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CARTER'S POLITICAL MISTAKES

The "worst political failure" of 1977, according to a leading West German newspaper (the Hamburg Morgenpost), was President Carter. Newspapers around the world have been caustic in commenting on President Carter's recent trip to Europe and Asia. Its real mission, if any, was obscured by the gaffs that stimulated Polish jokes and cartoonists' ridicule.

The German editor's conclusion was more incisive, probably, than he realized. Although he referred to Carter's ineptness in dealing with other heads of state, that has been exceeded by the way his foreign policies have added up to a series of domestic political mistakes.

A prime case in point is the way President Carter reversed the firm policy of six Presidents and gave the Crown of St. Stephen to the Communist dictator of Hungary. This useless and unnecessary surrender to a second-rate Soviet puppet pleased no one except the Communists, but mortally offended millions of Hungarian and other ethnic Americans, as was evidenced everywhere.

After Russian tanks and troops crushed the Hungarian Freedom Fighters in November 1956, the Soviets installed Janos Kadar as their puppet. He proclaimed the "dictatorship of the proletariat" under the Soviet Communist Party and decreed the death penalty for all opposition.

Twenty-one years have passed and nothing has changed to exonerate the Kadar Communists. They did an efficient job of stamping out all resistance to total Soviet control, and are still kept in power by the threatening presence of 200,000 Soviet troops. Now President Carter has annointed these atheistic Communists known to history as the "Butchers of Budapest" by sending them the holy, historic treasure

which has been revered as a Christian relic since the year 1000.

Carter had a splendid opportunity to crawl back off the limb the State

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Department had pushed him et\,\ ' QWi M>when the Kadar regime, in diplomatic language, insulted Rosalynn Carter. Kadar refused to accept the Crown from Mrs. Carter because she is a mere woman and holds no public office. Instead of seizing the chance to call the deal off, Carter caved in and sent Secretary of State Cyrus Vance to perform the rites of betrayal with full protocol.

The political fallout will come back to haunt President Carter in the next election. The way a cold-eyed President stonewalled Hungarian leaders,who tearfully pleaded with him to keep the Crown in the United States until Hungary is free again, will never be forgotten by those who witnessed the dramatic scene.

Why was President Carter so stubborn in his determination to please Kadar that he went ahead with the gift at the cost of having Democratic Congresswoman Mary Rose Oakar tell the press: "Not only has the President repudiated his own human rights policy with this inappropriate decision, but he is breaking his own campaign promise after criticizing former President Ford for being insensitive to the plight of the Captive Nations. When you no longer can trust the President of the United States, what hope is there?"

The U.S.-Hungarian joint communique issued by our State Department revealed that President Carter gave the Communist Kadar the Christian Crown without any demands for human rights in Hungary, without any demand for freedom of religion, press, m vement or elections, and without any demand for the removal of Soviet troops.

The transfer of St. Stephen's Crown was a supine surrender to a Soviet puppet dictator. It shows the hypocrisy of the Carter Administration's proclaimed pursuit of "human rights" and its willingness to cave in to any demands the Communists make. It ranks with the surrender of the B-1 bomber and the Panama Canal, the two other giant giveaways of Carter's first year in office for which the American people atl olutely nothing.

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The giving of the Crown of St. Stephen to the Soviet Communists in Hungary was worse than wrong; it was stupid.

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