

RONALD REAGAN

September 8, 1979

Mr. Michael Radenkovich
Vice President
California Citizens' Committee to
Commemorate General Draja Mihailovich

Dear Mr. Radenkovich:

Please convey to the California Citizen's Committee to Commemorate General Draja Mihailovich my sincere appreciation for their kind invitation to attend tonight's dinner to commemorate General Mihailovich. Unfortunately, prior commitments prevent me from being with you.

I believe that the spirit in which you have gathered here to honor the memory of General Mihailovich, the faithful allied commander and the first anti-Nazi leader in Europe, is shared by the great majority of Americans.

The ultimate tragedy of Draja Mihailovich cannot erase the memory of his heroic and often lonely struggle against the twin tyrannies that afflicted his people, Nazism and Communism. He knew that totalitarianism, whatever name it might take, is the death of freedom. He thus became a symbol of resistance to all those across the world who have had to fight a similar heroic and lonely struggle against totalitarianism. Mihailovich belonged to Yugoslavia; his spirit now belongs to all those who are willing to fight for freedom.

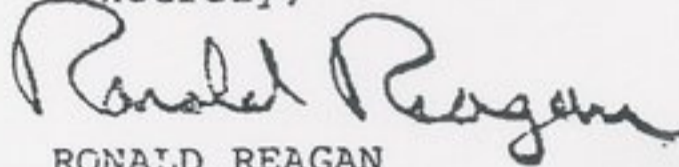
I wish it could be said that this great hero was the last victim of confused and senseless policies of western governments in dealing with Communism. The fact is that others have suffered a fate similar to his by being embraced and then abandoned by western governments in the hope that such abandonment will purchase peace or security.

Thus, the fate of General Mihailovich is not simply of historic significance--it teaches us something today, as well. No western nation, including the United States, can hope to win its own battle for freedom and survival by sacrificing brave comrades to the politics of international expediency.

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Your dinner therefore commemorates something more than the legacy of patriotism and heroism that Michailovich left us. You commemorate the principles for which he fought and died. And you remind our nation that abandonment of allies can never buy security or freedom. In the mountains of Yugoslavia, in the jungles of Vietnam, wherever men and women have fought totalitarian brutality, it has been demonstrated beyond doubt that both freedom and honor suffer when firm commitments become sacrificed to false hopes of appeasing aggressors by abandoning friends.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Ronald Reagan". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the printed name.

RONALD REAGAN