

## Haig preaches geopolitical confrontation

*General Alexander Haig, the New York Council on Foreign Relations' candidate in the 1980 presidential race, spoke before the California Bankers Association May 21. As in previous speeches in his still unofficial presidential campaign, Haig's address was filled with speculations that the Soviet Union and East bloc could be balkanized while a nuclear confrontation would reassert United States leadership. Here are excerpts.*

Now, as a military man, I am acutely aware that roughly a quarter of Soviet forces are positioned east of the Ural mountains, facing Communist China today. But how long we were, in the West, in comprehending the risks and the benefits of this fragmentation in Marxist-Leninism! I recall my own experiences in 1971 in Peking, when I spent some three hours alone in the Great Hall of the People with Zhou Enlai—at the height of the Vietnam conflict. As I left that experience and walked down the steps of the Great Hall of the People, I thought to myself, “Why, he never said so, but what this wily old Marxist leader was suggesting to me was: “Do not lose in Vietnam, and do not withdraw from Asia!” And when I returned to our nation's capital—and this was before a rabid criticism that existed there and on both sides of the Atlantic at the time—and I suggested that this was my interpretation of the discussions, I was accused of taking leave of my senses.

But how clear the picture has become in the intervening months and years! Why, as recently as this past summer, the Vice Premier of Communist China was asked, “What about this border conflict between Pnom Penh and Hanoi?” and he responded, “Border conflict? This is no border conflict. This is one nation in Southeast Asia seeking regional hegemony at the sufferance of the superpowers!” And how clear the picture became in the intervening weeks and months—as we observed the first 15 regular North Vietnamese divisions overrun neighboring Cambodia, and as we observed the highly dangerous punitive actions taken by Peking against Hanoi....

The reality, as we've observed, of fragmentation in an external sense in the Marxist-Leninist world, has been accompanied by increasing centrifugal pressures from *within* those areas which remain under Soviet hegemony today: the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe. Turn first to the Soviet Union: you know, the period of the 1980s poses profound difficulties for whatever Soviet leadership will emerge. First, we are watching fundamental demographic shifts within the Soviet Union itself.

Today, roughly 50 percent of the populations of that Soviet Union are non-Russian in character; and if one looks at birth-rate trends—*especially* to the Islamic republics of the southern Soviet Union and Latvia and the Ukraine in the West—we will see increasing minorities in the Russian composition of the Soviet Union itself. These minorities are going, in the period ahead, to insist on a greater role and greater autonomy. That combines with fundamental failures in the Soviet system itself—agriculture, historically, reductions in production and growth rates, and the forecast of definitive limitations on energy, which our Central Intelligence Agency forecast a year ago.

Now history has been replete with examples of the Soviet Union plagued by such difficulties, transferring these onerous burdens to their satellite areas in Eastern Europe. This reality will converge with the emergence of increasing restiveness in Eastern Europe today, as a consequence of a wave of historic nationalism which is global in context today, and we saw manifestations of it in recent months as the Soviet Union demanded greater defense expenditures—and some rebelled. We saw manifestations of it as the Soviet Union asked for a unified condemnation of Peking's invasion of Hanoi—and some resisted.

Now it seems to me that we should draw some fundamental conclusions about this. *First* [shouting], *we are not living with the inevitable victory of Marxism in this global world of ours!* Hardly at all! It has been, and remains, a *profound* failure. We must not allow Western and American policies which assume the inevitability of Soviet success. Secondly, barring no change in longstanding Soviet policy, these pressures in the period ahead, these centrifugal pressures, are going to continue to grow, and the directions these pressures propel themselves will be in large measure a product of their assessment of Western unity, solidarity, relevance, and determination to provide and protect our own vital interests.

Now, no strategic overview would be complete without a word about the so-called Third World, an area which today we in the Western industrialized world find ourselves increasingly dependent upon for the raw materials and energy that have spawned our growth since the second Great War. You know, we had great hopes for this Third World in the decade of the sixties. We indulged ourselves in the vast expenditure of American resources to provide for their moderate political development—and in one instance, volumes of American blood.

But how disappointed we have become, to see that

almost without exception, the emerging Third World has adopted dictatorial models of the right or the left today. And again, in the period ahead, it seems to me we should keep two factors fundamentally in mind. One is the current difficulties we seem to be having—especially in our own country—in finding terms and discriminating between authoritarian regimes on the one hand, and *totalitarian* regimes on the other. Both are unsatisfactory, from our Western point of view, because they accumulate at the apex of government unreasonable dictatorial control. But you know, they are fundamentally different in value terms. An authoritarian regime derives its unsatisfactory character from environmental circumstances—a lack of political maturity; perceived threats, internal or external; a lack of economic development—and because it's environmental, and it's expedient in character, it lends itself to entirely different ameliorative programs in our efforts to move it to more pluralistic structures. A totalitarian regime, on the other hand, finds universal conviction, *rejects* the principle of the role of the individual and state to which we are firmly wedded. And it seems to me you do not serve the purposes of social justice—let alone vital American interests—to assume policies which drive the authoritarian model into the totalitarian model; in no way at all.

Now a second aspect of our current problem is that, as Henry Kissinger has suggested recently, we must not proceed in our effort to work out a just and responsible relationship with this Third World under the premise that justice rests exclusively in the hands of those who would adopt warfare, bloodshed and terror to change status quo. ....

And as I observed recent Soviet activity over the past two years—the *creation of client-states*, in a line running from Afghanistan in the East through the Saudi Arabian peninsula, South Yemen, to the Horn of Africa, Ethiopia, and along both littorals of the African continent—I asked myself: Are we in the West enjoying balanced reciprocity in these twin pillars upon which we have built our peace?

Now, I recognize that there is much current sophistry in our own nation with respect to the implications of these illegal Soviet interventionism [sic] in the Third World. There are those who suggest, with some justification, that *because Soviet power is built essentially on force of arms*, it will ultimately collapse of its own weight—perhaps like ours did in Vietnam; therefore we should not be concerned, because we will soon see what we saw in Egypt, India, and perhaps Somalia. But I would suggest that there are at least three other factors that must be considered as we dispose...of the implications of this *illegal interventionism*. One is this: I am watching today the emergence of sophisticated Soviet naval and air bases on a line

through southern Eurasia along both littorals of the African continent, *which at any given moment could snuff out the lifelines of vital Western commerce*—especially our resources in energy.

Secondly: have we asked ourselves, with sufficient intensity, the impact that these unchallenged, illegal Soviet interventionisms are having on nonaligned, historically friendly Third World nations—upon whose convergence of policy we so vitally depend—Saudi Arabia, the Gulf oil-producing states? And are we not leaving them to a *syndrome of inevitability* in which they see the historic wave of the future turning toward the East?

And finally, I would ask: How can we hope to work out a just and responsible relationship with the Soviet Union, while we proceed ahead, almost mindlessly, in such functional areas as arms control, credit transfer, trade, agricultural transfer, cultural exchanges—while we simultaneously ignore blatant illegal interventionism in the Third World? That cannot be a basis for *sound* development of detente.

What I am suggesting is that we have long since arrived at a point in our own history where we must step back and ask whether or not we are appropriately orchestrated—in the still vastly superior political, economic and security assets of the Western world—to insist as we must, that necessary and desirable historic change occur within the confines of the accepted rules of international law. And I would suggest that this task is going to require a new style of post-Vietnam American leadership, a leadership that recognizes that our sterile involvement in Southeast Asia is *over* and that our *self-hypnotic* [shouting], *traumatized reaction to that involvement must also be over*. It is a leadership that recognizes that the day is gone when the United States could unilaterally move in and out of global crisis situations and bring about outcomes that met the collective interest of the Free World. The time has come to integrate both the advantages and the burdens of this management task. It is a leadership which must develop a global strategic concept that will enable us day to day to sort out the issues on the strategic horizon which are of vital concern to Western interests, from those that are best left to local solutions—leadership that moves away from the hyperactive post-World War II American foreign policy that saw every deleterious effect on the strategic horizon as a consequence of Marxist or Soviet duplicity—but *which will not recoil from challenging blatantly illegal Soviet interventionisms, wherever they occur*.

And finally, it is a leadership that must assemble, through more enlightened and sensitive diplomacy, the collective interests of the Free World, to orchestrate, if you will, a still superior asset, to manage global Soviet power....