

STATEMENT BY ALAN MACKEY, NATIONAL CHAIRMAN OF YAF TO IBM  
STOCKHOLDERS MEETING, BOSTON, MASS., APRIL 29, 1968

Mr. Chairman, my name is Alan MacKay. I am National Chairman of Young Americans for Freedom. We are stockholders in IBM. For some time, we have been conducting an educational campaign raising questions about IBM's policy of trading with Communist countries. It seems to me especially appropriate that this question should be considered here, as the management and stockholders of this company come together.

The question of East-West trade is not an everyday matter of business policy, but one with vast political significance, and is consequently one in which all the stockholders should be interested. Indeed, when the company involved is IBM, an institution in the business world, and globally recognized as a symbol of American enterprise, the general public has an interest in the decision made by IBM's management. It is precisely because IBM possesses such stature and influence that we chose it for the focus of our campaign.

Let me briefly outline the arguments against trade with the Communist bloc. The most sweeping argument would call for the cessation of all trade, on the ground that, by trading with the Communist nations, we save them from their own economic failures, thus perpetuating regimes that are repressive and form part of a system which, taken as a whole, poses the greatest threat to human freedom in our time.

But it is not necessary to go so far to be skeptical about East-West trade. At a time when our country is at war, North Viet Nam is receiving economic aid from countries with whom IBM is trading. Surely when we are fighting a Communist enemy in Southeast Asia, serious questions can be raised about trading with Communist countries that are aiding our enemy.

Since Young Americans for Freedom began its campaign, we have met several times with representatives of IBM management, and have received some very helpful clarifying information. I think it would be useful for all IBM stockholders to have their company's policies in this area clearly defined and explained. For example, the Government advocates bridge-building to the Communist world, not excepting the Soviet Union. We know that IBM has not traded with Russia; and I expect that if it were communicated to your stockholders that IBM has a policy against trading with Russia, they would be glad to hear it.

I think, too, that the stockholders should be made aware of any limitations imposed by the company on trade which are more rigorous than those imposed by the Government.

I think, in short, that this company, which has such excellent stockholder relations, should make a special effort in this area. Its significance is obvious; we have received tens of thousands of communications since our campaign began, and we know that IBM has received a great many inquiries on the subject.

I am certain this policy has been carefully reviewed by IBM's Board of Directors. I would ask that the Board reevaluate that decision with great care, that it consider seriously the arguments for ceasing all trade with the Communist world; that it very seriously weigh the possibility of a moratorium, at least, on trade with the East for the duration of the war in Viet Nam; and, that, having deliberated and formulated its policy, it communicate that policy and the reasons for it to all IBM stockholders.

Thank you.

*In summary*

Mr. Chairman, the building of bridges to Eastern Europe and/or the Soviet Union is particularly disturbing at a time when we are so deeply engaged in a war against a Communist aggressor in Southeast Asia. The Soviets boast that eighty-five percent of North Vietnam's war materials are supplied by the U.S.S.R. and its Eastern European satellites. Practically every day, we hear of new equipment being used in the war against Southeast Asia which is being furnished by Communist nations. Trading with these countries and thereby bolstering their industrial and military capabilities while at the same time their military equipment is killing American fighting men in Vietnam is what we call the Hypocrisy of '68. It is almost unbelievable to us that our Administration, at this time, would want to trade with these Communist nations.

Only when the war in Vietnam, and all other wars against the Free World which are instigated and carried out by the Communists, have passed should we even consider the enhancement of trade in non-strategic goods, even as we have outlined non-strategic goods.