



Gorbachev Honored With Liberty Medal

The event, broadcast live by CBS TV's Philadelphia affiliate, CBS3, opened with big-screen photo montages of Gorbachev, as CBS narrators enthused over the man who, they said, "changed history, freeing millions from oppression," and "ended the Cold War." Joseph M. Torsella, president and CEO of the Constitution Center; Philadelphia Mayor Michael Nutter; Pennsylvania Governor Ed Rendell; and Bush all lavished superlatives on the former Soviet leader and praised Gorbachev's commitment to liberty. "He grew up under the brutal rule of Stalin, a dictator who introduced the words 'purge' and 'gulag' into the beautiful language of Pushkin and Chekhov," said Torsella. "But when he came to occupy the same office that Stalin held, 63 years later,... he introduced very different words. 'Glasnost,' openness. And 'perestroika,' change."

"It is a true honor for me to participate in this year's Liberty Medal ceremony to celebrate the achievements of someone whom I consider a great world leader and a dear friend," said Bush. "When Eastern Europeans were living in the dark shadow of the Cold War, he provided a beacon of light.... President Gorbachev is always looking ahead at a better future and helping all of us work to get there."

Everyone politely ignored the numerous embarrassing items of Gorbachev's curriculum vitae that would conflict with the media-created hallowed aura that has been spun about him for the past two decades, such as his brutal suppression of liberty in Poland, Lithuania, Afghanistan, East Germany, and throughout the Soviet bloc; his aid to terror-sponsoring regimes; his involvement in the assassination plot against Pope John Paul II; and his vocal support for Vladimir Putin's increasingly totalitarian regime in Russia. Since retirement from office, Gorbachev has been active promoting world socialism and world government through the United Nations, Green Cross International, the Earth Charter, and his own Gorbachev Foundation.



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