

30/11/83.



10 DOWNING STREET

Prime Minister

Tim Dalyell  
raised the attached  
scandalous article in  
the Wall Street Journal  
under guise of an SO LO  
application today. I suspect  
Alexander Cockburn is  
the son of Claude  
Cockburn, the former  
Communist who died  
recently.

Can we find out? Mr  
JF



# Double Talk Doesn't Speak Well for U.S. Foreign Policy

By ALEXANDER COCKBURN

NEW YORK—A worthy Scot in Dundee yearned to become a magistrate and maneuvered toward this goal for many years. At long last he attained his dream and proudly took his seat upon the bench. The first miscreant to appear before him was a pervert, caught exposing himself in a public park. The magistrate listened to the squalid circumstances of the offense and the plea of guilty. Then he leaned forward and gazed down bleakly at the prisoner: "Hamish McKenzie, it is the sentence of this court that you shall be taken to another place and from there to a place of execution, and there hanged by the neck until you are

*infinitely good and the other side infinitely bad.* Let's test British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher on this one. After the ruthless downing of Korean Air Lines Flight 007, she told television audiences that the subsequent lack of apology by the Russians shows that they are an inherently evil and barbaric bunch.

On May 1, 1982, President Belaunde of Peru phoned President Galtieri of Argentina with U.S. Secretary of State Haig's proposals for settling the Falklands conflict. Shortly thereafter Mr. Galtieri told Mr. Belaunde that with two minor qualifications, the proposals were satisfactory. This response was ratified by the Argentinean junta a few hours later. On the same day then British Foreign Secretary Francis Pym, in Washington with Mr. Haig, declared an end to further hostilities unless the Argentineans entered the exclusion zone around the Falklands. Late that same night Adm. Anaya ordered all Argentinean naval ships to port.

On the morning of May 2 Mrs. Thatcher had before her reports of the state of the peace proposals, of the junta meeting and of Adm. Anaya's order. Without consulting Mr. Pym in Washington, she changed the rules of naval engagement. Outside the exclusion zone and steaming away from it, the Belgrano was torpedoed without warning and 368 Argentineans killed. Butchery continued until Mrs. Thatcher asked her people to rejoice in victory.

*Double talk and double cross: the self-righteousness that marches with ignorance.* For years one or another faction of the Christian minority in Lebanon has sought to lure in the U.S. to advance its interests. President Eisenhower and the Dulles brothers, misreading the Kassim coup in Iraq and the blandishments of Chamoun, dispatched thousands of Marines to Beirut in 1958. The situation was fortunately redressed by the speedy substitution of a U.N. peace-keeping force.

How now to explain, unless by self-righteous, self-deluding ignorance, a strategy

that has left U.S. Marines propping up the ambitions of the Phalange faction of the minority Christians, now termed a "government" but in fact the rabid militia that, with Israeli connivance and over U.S. guarantees of safety, slaughtered hundreds of refugees in the camps of Sabra and Chatilla. It is ignorant double talk to invoke a "quagmire" and to trace all trouble to Soviet meddling via its supposed Syrian and Palestinian "proxies" in a region where the hatreds and schisms have survived a thousand years.

*Double talk and double-think: the consequences of believing your own propaganda.* Can a government that has smiled upon tyrants in the Philippines, South Africa, Iraq, Pakistan and now even in Cambodia, afford excessive moral self-regard? The answer of course is yes, as long as the world is carefully rearranged to accommodate the moral and psychological self-mutilation required by the act of embracing two contradictory postures at the same time: i.e., that the U.S. despises tyrants but must sustain them, loves peace but must prepare for war. The need to recast the world into two simple hemispheres of good and evil becomes virtually pathological, with no crime so bizarre or so unfounded that it cannot be laid to the foe: yellow rain, the "plot" to kill the pope, the Soviet "destabilization," etc.

Almost worst is the fear that lies behind double talk: fear that straight talk will alienate some valued or threatening constituency. Watch courage and leadership melt away as we roll closer to the primaries and to Nov. 8, 1984; watch as the candidates rattle their mendicant cups—John Glenn to the Israeli lobby, Mr. Reagan to the women and so on. The Russians fear reality and say nothing. The Americans fear reality and say everything. Either way the Word, which came in the beginning, does not fare well, and neither does humankind.

Mr. Cockburn is a columnist for the Village Voice.

## Another View

dead, and may the Lord have mercy on your soul."

McKenzie fainted dead away and the clerk rose swiftly to whisper in the magistrate's ear that even leaving aside the merits of the punishment such a sentence was beyond the competence of his worship. "I'm well aware of that," the magistrate said with a sigh of pleasure, "but for 25 years I've been waiting to say it."

So McKenzie found to his great relief that words are one thing and deeds another. A few months ago, President Reagan was having a fine time saying that the Russians—or at least their leaders—are a bunch of morally worthless scoundrels. Then the Clerk of the Court of Sober Opinion whispers in his ear and the Caterpillar tractors and the grain shipments roll down to the docks and the president waves goodbye as they head east into the sunrise toward the empire of evil.

It's double talk and it's dangerous. A people asked to believe everything will in the end believe nothing. Double talk leads to double-think and then we're done for.

A couple of examples.  
*Double talk and moral self-righteousness: the dangerous belief that your side is*

