

Strategist calls Star Wars futile

By Angela Muniz
Emerald Associate Editor

Robert Sherman spoke to a small crowd of people Friday about the future of "Star Wars" and nuclear weapons, emphasizing the risk resulting from further development.

Sherman, a specialist in strategic weapons, said President Ronald Reagan's Strategic Defense Initiative has increased the chance of a superpower first strike. He instead promoted a flight test ban as a logical, necessary step to reducing the risk of war between the Soviet Union and the United States.

He said that since Reagan took office, the United States' defense budget has doubled but the ability to deter a Soviet attack has not improved.



Robert Sherman

"It's not a question of quantity. It's a question of quality," Sherman said. "What we've done is we've taken the missile in the silo and made it a much better missile. But if the Soviets strike first and they destroy that silo it won't matter what we've done," he said.

It is not a U.S. policy to initiate a first strike, Sherman said. However, SDI puts America in an offensive position.

"Any system that works for defense will work even better for offense," he said. "The net result of Star Wars will be to help the Soviet with a first strike nuclear attack against the United States, or vice versa."

This "hair-trigger situation" creates instability. Each country is trying to second guess the other because of Star Wars and new missiles that will be developed in the next decade, he said.

Sherman said SDI will be obsolete almost before it is finished. "What's to stop the Soviets from using their Star Wars satellite to destroy our Star Wars satellite," he said. "Any weapon that works against a missile will work against another satellite."

Star Wars gives the advantage to the aggressor, the country who initiates the first strike. The answer to preventing this is to stop testing ballistic missiles, he said.

Because it is necessary to test ballistic missiles

for workability and accuracy, a test ban would offer two advantages: first, it would prevent a Soviet first strike; second, it would create unreliability, which is a stabilizing factor, Sherman said.

"The less reliable nuclear weapons are, the less likely anyone will be about using them in a first strike," he said.

A ballistic test ban would be verifiable because there is no way to hide a ballistic missile flight test, Sherman said. Sherman believes the test ban also is negotiable provided it was combine with a ban on testing space weapons.

"This combination of a ban on testing space weapons with a ban on flight tests on ballistic missiles would give us far more security than any weapon or combination of weapons," Sherman said.

He said SDI is a bargaining chip. "But a bargaining chip is no good if you don't use it," he said.

Sherman also offered advice to peace groups trying to persuade others to their cause. "Those who are dedicated to ending the arms race need to stop talking to themselves — stop making the arguments that they like — and start converting people who have a very different fundamental view of the world," he said.

"They need to realize that they can't change their view overnight, but we can convince them that, by their standards, arms control can work," he said.

Sherman is a national security assistant to Oregon Congressman Les AuCoin.

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Local economy discussed at forum

By Betsy Clayton
Emerald Reporter

A common approach to solving local economic problems is to lure a big business to the city. But recent reports suggest that locally owned, small businesses are the key to a better economy.

Fergus McLean, a representative for Voters for A Liveable Eugene, offered this idea to a four-member panel and about 50 community members on Saturday as he opened a public forum on economic development in Eugene.

Panel members and moderator Peter Bartell, board chair of the Organization for Economic Initiatives, debated the problems and successes of the local economy and generated ideas on future possibilities. VALE sponsored the forum.

Local firms are already a target for economic expansion, said panel member Abe Farkas, director of the Eugene Development Department. "We fully recognize 80 percent of jobs in the future will come out of local firms. We have given out, in the last two-and-a-half years, \$2.5 million of loans to local businesses," he said.

Farkas said this is just one example of Eugene's economic development strategy. The city continues to look beyond federal and state dollars to more local resources, he explained.

One dilemma Eugene and many other communities face is land use planning. "When is it appropriate to take agricultural land and put it to industrial ac-

tivities? There is no easy answer," Farkas said. Eugene seems to need a large-scale industrial plan, although no formal action has been taken on one, Farkas said.

Panelist Shawn Boles, Eugene Budget Committee member, disagreed with Farkas, saying that too often cities think land needs to be cleared to get large companies to come. Boles said statistics indicate the difficulty of getting a large business to settle in a community like Eugene.

The use of local farm products must increase for improvement of the Eugene economy, said panelist Suavo Brooks, a director of the ARABLE loan fund. ARABLE is a private business development fund that makes loans to the area's small farmers.

Brooks said localizing markets and sales can feed the local economy. The food products industry in this area

should be targeted.

Panelist Skip Laitner, an economist with the University's Bureau of Governmental Affairs, said Eugonians need to re-examine what they want in their economy and how they can direct their resources to get specific results. "By asking different questions, we can use the tools we have available and arrive at different solutions," he said.

Two solutions Laitner cited are supporting local businesses more and using resources more efficiently. He said it is not just a question of what financial tools to use, but combining Eugene's resources with those tools.

Boles said new economic ideas are often "very sexy" in their appeal. With Eugene there is not a giant plan that allows the city to say, "Hey look at our economic development here."

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THE FAR SIDE

By GARY LARSON

"Again? Why is it that the revolution always gets this far and then everyone just chickens out?"