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THE STATE DEPARTMENT SHOULD FOLLOW OUR ELECTION RETURNS

The day the news hit the fan that the French Foreign Ministry had protested the "unacceptable character" of the outspoken comments by departing U.S. Ambassador Evan Galbraith, I was visiting with French friends in Paris. They not only were not offended; they applauded Galbraith and said he was right on target.

Galbraith stirred the ire of the Socialist Mitterrand by criticizing the Communist Party officials he had in his government. Galbraith said America found it easier to deal with the French after the Communist ministers left the government last year.

Galbraith made some other controversial comments a few days earlier which are more important to Americans. He called for major reforms in the U.S. Foreign Service, including the appointment of Reagan supporters to all major U.S. embassies and senior positions in the State Department. He said this is necessary to correct the Foreign Service's built-in "liberal Democrat" bias.

It is refreshing that a senior U.S. diplomat has finally spoken out about one of the scandals of the U.S. Government: the fact that the State Department functions as a law unto itself and ignores American election results. Galbraith said bluntly, "The facts are that most of the people in the Foreign Service vote Democrat."

Ronald Reagan was reelected President in the biggest landslide in modern times. The American people gave him a mandate to carry out his policies, domestic and foreign. That mandate cannot be carried out by people who voted for Walter Mondale. That's the crux of the problem with the State Department.

Policies are really made by the thousands of middle-echelon bureaucrats who give advice, determine what information is sent to their superiors, draft the "working" papers, prepare the "options," "interpret" the regulations, and summarize the "intelligence." The Federal bureaucrats in the State Department and the Foreign Service have the arrogant attitude that Reagan is just an interlude to be endured.

Democratic Administrations never permitted Civil Service or Foreign Service to impede

their political objectives. Presidents Roosevelt, Truman, Kennedy and Johnson ruthlessly got rid of Republican holdovers -- Civil Service to the contrary notwithstanding -- and used every possible tactic to put liberal Democrats on the payroll and keep them there.

President Franklin Roosevelt used "emergency" powers to fire hundreds of civil service employees, put a freeze on all new hirings, and then hired new workers through the employment office of the Democratic National Committee. When President Harry Truman wanted to load his friends in the Pendergast machine onto the Federal payroll, he just closed some Federal offices and reopened them in Kansas City.

President John F. Kennedy abolished the entire Federal agency then dispensing foreign aid, thus eliminating the Eisenhower appointees. Kennedy then immediately created a new foreign aid agency under a new name, and hired a new staff of all Kennedy supporters.

Dwight Eisenhower was elected President on the 1952 Republican Party Platform pledge that "We shall eliminate from the State Department and from every Federal office, all, wherever they may be found, who share responsibility for the needless predicaments and perils in which we find ourselves." Unfortunately, that promise was never kept.

Only a handful of top jobs were changed; the State Department which had lost China, and announced that South Korea was outside the U.S. "defense perimeter," remained virtually intact. The few Republicans who did receive high appointments were told they could not even hire a secretary of their own choosing, but had to continue with holdovers from the Truman Administration.

Fidel Castro was the bitter harvest of this failure to clean out the State Department. U.S. Ambassador Earl E. T. Smith sent back accurate reports that Castro was a Communist, but they came into the hands of a Truman holdover named William Wieland who pigeon-holed them and never passed them up to his superiors.

The Nixon and Ford Administrations did nothing to rock the boat of Kennedy-Johnson holdovers in the State Department. The Nixon-Ford foreign policy was managed by Henry Kissinger anyway, whose policies were indistinguishable from the Johnson Administration's.

In calling for President Reagan to appoint "his own men" to all major overseas embassies and to key positions in the State Department, Ambassador Galbraith has challenged the State Department's Imperial Bureaucracy. It will be an interesting debate between the American people and the entrenched elite.