

Editorial

Soviet's proposal is fair, realistic

Despite disparaging accounts from some who accuse the Soviets of manipulating public opinion in order to better their bargaining position, the upcoming Gorbachev-Reagan summit in November should be considered a stepping stone to a possible arms control agreement.

The Soviets have indicated they are willing to realistically negotiate an arms control agreement with the United States, and regardless of politics, the Reagan administration must bargain and compromise with Gorbachev before further escalation of the ever precarious arms race.

Recently, 80-year-old Soviet Prime Minister Nikolai Tikovov resigned his post, and was replaced by 55-year-old Nikolai Ryzhkov in just one of a series of moves to replace the old Stalin stalwarts, most of whom are in their 80s. The Politburo is bringing in young and dynamic loyalists, many of them with backgrounds in economics, in order to shore up the ailing Russian economy. A comprehensive arms control agreement would bring their massive military expenditures down to realistic levels.

One major stumbling block to the refurbishment of their economy is the massive outlays that would be required to match the U.S. space weapons research. They are demanding that the United States halt all research and development of the controversial Strategic Defense Initiative, or "Star Wars," missile defense program. Many American strategists believe the United States should continue the research despite the Soviet's threat to match any program with one of their own. If the past is any indication, it is not an empty threat, regardless of what it will mean to their economy.

Secretary of State George Shultz recently said the United States will refuse to give up the program, in spite of the Soviet offer to cut their nuclear missile forces in half in return for limits on its research.

Some administration officials have charged that the Soviets just want to stall an American "Star Wars" system, so they can build a system of their own. Some Soviet-watchers even speculate they are already working on it, even though they are thought to be several years behind the United States in knowledge of the electronic and communications know-how which would be needed to build an effective system.

Even if each side built a halfway successful defense system, which is highly unlikely, there would then be a race to build an anti-defense system, which would eliminate any usefulness from the system as well as throw additional billions of dollars down the drain.

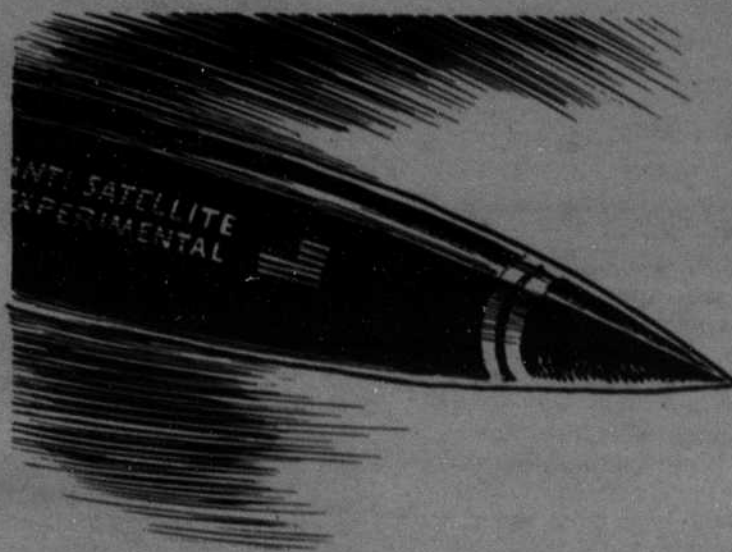
In a speech before the United Nations, Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze outlined what he called "Star Peace." He said the Soviet plan envisions the creation of a world space organization to supervise cooperation in the exploration and use of outer space for peaceful use. In addition, he said the world must work to prevent an arms race in outer space and to terminate one on earth. Although their sincerity cannot be guaranteed, it certainly appears that the Soviets are looking for a peaceful solution.

The Soviets have outlined two proposals for the Geneva conference. First, they are calling for a total prohibition of space weapons, and a 50 percent reduction in strategic nuclear missiles. Secondly, the Soviets would unilaterally reduce their medium range SS-20 missiles in Europe within two months.

Because the Russian strategists calculate the United States has about 3,360 strategic nuclear delivery systems, in addition to the Soviet's 2,504, the 50 percent cut would be from those figures. In addition, an upper limit of 6,000 individual nuclear explosive devices will be set for each side. The Soviet plan would limit to 60 percent the number of delivery systems each country could have in any one branch of the "triad," which includes land-based, sub-based and bomber-based nuclear systems. This last proposal would affect the Soviets the most, because they have such a large proportion of their strategic arsenal in land-based weapons.

The Soviet plan seems fair and realistic. Although, even if the summit is successful, both sides would still have enough weapons to destroy the world many times over. But it would force the leaders of both nations to reach out their hands in friendship and realize how much we really do have in common with each other.

Now it's up to the Reagan administration to look at the proposal, and think about the good they can do for humanity, or the results that will occur if steps are not taken to stop the gears in the machinery that could destroy our very existence.



ONE FINAL TEST BEFORE WE TALK...

Letters

Overt terrorism

The Reagan administration seems bent on making the United States appear as lawless to the rest of the world as the Palestinian Liberation Force hijackers who seized an Italian cruise liner last Tuesday. Our withdrawal from the World Court on Oct. 7 says, in effect, that we place ourselves above all laws, save those we choose to obey. Thursday's hijacking of an Egyptian airliner by U.S. Navy F-14 fighters confirms the administration's position that the only rule is "might makes right."

The unjustified interception of this plane after the PLF members had already released their hostages and surrendered to the lawful authorities of Egypt is as deplorable an act as the original hijacking of the Achille Lauro. There is little doubt that had the plane refused to cooperate, its "escort" would have shot it down.

It seems we have gone from the covert terrorism of mining Nicaraguan harbors to the overt terrorism of air piracy. Those who practice terrorism have no right to be outraged by terrorist activities.

Hiawatha
Graduate, Music

Forum worked

I found it in keeping with the

spirit of the fall symposium, "South Africa: Crimes Against Humanity," that rather than separately developing the issue of apartheid from other means of repression, this symposium was a forum which spent three days demonstrating how all forms of repression work together to support one another.

I rejoice that the Oct. 11 rally did not segregate apartheid from other crimes against humanity. Instead, it integrated the concerns of Central America, women, Native Americans and other minorities into a unified voice protesting the dehumanizing actions of all supremacists. Such integration might have depressed the spirits of some who wanted to feel positive about opposing apartheid. To elatedly oppose one means of repression while ignoring others, only encourages one's opposition of apartheid. It becomes instead, a means of remaining self-righteously oblivious to the universal nature of all crimes against humanity. Political rallies ought not to simply generate enthusiasm. They ought to empower us. When rallying in protest of crimes against humanity, the more we know about those crimes and their victims, and the more our knowledge, coupled with our passion, empowers us to act.

I submit this letter in protest of the editorial opinion expressed in "Rally is marred by overload of issues," (ODE, Oct. 14) and in gratitude for the fall

symposium's profound depth and breadth.

Bill Woolum
Graduate Teaching Fellow
English

Tunnel vision

The tunnel vision exhibited by the Emerald in the editorial on the South African rally (ODE, Oct. 14) is amazing. Your inability to make connections is most unfortunate. World events do not exist in neat little boxes apart from other events. What is happening in South Africa is one manifestation of a disease that affects millions of people throughout the world.

I am glad the organizers of Friday's rally were able to link the struggles of the people of South Africa with those of Native Americans, blacks in the United States, women and other oppressed people. I am curious, though, as to why you have the impression that President Olum's speech at the rally stuck to the narrow track that you advocate. Did you fail to hear Olum's references to Vietnam, El Salvador, Chile and the Soviet Union?

It is only through understanding the complexity of the problems we are faced with that we can move toward change. It is especially important for those who work in the media to open their eyes and see the big picture.

Gordon Roberts
UO student

Oregon Daily Emerald

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