

Opinion

Fattening Soviets on U.S wheat subsidies

"I guess," said New York Timesman Tom Wicker over television on Sunday, "no one has been more opposed to this administration than I have been." But, he went on to say to the panel that included George Will, Sam Donaldson and David Brinkley, he had to sympathize with the action of the administration, which has granted a subsidy for wheat sent to the Soviet Union. You see, Wicker explained to his dimly ignorant audience, in a democracy, politics has to be taken into consideration. And there are 20 Republican senators coming up for election and reelection next November who will be campaigning in the farm states. So — what can you expect?



William F. Buckley Jr.

George Will gave him one of his fine non-sense answers. What he said was that the Reagan administration has been the most spectacularly anti-Soviet administration rhetorically in the last generation, but that people are simply going to stop taking that anti-communism seriously, which among other things would have the effect of lessening Wicker's antagonism to the administration.

Political considerations, as Wicker stresses, are legitimate democratic considerations (perhaps one day he will write a column about the political considerations that govern the pace of desegregation in South Africa). But he needs to remember that the Reagan administration is in critical respects distinguished from administrations that are unguided by an animating vision. Nobody expects the president of Switzerland to be elected to chase down a political dream. When John F. Kennedy was elected he was startled when James Reston, minutes after JFK had taken the oath of office, asked him what he intended to accomplish as president. The young president was struck dumb. He had run for office in order to become president. It hadn't really occurred to him that he should have a grand design in mind.

And on the whole, we are better off with caretakers than with milleniarists, but a great deal is at stake in the matter of our dealings with the Soviet Union. Friends of President Reagan do well to advise him that his credibility as an anti-communist leader is mortgaged heavily

by such a deal as he recently sanctioned and which his secretary of commerce has been defending with the kind of arguments that would have got him cut off in a debate with candidates for running for office on an anti-communist ticket.

George Will forcefully made the indisputable point that our leverage negotiating with any of our allies is a matter of tender loving care for communist enterprises is flatly exposed. Reagan began his office by lifting an embargo on the sale of grain to Moscow. His secretary of agriculture then concluded a long-term grain agreement with the Soviet Union guaranteed the Soviets, in the diplomatic annals of the United States, never diplomatically, that we would never again, interrupt our supplies of grain to the Soviet Union, present or even if the Soviet Union launched a nuclear strike against us.

Having done this, Reagan turned the technologists who were helping him build a gas pipeline all the way from Alaska to Venice. The arguments he had to do with the joint responsibility of the Western world not to advance the Soviets' economic position. The Europeans loftily disdained the importunities of Reagan, citing his repeal of the grain embargo: The business of business is business, they said, and of course Reagan had to back down. What we have just now done is what we had to exert leverage on Moscow.

The tiresome and deceptive diversion is attempted: It's not OK (for us) to sell the Soviets instruments of war, but it is OK to sell them our things. True, you can't shoot an Afghan with a piece of wheat. But the people who are shooting Afghans eat wheat to sustain their energy.

It is depressing that politics should cause the dream of galvanized resistance to communism to grumble. We're spending something on the order of \$1 billion a year to appease American farmers. Rather than to continue making American wheat cheaper to buy in Moscow than in Washington, we'd better off buying it and throwing it in the sea. We can't give it away in Asia, Africa or Latin America, because to do so is to discourage local production. The ultimate solution is the obvious one: Stop subsidies. But in Washington that's the equivalent of saying: Stop paying. Meanwhile, the Soviet Union gets fat.

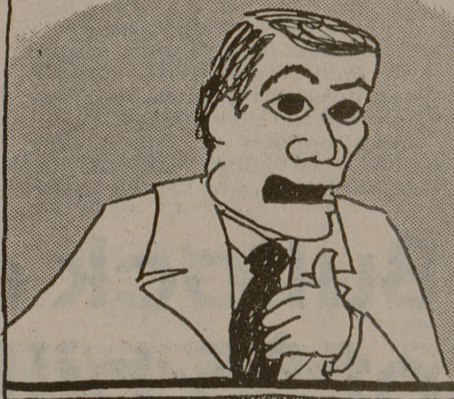
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Chariots of the Fundamentalists?

What ever happened to the ancient astronauts?

About 10 years ago there were tons of books and articles about them. Erich von Daniken came up with the theory that astronauts from other planets came to Earth thousands of years ago and influenced the development of the human race. In his book, *Chariots of the Gods*, von Daniken proposed that our ancestors weren't intelligent enough to build the pyramids in Egypt or Central America, the stone heads at Easter Island, Stonehenge or any other of the world's wonders. Von Daniken stated that these monuments might have been built with the aid of extraterrestrial visitors who wanted to leave behind a record of their visit.



Karl Pallmeyer

The idea that mankind was helped along the way by visitors from other worlds might make for a good piece of science fiction but it doesn't say much for the human race. Basically von Daniken was saying that mankind is useless and wouldn't have been able to do anything without outside influence. I used to think that our ancestors were pretty smart to be able to construct pyramids and other great things, but von Daniken would have had us believe that someone else was responsible. According to him, man is nothing without the ancient astronauts.

There are few people around today who believe in ancient astronauts, but there are several who choose to believe that mankind is useless. These people call themselves Fundamentalists.

Last month a group of Fundamentalist parents led by Vicki Frost launched a legal attack against the Hawkins County public schools because of some textbooks the schools have been using. The Fundamentalists are upset that their children are being exposed to books that "teach other forms of salvation, other than faith in Jesus Christ alone."

One of the books that has come under attack is L. Frank Baum's *The Wizard of Oz*. Most everyone who has read the book or seen the movie remembers that when Dorothy and her friends go back to the Wizard to get their heart, brain, courage and ride home, the Wizard tells them that they have those qualities inside themselves and all they have to do is work on developing them. The Fundamentalists are upset that their children are being taught that they should develop qualities of compassion, intelligence and courage on their own. The Fundamentalists believe that these qualities come only from God.

Basically the Fundamentalists are saying that mankind is useless and wouldn't have been able to do anything without outside influence. The Fundamentalists are saying that man is incapable of even the most basic acts without the constant supervision of the Almighty.

Man has several admirable traits that should be developed more fully. Whether these traits come from God or from man himself is debatable. If those traits are truly God-given then he must have intended us to develop them to the best of our abilities.

Man needs to work to improve himself and his world regardless of what might lie ahead. If the God of the Fundamentalists is the same God that I've read about, he would prefer that we work to help ourselves and each other instead of constantly praying for his assistance.

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Confidence in America

EDITOR:

They say that when the going gets tough, the tough get going — that is, they're supposed to get motivated, to get the job done, and as soon as possible. At least, that's the American way.

I think that things must work a little differently down in Mexico. There when things get tough, people really get going — out of the country and away from their troubles at home. At least that's how the Reagan administration sees things. The Mexican illegals are not proud enough to cope with their own problems, they say up in Washington.

I don't see it that way at all. I believe that America is in part to blame for Mexico's domestic plight — because we have not been a good neighbor. We do all sorts of things for Canada and Europe. We even do more to help the Russians than we do to help our neighbors to the south.

As far as that goes, I think that it takes a lot of courage for a man to leave his home in Mexico and to take the dubious and dangerous trek northward — there to try and make some money working at some menial job that no one else will do and send back home to his loved ones. Few and far between are the U.S. citizens who would do such a thing for their families.

Who are we to stanch their efforts? Our own fellow citizens sit complacent on their rear ends, drawing unemployment and mooching off the system, taking some sort of egotistical pride in the fact that others are less fortunate. Who are we to condemn the illegal aliens when they have more faith and confidence in America than most Americans?

William H. Clark II

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