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## A trump up their sleeve?

When the executive of a superpower such as the Soviet Union implies that the executive of another superpower such as the United States is a liar, then one of three things is possible:

1. The Soviet executive was speaking in the heat of the moment and so his rhetoric superseded his accuracy and an apology may be forthcoming in the interests of stabilizing Soviet-American relations.

2. The Soviet executive was bluffing in typical Soviet bullying fashion and the smear will not be withdrawn, no matter what.

3. The Soviet Union has "evidence" in hand which the KGB would say shows that Nicholas Daniloff was really an American spy or guilty of some other criminal act.

The latter hypothesis is the more probable. For example:

Last April, I left Moscow Airport after a two-week visit to the U.S.S.R. Although I had been refused a visa a few years earlier, for some reason I was allowed in this time, as part of a group organized by the World Media Conference.

When I came home and started emptying my pockets of the enormous amount of junk one collects as a tourist, I found to my horror that I had unwittingly taken with me a five-ruble note. Had I been searched at the airport at departure time and the currency found in my pocket, I could have been arrested under Soviet law, convicted of illegal currency transactions, and jailed. And nothing could have been done about it. I would have been guilty. It's that easy to violate Soviet law.

Without question, any foreign correspondent in Moscow can on any given day be arrested as a violator of Soviet law. (It's tempting to put the phrase Soviet law in inverted commas but in the interest of Soviet-American friendship, I will refrain.)

It is my thesis that Mikhail Gorbachev has in hand enough "evidence" to hang Mr. Daniloff. That is why Mr. Gorbachev has dared in effect to call President Reagan a liar. Soviet law, despite the apologetics of academics like Professor Harold Berman of Harvard University, operates on the assumption that everybody is guilty of anything and everything whenever it suits the Politburo.

There is no question in my mind that when the time comes Mr. Gor-

bachev will show the world that Mr. Daniloff committed several crimes. What's more, Mr. Gorbachev will have the proof, very likely on tape and in Mr. Daniloff's own voice. Mr. Daniloff was under KGB interrogation for 13 days in a KGB jail. In those 13 days, under skillful, friendly, understanding conversation and chatting, it would emerge that Mr. Daniloff had given some Russian dissident a bottle of scotch and the Russian dissident would no doubt have testified that in return for the scotch Mr. Daniloff had asked him to give him some secrets. Perhaps, some tough-minded people under similar circumstances would have refused to talk without a lawyer or would have refused to give any information except name, rank, and serial number.

However, let us assume that Mr. Daniloff has "talked" and "confessed" to a series of horrendous crimes. It is because Mr. Gorbachev has in his hands transcripts of Mr. Daniloff's "confessions" that Mr. Gorbachev has let the entire world know that the president of the United States is a liar or, at best, a tool in the hands of anti-Soviet elements in the White House who don't tell President Reagan anything.

In the meantime, there is another little question to pose:

When was the last time we heard anything about Afghanistan?

Is the Daniloff case a diversion intended to ease any pressure from the United States on the Soviet Union over what is potentially a geostrategic disaster for the Free World, namely, the potential collapse of Afghanistan and with it, perhaps, the domino fall of Pakistan, Iran, and the Persian Gulf?

How much moral indignation can a people muster in one season?

The Soviets will play out the Daniloff case for as long as possible, while real issues, such as Afghanistan, such as Andrei Sakharov and other mistreated dissidents, such as persecuted Poland, will be buried under a mound of clippings about the Daniloff case.

Isn't it time that America's diplo-

rats and negotiators learned the meaning of 70 years of Soviet history? Are we going to waste time trying to disprove and debate the Soviet "evidence" against Mr. Daniloff, whenever the Soviets get around to releasing it? Are we going to wait to see if the Soviets will invite Seymour Hersh to come to Moscow to investigate whether Mr. Daniloff is a U.S. spy or not, just as Mr. Hersh has just shown the world that the Soviet Union was really innocent of any evil intent when a Soviet pilot killed 269 innocent passengers in KAL 007?

In short, isn't it time to stop playing charades with Edward Shevardnadze, who, acting the "good cop," is, I'm sure, trying to persuade Secretary of State George Shultz of his helplessness before all those "bad" cops in the KGB?

Isn't it time that the United States government, as the leader and protector of the Free World, acted with the dignity and power which it is incumbent upon the president to demonstrate?

Ronald Reagan, where are you when we need you?

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