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(MISC)

ERIC L. -

Not a bad idea.
Did it pass?

BR

Trans mission Memorandum



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The President ought to get
in front of this! It's the
best education program I can
think of!

Best,
Ben

House OKs Freedom Day 417-0

Easy Senate passage seen of bill marking Cold War win

By Robert Stacy McCain
THE WASHINGTON TIMES

The House yesterday celebrated the 10th anniversary of the fall of the Berlin Wall by declaring Nov. 9 Freedom Day, an annual commemoration of the fight against Soviet communism.

The resolution calling "freedom's victory in the Cold War ... the crowning achievement of the free world's long 20th century struggle against totalitarianism" was introduced by Rep. Christopher Cox, California Republican, and passed by a vote of 417-0.

"It's important not only to remember the sacrifices and celebrate the victory," Mr. Cox said, "but also to educate each new generation of Americans" about the struggle against communism.

"The establishment of Freedom Day will institutionalize that pro-

cess," he said.

There is a "good chance" the Senate will pass the Freedom Day resolution today, said Dan Gerstein, an aide to Sen. Joseph I. Lieberman, Connecticut Democrat, the measure's Senate sponsor.

"Given the strong bipartisan support it received in the House, we can't imagine we would run into any resistance in the Senate," Mr. Gerstein said.

The memory of the Cold War — what President Kennedy called America's "long twilight struggle" against a Soviet regime that President Reagan later called "the evil empire" — is in danger of being lost, Mr. Cox noted.

"Many of today's college students do not know ... the leaders of the freedom movement who risked their lives," he said, naming such figures as Russian dissident Alexander Solzhenitzyn, Polish la-

bor leader Lech Walesa and Czech playwright Vaclav Havel.

"There was a very real struggle to win the Cold War," Mr. Cox said. "Freedom's victory was not inevitable. It took great statesmanship for President Reagan, for example, to recognize dissidents in the captive nations."

Mr. Cox and Mr. Lieberman credited the idea for Freedom Day to Ben Wattenberg, senior fellow at the American Enterprise Institute.

Mr. Wattenberg first suggested a day to commemorate the end of the Cold War in a 1991 syndicated column. He most recently advocated Freedom Day last week in a column in The Washington Times.

Opposition to Soviet imperialism "was an all-American, bipartisan kind of thing," said Mr. Wattenberg, who served in the administrations of Presidents Johnson, Reagan and Bush.

BEN WATTENBERG

Moving forward with Freedom Day

Ten years ago, on Nov. 9, 1989, the Berlin Wall was battered down by the people it had imprisoned. The event is regarded as the moment the Cold War ended. For Americans without sentient memories of World War II, the end of the Cold War has been the most momentous historical event of their lifetimes, and so it will likely remain.

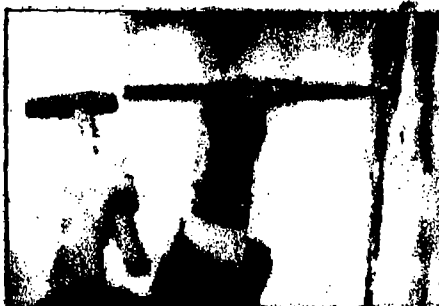
Long yearned for, the end of the Cold War has more than lived up to expectations. Democracy is on the march globally; defense budgets are proportionately down; market economies are beginning to flourish most everywhere. Everyday people are benefiting each and every day.

The end of the Cold War actually was a process, not an event. By early 1989, Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev had pulled his troops from Afghanistan, whipped Poles elected a non-communist government; the Soviets did nothing; Hungary, Czechoslovakia, East Germany and later Bulgaria installed non-communist governments. It was called "the velvet revolution," with only Romania the exception; Nicolae Ceausescu and his empress were executed.

For almost two years, the U.S.S.R. remained a one-party communist state, gradually eroding. Hard-liners attempted to resist the slow motion dismemberment. On Aug. 19, 1991, Boris Yeltsin stood on a tank, vetoed a hard-line coup. The hammer-and-sickle came down; the Russian tricolor went up. Other Soviet republics declared independence, including the big guy on the block, Ukraine.

U.S. diplomats did not "gloat" about it. The sovereign state of Russia would be unstable enough without the United States rubbing it in.

On Dec. 4, 1991, I proposed in a column that a new national holiday be established to commemorate the



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end of the Cold War. I asked readers to participate in a contest to: 1. Name it; 2. pick a date; and 3. propose a method of celebration.

Several hundred submissions came in. Some of the most imaginative entries for a name were: "Defrost Day," "Thaw Day," "Ronald Reagan Day," "Gorbachev Day," "Borscht Day," "Peace Through Strength Day," "E Day" (which would stand for "Evil Empire Ends Day"), "E2D2" ("Evil Empire Death Day"), "Jericho Day," "Pax Americana Day" and "Kerensky Future Freedom Day" (recalling that Mr. Yeltsin was not the first pro-democratic leader of Russia).

Scores of respondents offered "Liberty Day," "Democracy Day," and, mostly, "Freedom Day." In June of 1992, I publicly proclaimed "Freedom Day" the winner.

One suggestion for the date of the new holiday was June 5, for Adam Smith's birthday. But the most votes went for Nov. 9, the day the wall fell. So today I proclaim that date Freedom Day.

There were ideas about how to celebrate and commemorate Freedom Day. Build a sibling sculpture to the Statue of Liberty; eat potatoes, the universal food; build a tunnel to Russia across the Bering Strait; thank God for peace; welcome immigrants; meditate; issue a U.N. stamp; build ice sculptures; send money to feed Russians; and do something you can't do in an

unfree country — make a public speech, see a dirty movie, celebrate a religion, travel across a border.

I propose that discussion on the matter of how to celebrate be put on hold until we get the holiday established.

How? Because all the major presidential candidates participated in the Cold War, they should endorse the holiday. Legislators ought to push for it. Anyone who worked in a defense industry, or paid federal taxes from 1945 to 1989, ought to support it. President Clinton ought to go to the Reagan Library to endorse it.

I met with Mark Burman of the Reagan Presidential Foundation. He says they are on board for a campaign. The other great presidential libraries — Truman, Eisenhower, Kennedy, Johnson, Nixon, Ford and Carter — should join in.

So should anyone concerned with the teaching of American history. The holiday will remind American children that their recent ancestors preserved freedom. The Cold War generation may not be "the greatest" but they did their job — victory without a major hot war.

Americans can only create an American holiday. But we ought to invite all other countries to join in, Russia first. The citizens of Russia won the Cold War as surely as we did. If I were a Chinese dissident I'd promote the idea; it might give their leaders a clue.

If you like the idea, or have ideas, you may e-mail me at Watmail@aol.com. I'll pass the correspondence along to the appropriate persons, as soon as I figure out who they are.

Ben J. Wattenberg is a nationally syndicated columnist and a senior fellow of the American Enterprise Institute.

106TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. CON. RES. 223

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

Expressing the sense of the Congress regarding
Freedom Day.

106TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. CON. RES. 223

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

Whereas on November 9, 1989, the Berlin Wall was torn down by those whom it had imprisoned;

Whereas the fall of the Berlin Wall has become the pre-eminent symbol of the end of the Cold War;

Whereas the Cold War, at its essence, was a struggle for human freedom;

Whereas the end of the Cold War was brought about in large measure by the dedication, sacrifice, and discipline of Americans and many other peoples around the world united in their opposition to Soviet Communism;

Whereas freedom's victory in the Cold War against Soviet Communism is the crowning achievement of the free world's long 20th century struggle against totalitarianism; and

Whereas it is highly appropriate to remind Americans, particularly those in their formal educational years, that America paid the price and bore the burden to ensure the survival of liberty on this planet: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate*
2 *concurring)*, That it is the sense of the Congress that

3 (1) a Freedom Day should be celebrated each
4 year in the United States; and

5 (2) the United States should join with other na-
6 tions, specifically including those which liberated
7 themselves to help end the Cold War, to establish a
8 global holiday called Freedom Day.

Passed the House of Representatives November 9,
1999.

Attest:

Clerk.