

Letters to the editor
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It is not easy to criticize Roy Meachum unfairly by James E. Keenan was up to it (9/12/91)!

In a lengthy letter, ostensibly responding to Meachum's alleged "unusually inane diatribes" Mr. Keenan cites not a single word of any single column in support of his characterization.

Instead, like others of the irrational right extreme he uses his letter for other political objectives, describing all who do not see the world through his contorting eyes as "leftists", "liberals" and even coup-plotters.

Irrational ^{and} sick hardly describe Mr. Keenan's own diatribes, like:

"Gone are the dreams of a leftist coup to install an American Stalin in the White House. Gone are the dreams of the Red Army marching in triumph down Pennsylvania Avenue. Gone is a future in which an American Soviet Republic would join the U.S.S.R. in imposing Marxism-Leninism on the world."

Dream? This is Mr. Keenan's nightmare, without any foundation at all, but then those who think like him do not contaminate what they say with fact or reality.

The horror he invents never existed, never was in any Meachum column I read, never was in any Democratic mind.

What he writes is insane and disgraceful.

It also reflects a bankruptcy of ideas if he cannot oppose what he does not agree with without adopting the method and thought of "Mein Kampf."

In the real world the Keenans cannot be comfortable in, ^{table} there was one planned coup of which I know. It was by those of Mr. Keenan's philosophy, aimed at FDR, was to be financed by a prominent Wall Street bonding house, and it was, in the plotter's plans, to have been led by former Marine General Smedley Butler, then Philadelphia's public-safety director. Only Butler was aghast and instead of leading that march on Washington on a white house he exposed the plotters.

The Keenan method, of saying one thing and talking of anything but that to argue political preconceptions is S.O.P. for the lunatic right. And it is crazy!

Harold Weisberg
Handwritten signature

F Post 1/24/91
Forgive 'poor old' Roy for
'unusually inane diatribes'

I beg my conservative friends to forgive poor old Roy Meachum for his more than usually inane diatribes of recent days. Things are going hard for the American liberal left in these times. Their rock and bulwark, the land where they "have seen the future and it works," is falling apart. The Soviet Union not only is rapidly retreating from communism, but is disintegrating as even a nation. The old imperial flag flies over Moscow. Soviet troops are no longer welcome in their capital city.

The head of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, Mikhail Gorbachev, has not only resigned from the party, but suggested its dissolution. To American leftists, it is as if Catholics saw the Pope resign and join the College of Cardinals in a mass conversion to Buddhism.

Gone are the dreams of a leftist coup to install an American Stalin in the White House. Gone are the dreams of the Red Army marching in triumph down Pennsylvania Avenue. Gone is a future in which an American Soviet Republic would join the U.S.S.R. in imposing Marxism-Leninism on the world. The Communist Party of the United States is a sorry, rag-tag group of washed-up survivors of a sunken Marxist Titanic, clinging together for cold comfort in a world suddenly become capitalist.

Oh, Roy and the others are not entirely without friends. There is still Castro to praise and adore; there are still Arab terrorists and the bloody Khmer Rouge to support; there are still the Gadhafis and Saddams of the world to glorify. But these two-bit thugs are a far cry from the worship of a truly towering (in world affairs if not in person) figure like Josef Stalin.

Nor are the blows to the liberal left solely emotional. The Soviet Union is broke; hitherto wide open purse of the KGB is shut and empty. Left-wing writers and pseudo-journalists will have to (horrors!) live on their earnings; leftist PACs will find that there really is a bottom to their secret money bucket. Friends of communism inside and outside government will have to try to find someone else to buy their stolen secrets. Things are really in a sorry mess for the Americans who feel that the Soviet Union is "the land of the heart."

Even the fatuous attempt by leftwing "journalists" to portray the neo-Stalinist Soviet coup as originating with "right-wingers" has been greeted with laughter. Calling these old-time, hardline leftists "right-wingers" and "conservatives" must surely be a last pathetic attempt to push Marxist dialectics on a newly awakened world.

So forgive Roy, please. He is going through a rough time. Maybe someday he will find relief from his trauma, but that time is not yet. Meanwhile, he needs peace and quiet. Maybe he should take a long vacation to think things over.

We promise not to miss his column.

JAMES E. KEENAN
Middletown