Op-Ed

Comments don't mean too much

The news was not good last week for conservative allies of President Reagan.

Not only were they faced with the realization that the United States and the Soviet Union are likely to sign a treaty eliminating all intermediate and short-range missiles this week, but Reagan himself slammed conservatives for believing "war is inevitable."

Commentary
by Stephen Maher

"I think that some of the people who are objecting the most and just refusing even to accede to the idea of ever getting any understanding, whether they realize it or not, those people — basically down in their deepest thoughts — have accepted that war is inevitable and that there must come to be a war between the two superpowers," Reagan said.

Never before has Reagan heard such a backlash from his long-time conservative constituency than after those remarks, which were delivered to four network anchormen.

Reagan was termed "a useful idiot for Soviet propaganda" by Howard Phillips, chairman of the Conservative Caucus. Another prominent conservative, Richard Viguerie, said, "We feel alienated, rejected and abandoned by the president."

U.S. senators also entered the arena, eager to lasso Reagan at will. Sen. Malcolm Wallop, R-Wyo., said, "This senator does not see the inevitability of war, and that is why I dare question what might be in this treaty." And Sen. Steve Symms, R-Idaho, got downright angry: "Why is it that all of a sudden we are being asked to ratify a treaty with the same bunch of bandits that have been cheating on all their past treaties?"

So much for keeping things under wraps and together in the old Reagan camp.

The question arises over whether this will have any lasting effect on Reagan's strength among conservatives and whether Reagan, in his old age, perhaps is becoming more pragmatic.

The answer to the first question is a very sure no. Reagan has done too much over the years to help the cause of conservatives and their "America, right or wrong" ideology. Conservatives, by and large, are a loyal lot, and they aren't likely to give up on their old commander-in-chief. At least not until he kicks the bucket and passes on to Republican heaven.

The answer to the second question also is no. Reagan likes to shoot from the hip and his comment came out like many of his other statements: without foundation. Pragmatic types don't call Ollie North "a hero" or re-assert that the Soviet Union is an "evil empire," as Reagan recently did.

So what do Reagan's comments mean? Probably not much. Unless you believe Reagan remembered to repeat what Larry King said about conservatives rather than what Ed Meese and the boys said in the cloakroom.

Then there's cause for worry.

Stephen Maher is Community Associate Editor for The Oregon Daily Emerald and an occassional student of politics.

Letters

Half the story

Bill Moore's recent letter correctly expressed anxiety over United Way's unhealthy involvement with Planned Parenthood. A most effective communicator for Planned Parenthood, Mary Wycoff, recently visited my workplace, promoting United Way and her organization.

She said "today's sexually explicit society" makes premarital sex acceptable to teen-agers. What she didn't say: Planned Parenthood's own explicit publications and in-school indoctrination are major contributors to teens accepting any and all sexual practices.

She explained Planned Parenthood's drive for universal use of contraceptives in high schools. What she didn't say: Planned Parenthood, trying to justify abortions, previously emphasized the known failure rate of contraceptives. Now with the deadly consequences of AIDS, condom failure is ignored — they can't abort AIDS.

She credited Planned Parenthood's high school contraceptive dispensation with recent declines in the number of teen pregnancies. Left unmentioned is the real reason for the decline: The number of teenagers has declined.

She said, "it would be nice if more were done with the knowledge of the parent — and we work on that." What she didn't say: Planned Parenthood battled all the way to the Supreme Court to eliminate parental notification and consent for abortions and birth control devices.

Planned Parenthood's hidden agenda emasculates parental authority, belittles pre-marital abstinence, undermines traditional morality, and pressures teens into the use of contraceptives (ignoring the failure rate) with a backup of abortion.

Sure, you can visit their offices. They'd love to tell you half the story. But the problem is what they don't (and won't) tell you.

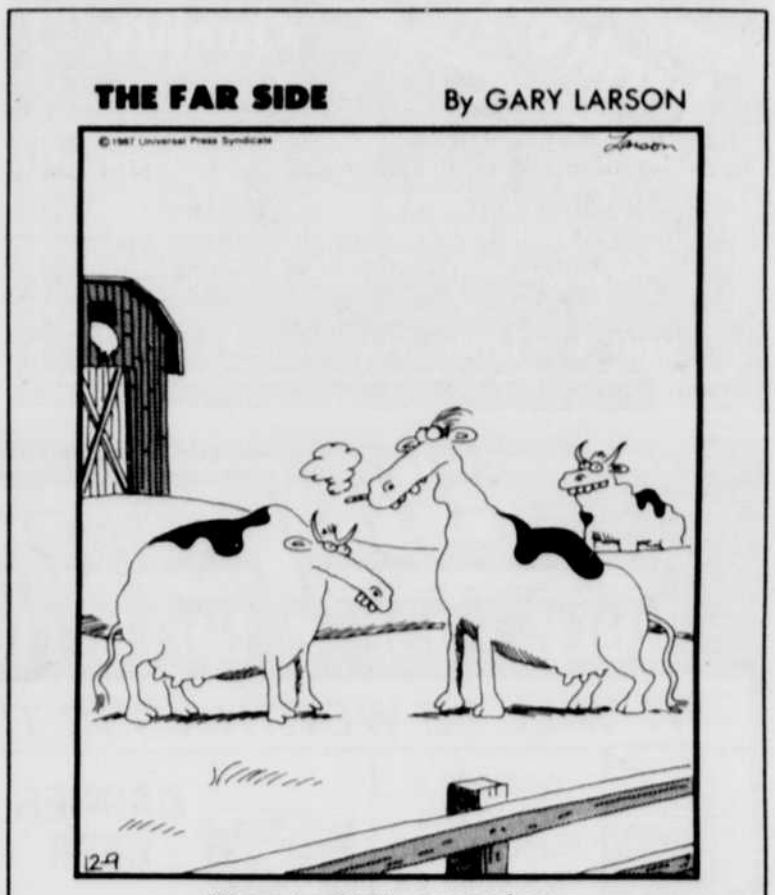
Jon Wollander
Eugene

Letters Policy

The Emerald will attempt to print all letters containing comments on topics of interest to the University community. Comments must be factually accurate and refrain from personal attacks on the character of others.

Letters to the editor must be limited to no more than 250 words, legible, signed and the identification of the writer must be verified when the letter is submitted.

The Emerald reserves the right to edit any letter for length or style. Letters should be turned into the Emerald office, Suite 300, EMU.



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