural changes, another fearsome action disenfranchised political opponents of the government. Mrs. Bandaranaike was deprived of her civic rights, was banned from contesting elections for several years, and expelled from the National Assembly by majority vote. Her alleged crime was an undefined "abuse of power" during her tenure in office. But the parliamentary majority did not stop at sidelifing the nation's most distinguished citizen, its leader on and off for twelve years. It legislated political leprosy, with heavy penalties for contamination: Any political appearance or support by Mrs. Bandaranaike of any candidate for public office will immediately disqualify that candidate.

The important point here is that all these actions and many more were accomplished by legitimate procedures with appropriate parliamentary endorsement. Democracy and a majority democratically elected were used to institute a variety of draconian measures. It seems as if democracy can subvert democracy if the spirit of the process is not maintained.

Protected in this way, the existing government then held a national election on October 20, the first in five years and the first election for an executive president. The incumbent Jayewardene had held this position by parliamentary appointment since 1978, and his chief opponent, Mrs. Bandaranaike, was banned both from the contest and from any form of campaigning. Bandaranaike's Sri Lanka party had to select another challenger—an insipid shadow with little public appeal. A fully democratic election then took place, including free electioneering (except by Sirimavo Bandaranaike), open public meetings, and all the other ac- countments of democracy. President Jayewardene was returned to office for a six-year term, polling 52 per cent of all votes.

Three observations are appropriate in the context of these occurrences. First, the responsibility of Western governments. In the past five years, the United party government of Sri Lanka has flung open the island to foreign investors. Multinationals and other corporate interests have responded to this "attractive" climate. Western governments, notably the United States and Britain, have increased aid in expression of support for the policies of the government. When Western governments endorse governments whose free enterprise policies they find congenial, are they not also contributing to the political performance of those governments?

Second, there is a real danger that the appraisal of Sri Lanka's election as a triumph for democracy may encourage other nations to use democratic procedures to curtail democracy. World opinion does sometimes matter, and superficial endorsements are potentially dangerous to freedom in many nations.

Finally, is there not a sinister element of the double standard on issues of human rights? Extensive campaigns are mounted by Western nations over questions of human rights in Marxist states. Communist governments also raise fierce cries when the liberties of their allies are abridged in non-Communist states. Yet, when the rights of independent Third World leaders and citizens are restricted, there is little outrage. Protest at political victimization should have no ideology but that of freedom.

When next we read that democracy is alive and well in Sri Lanka, let us remember that it is indeed alive and it may be well, but it is also in chains.

Juliet London is the pen name of a freelance writer who specializes in Asian affairs

**EXCURSUS 3**

Mark A. Bruzonsky on **FEZ, THE U.S., AND ISRAEL**

Contrary to many press accounts, the Arab summit at Fez, Morocco, in September was a decided turning point in the history of the Arab-Israeli confrontation. It may, in fact, have far greater impact on the future of the Middle East than even the Israeli invasion of Lebanon and attendant atrocities. And for this, President Reagan's September 1 speech outlining U.S. policies for the region—essentially those first enunciated in U.N. Security Council Resolution 242 and the 1969 Rogers plan—can take a good deal of the credit.

At Fez the Arab world, collectively and without significant dissent, agreed publicly to Arab-Israeli negotiations leading to a full peace settlement and acceptance of Israel as a legitimate state in the region. Continuing condemnations of Zionism and occasional outbursts notwithstanding, this is the contemporary reality.

There were hints of this at the Baghdad summit of 1978, after Egyptian President Sadat had embarked on his inde-