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To the Editor, American Political Science Review:


I am afraid I am among those who have in recent years found the APSR to become depressingly unreadable, as arcane notations replaced expository English and political insight yielded to statistically-demonstrated trivia. But I am delighted to discover that APSR has after all a saving sense of humor. I refer to your selection of perhaps the nation's most unregenerate right-wing political scientist to review my book In Search of American Foreign Policy: The Humane Use of Power. (Vol. LXXI, December 1977).

That a broad reevaluation of foreign affairs liberalism should be entrusted to a dedicated opponent of liberalism in any form was a deliciously witty act, ensuring as it did that the entire effort would be ridiculed rather than critiqued, and that it would be tested entirely in terms of its deviations from true orthodoxy regarding the Soviet Union as revealed by Professor Possony.

I can envisage a regular humor section in the "Book Reviews," in which, to give only a few obvious examples (to which I am by no means comparing myself), books by Carter are reviewed by Reagan, Woodward-Bernstein by Nixon, Gandhi by Nitze, Rathjens by Wohlstetter, Tizard by Lindemann, Galileo by Torquemada, etc, etc. Prizes might be offered for the funniest mismatchings, thus converting to a delightful game the otherwise heavy weather of serious and informative book reviewing.

Of course, since the review in question appeared four years after publication, it (like all APSR reviews) is essentially useless to the profession, and the matter is really moot. For that reason I will restrict myself to observing that the far right's resort to contempt and ridicule when confronted with anti-Sovietism that is insufficiently dogmatic, bears an uncanny resemblance to the outrage on the part of true Stalinists in the face of familial heresies such as democratic socialism and Eurocommunism.

Keep up the good work. Pretty soon the profession will become totally invisible -- all clothes, as it were, but no Emperor.


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