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Family fights and intra-party squabbles are more newsworthy than ordinary disputes between known enemies. That's why it is fascinating to watch the trench warfare between the high command of the Democratic Party and the LaRouche candidates who were just nominated for state office on the Democratic ballot in Illinois.

Just as interesting is the escalating rhetoric between the State Department and the prestigious conservative think tank called the Heritage Foundation. State accused Heritage of publishing a foreign policy report "filled with misstatement, inaccuracies and false innuendos ... uninformed polemics and mischievous gossip." Heritage shot back that the State Department memo "was filled with innuendo and insults instead of specific responses to our criticisms."

The problem seems to be, who is the keeper of the flame? Who can enunciate, interpret and implement U.S. foreign policy? State seems to think that it can make policy independently of the President, and Heritage is trying to hold State to a standard of loyalty to authentic Reaganism.

It's clear where Ronald Reagan stands. His heart is with the freedom fighters everywhere in the world. He has consistently said that we have a moral obligation to support anti-Communist resistance movements fighting for freedom.

But the State Department doesn't seem to get the message. There is a yawning gap between rhetoric and reality. Of the eight pro-Western, anti-Communist resistance movements now operating inside Communist countries with a chance to win, State is supporting only the one in Nicaragua, and even that support is reluctant.

Take Afghanistan. State opposed U.S. aid to the freedom fighters and continues the Most Favored Nation trade status for the Soviet-installed regime there. Although Congress voted for humanitarian aid, State engages in footdragging to avoid releasing the money.

Take Angola. Congress has shown bipartisan support for aid to the anti-Communist forces called UNITA, and repealed the Clark Amendment which previously forbade it.

However, Secretary of State Shultz wrote a "for your eyes only" letter to House Republican Minority Leader Robert Michel opposing aid to UNITA.

Take Mozambique. State is asking Congress to appropriate $27 million to prop up the shaky Soviet-installed regime of Mozambique which has deliberately evacuated and starved thousands of its own people. State encourages U.S. corporations to invest in Mozambique, as well as in Angola.

Take Cambodia. Congress, with bipartisan support, voted aid to the Cambodian freedom fighters. State opposed this aid and, now that it is passed, is delaying delivery as long as it can.

Take Nicaragua, Reagan's most important foreign policy issue. State is conspicuously unenthusiastic about the military aid that Reagan wants to send, insisting that U.S. policy is purely "diplomatic." State sides with the Communists in excluding the freedom fighters from negotiations about Nicaragua.

Take Eastern Europe. State has given Most Favored Nation trading status to Hungary and Romania under the fiction that they are more "independent" of Moscow than Poland, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, and East Germany. State opposes enforcing the Tariff Act of 1930 which prohibits importing goods produced by slave labor.

State supports the subsidizing of bank loans to the Warsaw Pact countries through the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank. State encouraged huge new commercial bank loans to East Germany which, in turn, loaned millions to the Sandinistas in Nicaragua. State advocates the admission of Poland to the IMF.

Take the United Nations. State opposes reducing the number of Soviet bloc personnel at the UN in New York and limiting their movements, despite overwhelming evidence that espionage is their principal mission.

Take the Soviet Union. State sends a letter each year on November 7, the anniversary of the Bolshevik Revolution, congratulating the Soviet people. We don't hear a peep out of the State Department on Captive Nations Day, when American law requires our President to proclaim our hope that the countries under Communism may one day achieve freedom.

The disgraceful return to the U.S.S.R. of the Ukrainian sailor, Miroslav Medvid, who twice jumped ship when it was docked in New Orleans was, unfortunately, a typical example of the State Department's continuing accommodation of the Soviets.