

The best,

MAN OF THE YEAR: Without any question, the award goes to Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev. It is now clear that this remarkable man is producing dramatic, profound and wide-ranging changes in the Soviet Union. He has thrown open the windows of musty Soviet society and let in the cold, fresh air of progress. If his initiatives continue, Gorbachev could emerge as the most effective leader since Stalin. Gorbachev's brief rule has already shaken up the economy and bureaucracy, reformed the military, and woken up the party. Soviet foreign policy has been revitalized, putting the U.S. on the defensive.

Inside the USSR, Gorbachev is the first leader since the war to tackle the endemic problems of Soviet society. The more one sees of Gorbachev, the more impressive he becomes. And the more we must begin to wonder — if inefficient, slothful Russia is today a threat, what will it be like as a more vigorous, efficient and organized nation?

DISASTER OF THE YEAR: Of course, to Ronald Reagan who just got the Persian carpet pulled out from under him. A calamitous ending for so bully a presidency and a deadly blow to anti-communist forces everywhere.

To their sorrow, U.S. conservatives have found that you can't privatize foreign policy.

SHAME OF THE YEAR: The continued genocide of the Afghan people by the Soviet Union. Ditto to western nations, like Canada, that either watch in silence, or just "tut-tut" and go back to roasting can't-shoot-back South Africa.

RUNNER UP: Syria, for blackening its name and that of the Arabs by ruthless terrorism, and for persecuting

worst and silliest of 1986



Eric MARGOLIS

the Palestinians. And to Abu Nidal's group for the murder of innocent airline passengers.

SENIOR CITIZEN OF THE YEAR: Imam Ruhollah Khomeini, Iran's venerable leader, who overthrew the mighty shah, created an Islamic theocracy and managed to rub the red faces of two American presidents into the sand. Proof again that a fine human brain, even if it's under a turban, is better than all the fancy computers in Washington. So much for "camel-jockey" jokes.

BAD GUY OF THE YEAR: Once again, that perennial champion, the Beast of Benghazi, the Terror of Tripoli, he who haunts Reagan's dreams, who even flouts the wrath of the Toronto Sun — take a bow Moammar Khadafi, the man we all love to hate.

Take another bow for winning the "Terrorist Chic" award for your salmon-colored head cloths and natty, metallic blue zippered jump suits.

DEFENDANT OF THE YEAR: Poor old Jean Bokassa, formerly Emperor Bokassa I of the Central African Republic, on trial right now for various infractions ranging from murdering school children to stewing up his opponents in a pot. Spiteful exaggerations, claimed

the hard-done-by Bokassa. His opponents were only sauteed, not stewed.

MORNING AFTER AWARD: To former Australian prime minister Malcolm Fraser, a noted moralist. He was found recently wandering about Atlanta with nothing on but a towel. What happened to his clothing, money and the entire night before, remains a dark mystery.

BIGGEST LETDOWN OF THE YEAR: Shared by India's Rajiv Gandhi and Pakistan's Zia ul-Haq for allowing their early progress in improving Pak-India relations to degenerate into poisonous recriminations and schoolyard antics. Their nations deserve better. Particular blame to Gandhi for trying to blame the Sikh problem on wicked Pakistani machinations.

EMBARRASSMENT OF THE YEAR: To Israel, which apparently kidnapped its own citizen, Mordechai Vanunu, for revealing that nation's secret stockpile of 100 or more nuclear weapons. After blasting the Soviets for jailing dissidents, Israel has done precisely the same to one of its own dissidents.

RUNNER UP: To Britain for having managed to give the impression, in the recent Australian trial over a new book on Soviet penetration of the UK's intelligence services, that merry old England really is a nest of communist poofers and spies. Maggie, come clean.

FUNNY MONEY OF THE YEAR: At first, Angola's kwanza was in the lead. Next, the Burmese kyat. For a while it even seemed the Zambian kwacha was winning. But now it is clear that Canada's colorful new money has won hands down. Any Third Worlder looking at all those plump little birdies on our Mulroney money will instantly recognize familiar socialist wampum.