from Phyllis Schlafly

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Conservatives Find Their Shining City on a Hill

The dedication of the Ronald Reagan library this week was a happy victory party for those who call themselves the Reagan Alumni-- the grassroots conservatives who made it all happen. Several thousand of the faithful gathered on a mountain top in Sini Valley, California, to rejoice that they have found their "shining city on a hill."

These were the remnant of the 27,000,000 Americans who voted for Barry Goldwater in 1964, kept the faith, stayed the course, discovered a new leader in an ex-movie star and after-dinner speaker, and carried him into the White House. It took faith, dedication and perseverance on the part of many people to accomplish that, considering the tremend6us forces arrayed against them.

Ronald Reagan has had a momentous and lasting effect on America. He mainstreamed conservatism and made it the wave of the future. He proved that the key to economic well-being and more jobs is tax cuts, not government handouts and intervention. He made us proud to be Americans and he restored respect for traditional values.

Reagan proved that military strength is the key to peace, victory over our enemies around the world, and liberation for the captive peoples. He won the Cold War without firing a shot. He started the tide that toppled the "evil empire" and knocked down the Berlin Wall. He replaced Mutual Assured Destruction with his Strategic Defense Initiative.

No politicians were visible among the thousands who attended the Library dedication, or at least nobody noticed any, except for the unique appearance of the five living Presidents. A cluster of media huddled on the sidelines, but they were just bystanders not players in the event. The day belonged to the grassroots Americans who had invented and nurtured the conservative movement.

The joint appearance of all five men who have been President of the United States made the day historic. Ronald Reagan had run for President against each of the other four: against Nixon in 1968, against Ford in 1975, against Bush in the 1980 primaries, and against Carter in the 1980 general election.

Richard Nixon best fingered the ultimate meaning of the Reagan Presidency: "Ronald Reagan was on the right side, standing with the forces of good against the forces of evil in the world." Indeed, history has justified the righteousness of his message.

Nixon recalled that as Vice President he had traveled to Moscow and heard Nikita Khrushchev boast, "Your grandchildren will live under Communism." Nixon had then responded, "Your grandchildren will live in freedom." This week, Nixon admitted, "I was sure Khrushchev was wrong, but I was not sure I was right. Thanks to Ronald Reagan, my prediction came true."

Gerald Ford pointed out what was so unique about Reagan. He is "able to articulate the highest hopes and deepest beliefs of Americans. People trust Ronald Reagan." Indeed, they do.

Less dramatic, but just as momentous, is the crumbling of the socialist bureaucracies all over the world. Sweden, which for decades was touted by U.S. liberals as the model for our future, has had a sudden awakening and repudiated its socialist politicians. The failed state-run economies are retreating before the proven superiority of Reagan-style free-market capitalism.

Central planning, government intervention and regulation, and high taxes are failures everywhere because they are unworkable, inefficient, stifling to economic expansion, and horribly costly. Even more important, they restrict freedom, violate human rights, and spawn corruption.

A new study at Johns Hopkins University shows that free-market capitalist economies grew three times faster than socialist countries over the last 20 years. Countries in socialist Africa don't produce any more than they did in 1970.

It is amazing that, with the whole world moving toward. Reagan- style capitalism, only the United States seems to be going in the other direction.

The liberals in congress seem to have co-opted the Bush Administration into trying to reverse the Reagan Revolution. The tax increase of October 1990 prolonged the recession, and a series of new laws (the Americans with Disabilities Act and the Civil Rights Act) and pending bills (Mandated Family Leave) are making it so costly to hire new workers that unemployment will surely remain high.

At the Reagan Library dedication, emcee Charlton Heston recited some relevant lines from famous Americans ending with Abe Lincoln’s words, “let us finish the work we have begun.” The grassroots Americans who recognized a leader in Ronald Reagan are now looking for a new leader to finish the work of the Reagan Revolution.

At the moment they don't see one, but they are sure they will find one because they share Reagan's own optimistic faith in America. In his speech at the Library dedication, which was authentic Reaganism, he said: “America is no accident but part of God’s plan. We Americans were uniquely situated to start the world over.”