FROM: Phyllis Schlafly

68 FAIRMOUNT, ALTON, ILLINOIS 62002 / (618) 462-5415

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ARE WE SUCKERS FOR SLOGANS?

Former Secretary of State Cyrus Vance finally said something I agree with. In a recent New York City speech, he said that shallow debates about U.S.-Soviet relations "based upon slogans and stereotypes," and whipped by "the political winds and passions of the moment," can imperil our nation.

Vance spoke at the dedication of the W. Averell Harriman Institute for Advanced Study of the Soviet Union (at Columbia University). Harriman and his family endowed it with $11.5 million. Harriman is the dean of the Inherited Wealth Elite who have been so influential in the Democratic Party since the time of Franklin D. Roosevelt.

Vance is correct that the United States is endangered by slogans. The trouble is that Harriman, Vance and Company have been persistent perpetrators of foreign policy slogans which have disarmed America in the face of the Soviet missile threat.

"Stop the arms race" has long been a favorite slogan of the Vance crowd. It is designed to play on the American public's feeling that, so long as we are spending so many billions on defense budgets every year, we must be fueling the "arms race."

The truth is that the United States dropped out of the arms race with the Soviet Union years ago. Since 1967, we have not increased our number of 1,054 ICBMs by a single one; we have not increased the number of our 41 nuclear missile-firing submarines by a single one; and the number of our long-range strategic bombers has dropped from more than 600 to about 316.

"There are no winners in a nuclear war" is a current favorite of the nuclear-freeze sloganeers. However, in the world's first nuclear war (the use of the atom bomb on Hiroshima and Nagasaki), there clearly was one winner and one loser.

Both sides now have nuclear weapons, but one thing is sure. If we have no defensive weapons to repel attack, and if our offensive weapons are less powerful than the Russians', then we are sure to be a loser.

Soviet military strategists believe that they will be the winner in a nuclear exchange. Maybe they are wrong and will end up being a loser, too; but we will surely be

a loser if we cannot defend ourselves.

Being a "loser" in a confrontation is usually relative. Many people believe that both spouses nearly always lose in a divorce. But when you talk to them afterwards, it becomes clear that one spouse usually loses more than the other.

During World War II, 12 million Russians were killed. Did that make Russia a "loser"? On the contrary, the Russians believe that World War II made them a big winner and a world power, even though 12 million dead Russians obviously were losers.

"It's better to be talking than fighting" is another silly slogan propagated by the Vance-Harriman crowd. They blissfully ignore the fact that aggressors have always been able to do both at the same time and to use "talk" (negotiations, conferences, and agreements) as a "cover" for war preparations.

The Japanese were talking with the Roosevelt Administration in Washington while the bombs were dropping on Pearl Harbor. The Soviets signed a peace pact with Czechoslovakia only two weeks before the surprise attack of August 1968, for which the Russian military preparations had taken six months.

The American people should get very nervous whenever political candidates sound off with peace slogans. Woodrow Wilson was elected President in 1916 on the slogan, "He kept us out of war." A few months after his inauguration, American soldiers were sent to fight in World War I.

Franklin D. Roosevelt was elected to his third term in 1940 on the promise, "Mothers and Fathers of America, I have said this before, and I will say it again and again and again; your boys will not be sent to fight in any foreign war." A year later, we were plunged into World War II.

President Harry Truman said on June 1, 1950, "We are closer to peace now than at any time in the last five years." On June 27, he ordered American GIs to fight the UN war in Korea. Lyndon B. Johnson was elected President in 1964 on his peace promises and his TV spots that falsely branded Barry Goldwater as a warmonger. Within months after LBJ's inauguration, he had embroiled us in a costly ten-year war in Vietnam.

Phony peace slogans have played the American people for suckers again and again. As Cyrus Vance said, slogans can imperil our nation.