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lated to arouse grief and outrage among those who care about human rights; but, in the present era of unparalleled danger for the human future, the need to take every possible step for the prevention of nuclear war is overriding. Moreover, I believe that the chance of ameliorating the lot of the oppressed in the Soviet Union is more likely to be increased (although perhaps very slowly) by closer and more cooperative personal relations than by maintaining a refusal to undertake further exchanges.

We should, of course, continue, as individuals and in groups, to plead the cause of those whose human rights have been violated, under every regime that has been guilty of oppression. Among these, the Soviet Union is one of many. Certainly we should continue our work in petitioning for the rights of those who are persecuted. However, the relation of the United States and the U.S.S.R. is unique today. Each has the power to destroy the other; we hold the fate of the world in our hands. We are trustees for the future of humanity; the development of nuclear energy and nuclear weapons has thrust that awesome responsibility upon us, and for me that must remain the primary consideration.

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Arms Negotiations

R. Jeffrey Smith's article "Allegations of cheating endanger arms talks" (News and Comment, 8 Mar., p. 1180) is a misleading portrayal of the President's General Advisory Committee on Arms Control and Disarmament (GAC) and its report *A Quarter Century of Soviet Compliance Practices Under Arms Control Commitments: 1958-1983*.

The GAC report resulted from a year-long analysis of all available data, through the highest levels of classification, concerning post-World War II Soviet actions pertinent to Soviet arms control commitments, including 26 documentary arms control agreements and numerous Soviet unilateral commitments.

Looking across the spectrum of Soviet arms control practices provided new insight into Soviet approaches to arms control. For example, the GAC found the complete body of available evidence persuasive in establishing that the Soviets had *planned* to violate certain arms control agreements even as they were in

the process of signing and ratifying those agreements.

Smith does not note that (i) the Committee used the 1969 Vienna Convention of the Law of Treaties and decisions of the International Court of Justice concerning unilateral commitments as the legal basis for analyzing Soviet compliance behavior; (ii) the GAC carefully distinguished among the categories of material breaches; (iii) the GAC distinguished between the 17 instances for which the evidence indicates with high confidence that material Soviet breaches have occurred and those numerous areas for which the evidence gives substantial reason for suspicion but is not conclusive; (iv) it was the purpose of the report to look at all data concerning Soviet behavior under arms control constraints and not to disregard information on the basis of a prior bias or rationalization; and (v) several Soviet actions that may appear to be minor breaches when viewed in isolation and with only limited information take on a more serious complexion when viewed in the context of other Soviet actions and in light of all evidence that has been acquired to date.

Finally, the title of Smith's article implies that those concerned about Soviet cheating are really opposed to arms control and are using the violations issue as a way to block any new agreement. Nothing could be further from the truth. It is not the discovery and discussion of Soviet cheating that endangers arms control, but the cheating itself that discredits arms control as an instrument of international relations. The arms control process is strengthened when the parties comply with their commitments.

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Although Van Cleave says that the article was misleading, he does not identify anything misleading in it, and I stand by it as a fair and accurate portrayal of the report and the ongoing debate over treaty compliance.

The article did not suggest that only arms control opponents are concerned about Soviet treaty violations. In fact, it prominently featured statements of concern by longtime arms control advocates such as Paul Warnke and Gerard Smith, as well as moderates such as Gary Hart.—R. JEFFREY SMITH

Erratum: In M. Mitchell Waldrop's briefing "Reagan names space commission" (News and Comment, 12 Apr., p. 160), Charles M. Herzfeld's name was spelled incorrectly.

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