

Editorial

SDI negotiations should be practiced

When Mikhail Gorbachev announced Friday he would not set a date for a summit meeting with President Reagan, the Strategic Defense Initiative once again prevented an arms control agreement between the two countries.

Secretary of State George Schultz and Soviet foreign minister Eduard Shevardnadze have been negotiating a treaty that would reduce long-range missiles and abolish medium and short-range missiles.

But Gorbachev's announcement has now put the pressure on Reagan to resolve the SDI issue. If Reagan does not agree to limitations on the development of space weapons, a agreement may never be reached.

Although Gorbachev's refusal to arrange a summit meeting comes as a surprise to the United States, it is justified. By developing SDI we are moving to a new level of nuclear weapons — one that eliminates the current theory of mutually assured destruction.

Completing SDI would place the Soviet Union in the awkward, and potentially dangerous position of second-guessing the U.S. Obviously SDI is a threat to the Soviet Union. It gives the U.S. a feeling of superiority and invincibility.

Because of this situation, the Soviets have a choice between negotiating with the U.S., or developing their own version of "Star Wars." And because SDI only promotes the idea of nuclear war, an arms control agreement is of the utmost importance.

Instead of continuing to stockpile missiles on earth, and continuing the defensive MAD theory, the U.S. is spending more money to design an offensive program. Reagan is determined to allot more defense funds for SDI, even though Congress has objected to the excessive spending.

However, the Iran-Contra scandal and decreasing popularity have forced Reagan to consider an arms agreement. Now it seems he must reconsider his position on SDI if he is to reach an agreement with the Soviet Union and reap the benefits of signing a treaty.

Unfortunately Reagan has had a hard-line, pro-SDI stance in the past. He refused to negotiate the space defense program with the Soviets during the Iceland summit last year, and the Soviets eventually walked out of the meeting.

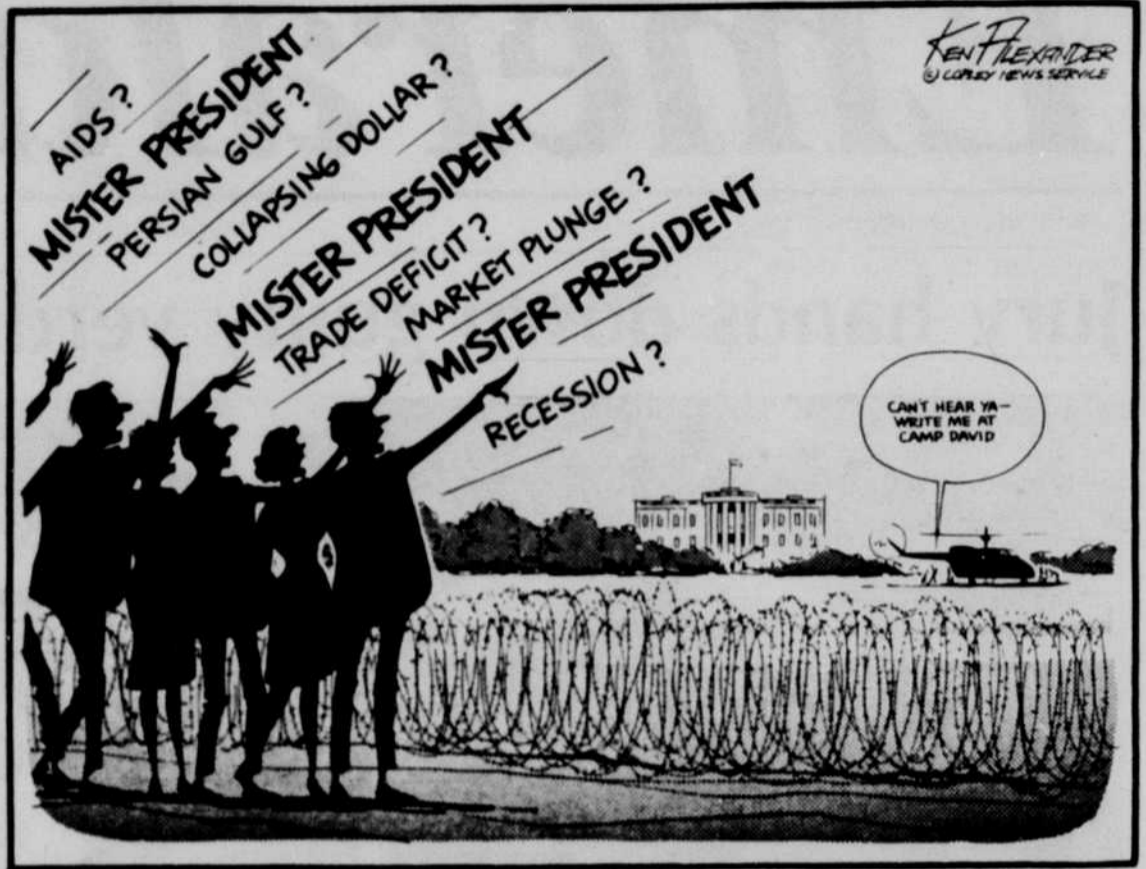
In response to Gorbachev's announcement, Schultz said that while the U.S. is prepared to discuss SDI with the Soviets "we are not willing, and I don't think we ever will be willing, to throw in the towel on learning how to defend ourselves."

This comment reflects the hard-line approach the administration has always held. But it will have to change if an agreement is to be reached.

Because the SDI program is not completed, it is important to consider the immediate ramifications it is having on relations between the U.S. and the Soviet Union.

The Soviets are taking strides to slow the arms race. Regardless of their motives, the United States should not balk at their proposals. SDI has not been proven effective and only increases tensions between the two countries.

Reagan should listen to Gorbachev's proposals. They can prove to be beneficial for peace.



Letters

Consider acts

I must take issue with some of the information given by Mr. Mornarich (ODE, Oct. 19). Much of the problem with AIDS, besides the disease itself, is the propagation of misinformation.

Mr. Mornarich stated that the Supreme Court stand on the Hardwick decision was that "sodomy among consenting adults... was unconstitutional." The ruling in the case was actually that the U.S. Constitution did not prohibit a state from declaring sodomy a crime.

He also seems to believe that sodomy is "one of the major causes of AIDS." Again, he is sadly mistaken. The cause of AIDS is a virus, not an act.

Mr. Mornarich also says that if he had a girlfriend that he truly loved, he will not engage in sodomy with her. Perhaps he should not engage in any form of sex with his girlfriend. Many viral diseases can be transmitted in this fashion, including herpes, syphilis and the common cold.

Perhaps he should not enter the medical profession because he might handle blood that contained the AIDS virus, get it into

a scrape on his hand, and become an AIDS victim.

And perhaps he should not receive a blood transfusion because those screening procedures are imperfect. And perhaps, if he uses intravenous drugs, he should not use dirty needles because that is another manner in which the disease may be transmitted; not created. Also, let me caution him that it is possible to acquire AIDS from his partner in vaginal intercourse.

Russ Gilman
Freshman

Time for war

It's time for our nation to start a war against them Iranians! It's in our best interest, don't you think?

Just consider what it will do for the GNP (the guiding indicator that leads us all to prosperity and happiness). Why think how the steel industry and ship building industry will sail through the next recession when we have to replace our naval vessels after Iranian attack.

The oil companies should rejoice that we are in conflict. A little scrimmage could boost the price of oil and put the life back into a dying domestic oil industry.

Surely the medical supplies industry should support further action in the Middle East; wounded men will create a demand for more products. And we all know that an increased demand will lead to greater profits for American corporations.

The casket builders and mortuaries across the nation should also support a decisive attack. Business will be better than ever, providing our troops ever make it back.

Yes, it's time for a war. It will be good for the American economy. Just remember: What's good for the economy is good for the people!

Allan Hancock
PPPM

The facts

In reply to Jeff Mornarich's letter, a few facts need to be clarified (ODE, Oct. 19).

While your dictionary may define sodomy as only "anal copulation," the accepted legal definition in most states includes both anal and oral sex. In fact, when Michael Hardwick was arrested 10 years ago, he was in the privacy of his own bedroom engaged in the latter activity. I seriously doubt that the Supreme Court has begun breaking legal precedent by considering issues extraneous to the case at the time of initiation.

Another erroneous statement you made dealt with the transmission of AIDS. The facts are, that other than blood-to-blood contact, one of the most efficient means of transmission of the virus is through vaginal intercourse. So eliminating anal sex would have little effect on the spread of AIDS. Anal sex does not "create" AIDS. It is spread by a variety of means, among them some of your favorites.

But the main problem with your argument is a typical one expressed by the straight community, and your insinuation regarding your personal sexual practices shows your tenuous touch with reality: Abstinence is not a practical solution! You may be willing to abstain as a means of protecting yourself (although it does not sound like it), but for the vast majority of us, whether straight or gay, it simply is not a viable alternative.

We handed out free condoms to random people to make a point: We all need to take AIDS seriously. Letters like yours do a grave disservice to the straight community by continuing to mislead people as to who is at risk; we all are.

Tim Hughes
Co-director,

Gay and Lesbian Alliance
Wednesday, October 28, 1987

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