

wails.

What is remarkable about Soviet communism is that something so bad could last so long. Dictators and bad kings are lucky to last a decade. Jeanne Kirkpatrick observed more than a decade ago that communism was worse than mere tyranny because its roots went deeper.

The hammer and sickle won't be coming down New Year's Eve because of Mikhail Gorbachev, though it would be fitting if they gave Gorbachev the flag honors. The Soviet flag is coming down because the system broke down. It never worked very well, but Stalin, Khrushchev and Brezhnev kept that hidden with wars and gulags.

With the wars over and the gulags closed, Russians began to notice how poor they were. Gorbachev was among the first to notice. "The aims of perestroika," he wrote, "are economic freedom, political freedom, escape

a maccup. Reformers always believe they can control the forces they unleash and they are always wrong. Mirabeau, Alexander II, Kerensky, Shapour Bakhtiar, Gorbachev, the list is long.

Gorbachev is different from the others. Yes, he made the common error of believing he could control the pace of change. But he has not been devoured by his revolution. And unlike Mirabeau, Kerensky and Bakhtiar, he has not been muscled aside by anti-democratic forces, but by forces seeking to go farther toward democracy than he wanted to go.

When the Russians finally decide what to do with Lenin's body — an unmarked grave in Siberia would be fitting — we have a suggestion for the empty mausoleum: Save it for Gorbachev. The father of Russian democracy deserves more than the father of Russian communism.

## Letters

### 'Fark' not 'Fork'

Editor:

I couldn't get to sleep at all last night. I kept tossin' and turnin' in my straw tick. Thinkin' about the insensitive and thoughtless implications displayed by Mrs. Adams in her "Drop the Fork" letter. Finally I decided it was time to get out my plume and clear the soiled name of my town with a response.

It is evident that Mrs. Adams has not been a resident of this valley for any length of time — for she has misspelled (and as a result, mispronounced) the name of our fair city. It is not clear to me where she acquired the name "Spanish Fork." I assume that she was referring to what most folks 'round these parts call "Spanish Fark." It is unfortunate that such a gross lack of culture was so blatantly displayed in the Herald. Us Spanish Fark-ites take offense to having our town mislabeled as "Spanish Fork."

In addition to this deplorable misspelling, I believe that us Spanish Fark-ites were called "unprogressive" in this letter. You might think this is funny, but in Spanish Fark, this is no laughing matter. It hurts, Mrs. Adams. It plum hurts the residents in a town whose motto is "Pride and Progress." Shoot, we ain't got any less feelin's than you big city folks got way over yonder in Provo. And, shucks, we just plain don't take a likin' to big city folks callin' us names.

We are real sorry for being such a blemish upon you city folks.

However, if you change the name of Provo/Orem to Sodom, maybe us Spanish Fark hicks would be willing to change our town's name to Gomorrah — and get in step with "progress."

Chris Christopherson  
Spanish Fork

Why New Year's Eve?

from Nu Skin, purchased the property in the name of Keith Halls and assignees, and that Blake Roney, President of Nu Skin and Steven Lund, vicepresident of Nu Skin each contributed \$1,500 to incumbent council chairman Steve Clark's campaign.

Why didn't Provo City auction each acre individually, instead of limiting the sale to those that could afford to purchase the entire 10-acre plot, and why didn't Provo City wait for the title transfer from the Forest Service, rather than conditioning the sale "upon successful transfer of the title from the Forest Service"?

The three newly elected council members that successfully campaigned against the management compensation plan, expressed that they did not want to move forward on the management compensation plan at this time, at the last study session of the council meeting, and Ben Porter has been very vocal in his opposition to the management compensation plan since it was first exposed Oct. 21.

What is the gain of passing the management compensation with only seven days until the new city council can take it back out? How much can the administration do in only seven days, besides give out "bonus" checks to recognize employees that endorsed and campaigned heavily for the incumbents, that lost, in the last election, for "extramile" performance?

Mayor Joe Jenkins is clearly drawing the battle lines declaring war, if the newly elected council members plan to proceed with the campaign promises, that made them victorious in the election!

Peggy Burdett  
Provo

### Grigg is tilting

Editor:



## Christmas a busy time for atheists

For the politically active, evangelizing atheist, Christmas time is a delightful season. No other time of year offers such plentiful opportunities to use the blunt instrument of litigation to pummel local traditions.

Utah is already being smitten hip and thigh with lawsuits brought by the local division of the atheist/secular humanist axis: fortunately, this Christmas did not produce yet another harassing suit. However, shortly before Christmas the Pontiff of the American Atheists visited Salt Lake City in order to rally the faithful.

Jon Murray is the son of Madalyn Murray O'Hair and president of the American Atheists. In his speech to Utah atheists Murray denounced Christmas as the celebration of "the birth of a dictator." He condemned the holiday as a divisive influence upon society, suggesting that a more unifying influence could be found in the celebration of the winter solstice and other Earth-based holidays.

Now, flawless consistency is a trait well beyond human competence. But Mr. Murray's disapproval of disunity in the Salt Lake address is flatly incompatible with the message he took to Moscow in 1989. A recent issue of American Atheist magazine chronicled the visit of a Murray-led contingent to the Moscow International Book Fair in 1989. During a visit with a Soviet atheist publisher, Murray's group criticized the Soviet government for relenting in the war against religion:

"We were quite frank (in saying) that



Will Grigg

ABROAD

both disarmament and peace could have been negotiated without a sellout to religion and that there was no way in this world that atheists and theists could live side-by-side and reach out for a mutually supportive end. There was no such thing. The "unity" pursued by Murray's group, therefore, could only come about through the annihilation of religion, perhaps through the physical liquidation of religious people.

Indeed, Madalyn O'Hair was quite disappointed by the failure of the Soviet "final solution" to the problem of religion: "(It) was apparent to all of us that really little or nothing had been done in 70 years in the U.S.S.R. ... The Soviets had simply been sitting there waiting for religion to wither away.")

Actually, the Soviets have been quite energetic in their efforts to destroy religion. Voltaire, an accredited member of the Humanist pantheon, once mused, "Up to what point can statecraft permit superstition to be destroyed? This is a very thorny question. It is like asking to what depth

should one make an incision in a dropsical person, who may die under the operation. It is a matter for the doctor's discretion."

In order to "cure" the Russian people of the scourge of religion, the Soviet regime killed at its discretion, piling up corpses at a pace unprecedented — and perhaps unequalled — in history. What percentage of the 60 million domestic victims of Soviet communism were killed in the effort to extinguish "superstition"? It is impossible to say. However, we can say with some confidence that even the prodigious efforts of the Soviet regime fell short of Murray's ambitions.

After making a ritual pilgrimage to Lenin's tomb, Murray's group "turned to one another — knowing that atheism in the world was represented only by American Atheists." During his visit to Salt Lake, Murray explained to the True Believers that "We are animals ... we are not a special creation of some type of god." The bestial nature of that portion of humanity devoted to "aggressive atheism" was amply demonstrated by the regime that failed to fulfill Murray's expectations. Nowhere in the history of organized Christianity — not even in the depth of the Dark Ages — can there be found any atrocity to compare with the mildest outrages committed by the Soviet regime.

If there is no God, warned Dostoyevsky, anything is permissible. The history of this bloody century testifies of the truth of that apothegm.

## Customs' & NBC's deal could blow drug bust

WASHINGTON — A deal between the U.S. Customs Service and NBC is threatening to jeopardize the biggest heroin bust in U.S. history — a bust in which a federal judge said Customs used NBC as an agent for the government.

The drugs — more than half a ton of heroin — were discovered last May in



Jack Anderson & Dale Van Atta

UNITED  
FEATURE

a short segment on the NBC Nightly News on June 21. It was enough to give the defense lawyers legal fodder.

On Dec. 9, the judge in San Francisco ruled that NBC had acted as a government agent in an unprecedented drug investigation in which Customs "shared investigative data with NBC, transported NBC per-