

Weapons stock taints superpowers in Paris

The complete elimination of chemical weapons from the planet is a lofty goal — perhaps a goal that most of us will never see in our lifetime — but following the past week's developments at an international conference on chemical weapons adds some light to the dark clouds.

The objective of the conference was to reaffirm the 1925 Geneva Protocol banning chemical weapons, breathing new life into negotiations asking for a total ban on development, use, production and stockpiling of chemical weapons.

Fortunately, the 149 nations represented at the conference pledged not to use chemical weapons and to work to eliminate them.

U.S. officials, in fact, had hoped that the conference would give impetus to a new treaty being negotiated in Geneva concerning a similar worldwide ban on chemical weapons. U.S. President-elect George Bush himself offered the U.S. draft of this treaty when negotiations on the chemical weapons began in Geneva in 1984.

But for all of Bush's apparent hard work to draft such a treaty — in a recent speech referring to the proliferation of chemical weapons, he said one of his highest priorities as president would be "to deal with this terrible scourge" — it was he who cast the tie-breaking vote in the Senate to resume production of chemical weapons two years ago.

Using typical "Red-scare" mentality, he was swayed by the Senate's argument that the United States needed a reliable chemical weapon stockpile to use as bargaining chips with the Soviets.

It is precisely this mentality that hinders any agreement among nations or a thorough ban on chemical weapons.

While a superpower agreement on a chemical weapon ban might serve as an example to other nations, it is only part of the battle. Controls on the export of technology and materials that other nations use to establish their own chemical weapons facilities are needed.

This issue brought heated debate to the five days of bickering at last week's Paris conference. Many participants believed they shouldn't be expected to limit their chemical weapon use as long as the superpowers retain their stockpiles.

Many participants also said that their chemical weapons are their only deterrent to the nations with nuclear weapons. Charges of hypocrisy were aimed at the Soviet Union, for using chemical weapons in its war against Afghanistan, and at the United States for dropping the poisonous weapons on Vietnam.

But not all hope is lost in the battle to ban chemical weapons.

In fact, the Soviet Union made the largest leap at the convention. It has announced that it will begin disposing of its chemical weapons stockpile — a declaration by a superpower not offered by another.

The U. S. representatives, however, downplayed the significance of the Soviet Union's declaration, claiming the Soviet stockpile is full of obsolete weapons and therefore would lose nothing by disposing of it. The United States is already disposing of its outdated chemical weapons.

Maybe the proliferation of chemical weapons can be prevented by this agreement among nations to limit or eliminate the supply. But the transfer of technology and materials also must cease for the ban to work, as West Germany's apparent role in selling Libya parts and materials for a chemical factory makes glaringly clear.

The horror of the effects of chemical warfare on its victims is paled only by the horrible reality that nations remain poised and willing to use it.



Letters

No attempt

I expect that the designers of next year's school phone book will heed your editorial (ODE, Dec. 7) and include blacks, hispanics and orientals on the cover.

But I hope that they will, instead, select a cover photograph by whatever criteria they have used in past years, not making any racial distinctions.

Racial prejudice will be defeated only when people stop discriminating by race, whether or not they have done it for humanitarian reasons. A concern for the welfare of all races is admirable, but it can be served only by treating them equally — which is to say, without distinction.

A concern for the image of the University is also justifiable, but the University can best prove themselves to be impartial about race if they never consider it, in this case making no attempt to include specific racial groups on the cover of next year's phone book.

John Shenon
Student

We notice!

In response to Dean A. Howard's letter (ODE, Jan. 9) attacking the Emerald's editorial "Symbols on Directory a Sim-

ple 'Whitewash' " — the editor obviously touched a sensitive nerve.

I doubt that the publishing company is a group of white racists. I do think, however, that very often individuals and groups in the majority are simply unaware of such acts of omission and selectivity.

Mr. Howard's accusation that the Emerald has a "narrow-minded perception of a perfectly innocent situation" shows his own narrow perception. People of color are subjected to these "innocent" oversights every day. We notice!

Edwin L. Coleman II
Director of Ethnic Studies
Latex gloves

Evidently, Jon Wollander is not aware that homosexuals are likely not the only ones engaging in the sexual behaviors he so vividly describes. Who knows what dastardly things people do behind closed doors? Certainly when a pair, or more, of adults get together for sexual activity, they are limited only by their imaginations as to the techniques they can devise.

Unfortunately, Jon and those who share his views won't bother to educate themselves about the facts that are known regarding AIDS and other STDs. The truth would fly in the face of their ignorant and vitriolic opinions.

I suggest that Jon stock up on latex gloves, chlorine bleach, and above all, avoid person-to-person contact.

Kristen Smoot
Eugene

Unfair fee

In the course catalog it states student I.D. cards and validation stickers allow students to

use certain services: Library, LTD bus service, physical education facilities, admittance to athletic contests, etc. ... due to the payment of an incidental fee of \$21.25.

I noticed the same \$21.25 fee is assessed to students in the community education program, even though the services available are hardly plausible.

I inquired as to what services are offered? "Library, and physical education facilities (only if you are enrolled in a P.E. course), and daycare at reduced priority," was the response.

No mention of Student Health Center, no mention of being included as students in attendance to athletic events, no mention in LTD bus service, whose cost to ride "free" was included in incidental fees, and no mention of access to physical education facility use, even though the fact is you have paid for their use.

The major question remains "Why is this fee assessed to CEP students when they do not receive even a "hint" in services covered in incidental fees? There should be either 1) an exemption of the fee for CEP students — since they do not receive any notable services anyway, or only for those taking three credit hours, 2) a reduced amount paid in incidental fees — a fee only for the actual service they do get, or 3) an increase in services available to CEP students to justify this fee imposed.

This assessment of a "tax" tag onto CEP students, when they do not receive services outlined in the fees, is unfair.

A similar conflict arises when I consider the 50 percent wage increase for Congress — is there any discernment of justice left?

Sheri Steiner
CEP student

Letters Policy

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.

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