

Ford Ad



The Russians Don't Welsh on Allies

William Rusher

WOULD somebody please tell the Russians the Cold War is over?

A year or so ago, after we had pulled our ground troops out of Vietnam and retrieved our POWs, Congress began to tire of supplying arms and ammunition to the South Vietnamese. Hadn't we done enough for them already? So, bit by bit, Congress started dragging its feet. The result?

Substantial numbers of planes, helicopters, tanks and other combat vehicles are out of service for lack of spare parts and civilian maintenance crews. Rationing of fuel has cut the operating hours of aircraft and ground combat vehicles to one-half their capability; ammunition use has been cut back 30 per cent. Lack of mobility and reduced air and artillery support have led to loss of outposts, an increasingly defensive posture and higher casualties.

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IF YOU THINK I exaggerate, let me surprise you: That last paragraph is a verbatim quotation from the lead editorial in the March 21 issue of the New York Times, a newspaper rarely accused of hawk sentiments.

Since it was written, the collapse of

South Vietnamese resistance has begun to take on the dimensions of a rout.

But please observe the Russians. They don't get tired. They don't welsh on their allies. They just keep on quietly sending weapons and ammunition to the North Vietnamese. Some detente, eh?

Meanwhile, one of our NATO allies is missing. The Communist takeover of Portugal is just about complete. The job is being done so gradually that there will be no point at which American opinion can conveniently be crystallized in opposition to this slow-motion abduction of a key European ally.

So we can't count on public opinion to take Messrs. Ford and Kissinger by the nose and drag them into a new and tougher policy on Portugal.

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I AM INDEBTED to my "National Review" colleague, Professor Jeffrey Hart, for a most sensible proposal in respect to Portugal: Why doesn't a NATO task-force move in, supervise honest elections and then depart?

That is basically what the United States did in the Dominican Republic in 1965, and it not only prevented a Communist takeover there but resulted in a free and stable government that has lasted ever since.