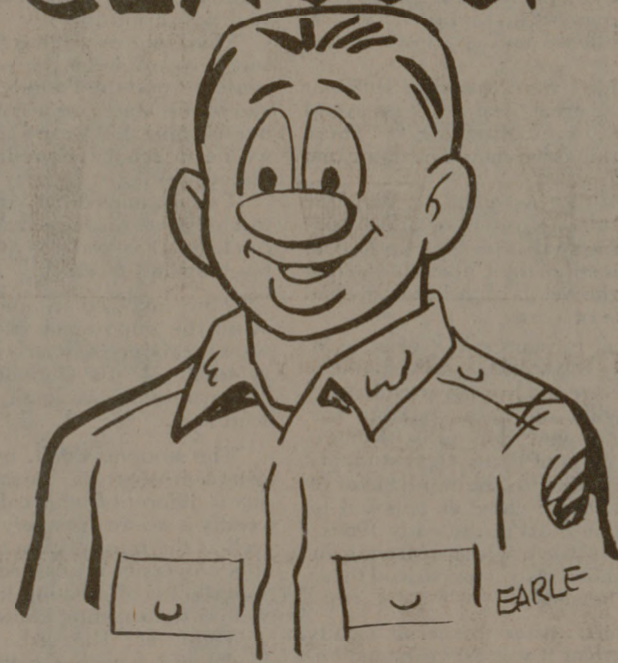


Slouch By Jim Earle

GOODBYE CLASS OF '81



Nuclear arms control needed for survival

By DAVID BRODER

WASHINGTON — On Nov. 30, the day the new round of nuclear disarmament talks began in Geneva between the Soviet Union and the United States, Eugene V. Rostow, the director of the U.S. Arms Control and Disarmament Agency, made a speech before the English-Speaking Union in London. It is a speech worth noting.

The sentiments were nothing new from Rostow. But the skepticism this senior Reagan administration official expressed about the effort at capping the nuclear arms race is an important warning sign of the barriers to be overcome — not just in Russia but here — before the hopes of Geneva can be realized.

The essence of Rostow's argument can be summarized in a series of excerpted quotations:

"The wall between conventional and nuclear war can never be impermeable, no matter how high we make it. Small wars can become big ones at least as readily as in the days when archdukes were assassinated at Sarajevo and Danzig was the center of world concern. It is now apparent that arms-control agreements are hardly worth having if they make the world safe for conventional warfare, terrorism and the movement of armed bands across international borders."

Again: While "arms control agreements could result in a somewhat more stable environment, at least in restraining the potential escalation of conventional force conflicts... under contemporary circumstances, that is an insufficient goal, and probably an illusory one. . . . The fruits of SALT I and SALT II have turned to ashes in our mouths. The decade which began ten years ago with high hopes of detente became the worst decade of the entire Cold War."

Rostow's argument is that the great danger is not nuclear war but the relentless aggressiveness of the Soviet Union. "There is no blinking the fact that the Soviet Union risks war in its campaigns of expansionism all over the world," he says. And since every war, in his view, is potentially a nuclear war, there can be no real security unless Russia renounces its expansionist goals.

Since earlier arms-control agreements have not halted that Soviet imperialism and since the existence of the agreements may have lulled the West into neglecting its own defense needs, the nuclear weapons treaties "have turned to ashes in our mouths."

Believing that, Rostow makes only the most grudging concession to the President's decision to enter a new round of arms negotiations. Indeed, he exclaims at one point, "arms negotiations have no magic in themselves."

Rostow is exceptional in having the temerity to express these doubts at the very moment when the President has launched an ambitious nuclear disarmament plan. But his view is far from unique. There are many like-minded skeptics in the Reagan administration and in the Congress who argue that no arms-control agreement is worthwhile unless it somehow compels the Soviets also to renounce their habit of creating and exploiting political and military problems all around the globe.

For the moment, Ronald Reagan has embraced the opposite view — that nuclear war is an evil in itself. He said plainly in his National Press Club speech that limitations on deploying, developing and testing nuclear weapons are goals worth seeking even in — and perhaps especially because of — the shaky international environment.

He embraced the view that avoiding the use of nuclear weapons in warfare for 36 years is perhaps the most significant achievement of the past generation, one not easily to be dismissed.

It is true that in those 36 years there have been a multiplicity of small wars. There have been countless shifts in the world balance of power, affecting the interests of the Soviet Union and the United States. But all of those conflicts and shifts have not been one-sided. The Soviets — no less than the United States — must reckon their losses along with their gains.

Those calculations are all dwarfed by the overriding fact that, for 36 years, we have avoided nuclear war. We have avoided it because Presidents of both parties understood — contrary to Rostow — that arms-control agreements are worth having, even if they still leave us to contend with the risks of conventional warfare, terrorism and cross-border conflicts.

Rostow may believe the the fruits of those treaties are just "ashes in our mouths." But there are many — including, I think, this President of the United States — who rejoice that the globe has not been reduced to nuclear ash, as it might have been without the continuing quest for nuclear arms control.

Hit squad affects Reagan's lifestyle

WASHINGTON — The reported threat from Libya hit squads, and terrorism at large, is having an impact on the life style of president Reagan, already the victim of one assassination attempt.

Even after he was shot in the chest last March, Reagan did not fear to venture forth in public. And he told reporters he was not going to be chained to the White House, which presidents often view as a prison.

But from now on, it appears all his public movements will be weighed with the thought: Is this trip necessary? despite the dangers and risks?

It is a more dangerous world with instant communications and rapid transport. More and more, the Secret Service will be able to impinge on a president's activities, making perhaps the ultimate decision on where he goes and when.

In the past, some presidents have prided themselves on overruling their bodyguards. When a helicopter pilot told John Kennedy that it was too foggy to lift off, he said, "Let's try it."

Lyndon Johnson was not one to be dictated to by his protectors, although all presidents are briefed on the dangerous lives they lead from the moment they set foot in

the White House.

During the Vietnam War, particularly as the protests mounted, Johnson soon came to the point where he could only go to military bases, and to his home in Texas.

Time was when Harry Truman could take his early morning walk with Secret Service agents and a few reporters and cameramen dogging his heels. But a morning constitutional outside the White House fence would not be recommended for a president these days.

Many new safeguards have been introduced in the protection of Reagan, and as they become institutionalized, as they will, the public exposure of any president will be lessened considerably. More and more, he is expected to resort to television as people contact is ruled out for safety reasons.

Whether the reports of Libyan death squads dispatched to eliminate the U.S. top leadership are true or false, they cannot be ignored and steps are being taken to enhance the president's protection.

And although the present administration is not fond of laying its cards on the table, it may just have to produce some of the "evidence" that has heightened international tensions and worried the country.

Administration officials are appalled by there has been some skepticism regarding the reports, and they have seen no reason publicly justify their concerns.

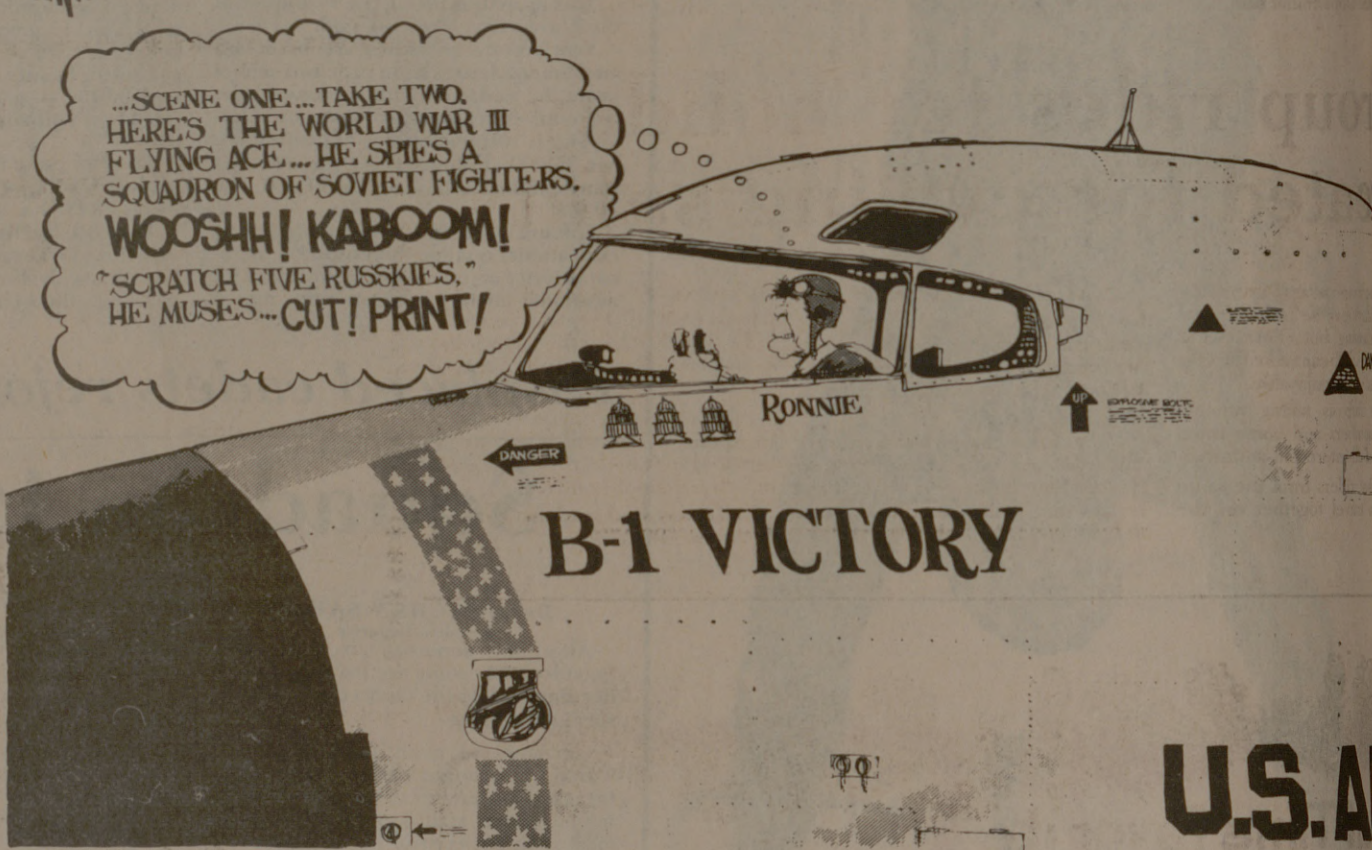
There is enough support for the administration to bank on general faith in the nation's intelligence community. But there also are some questions relating to credibility that somewhere along the line must be answered.

If the reports are true, lives are at stake and no one would want to jeopardize them. But the White House is probably going to have to produce more facts in the future to win support for any tough measures it proposes.

When Kennedy had his second Cuba missile crisis, he showed on national television the photographs of Russian ships that he wanted removed. The decision to show the pictures was a happy stroke that convinced the people that indeed the ships were there in Cuba.

Whether the Reagan White House will follow suit and back up its story with concrete evidence is not known. But it would convince some of the skeptics, and enhance the administration's stature in the eyes of the public.

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It's your turn

Merry Christmas with stolen tree

Editor:

First of all, Merry Christmas to everyone, but mainly to the person who visited our door Tuesday night. Yes, we had a little problem at Fowler Hall. It seems our Christmas spirit was so impressive that someone became jealous.

We want the person who took the Christmas tree at Fowler to really enjoy it. The tree was going to be taken to a nursing home on Thursday, but it appears you needed it more than they did.

Not only did you disappoint us with that, you also had to take the Santa's boot that was on our door.

We want you to have a Merry Christmas with OUR tree and boot. Oh, and if you need a string of popcorn for the tree, it's inside, but we'll put it outside for you — we have no use for it now.

Pam McDonald '84
Karen Zern '84
Fowler Hall

bang, the dropping of the bomb on Hiroshima. Now, if these don't sell furniture, nothing will.

Let me close by saying thank-you for proving to me once again, that for many people in today's world, the only thing that matters is the almighty dollar!

Steven M. Harris '80

Nutrition vs edibility

Editor:

When I came to A&M at the beginning of this semester, I was against having to eat

in a school cafeteria. But after I had eaten there, I found the food very good.

In the past few weeks, though, the food has been going downhill. The school food is still very good, but the cafeteria food is getting progressively worse.

Last Monday night, when I walked to eat dinner and saw they were serving spaghetti with watery sauce and beef noisettes, I was tempted to walk out. But I stayed and went to the "junk" section to get something to eat. When I looked around, it seemed as though about one-half of the students who eat in the cafeteria had the same idea.

I think it's pretty bad when you have to resort to eating "junk food" because the choice of good nutritional food is near nonexistent.

Lauri Strickland

the small society

by Brickman



Local ad in poor taste

Editor:

(re: letter to Teague Furniture)
This letter is in response to the advertisement you ran on December 7 on a local radio station. I find this commercial, advertising Teague Furniture Store, to be the most tasteless advertisement I have ever heard.

"Zeros are dropping from your prices like the Japanese on Pearl Harbor that day." Really! Is business so bad that you must use the tragedy of Pearl Harbor to sell furniture? If so, I have a few ideas for your next advertising campaign.

Let's start with, oh say, the Boston Massacre, Custer at Little Big Horn, the sinking of the Titanic, the Alamo, or you could use the senseless murder of 6 million Jews during World War II, and finish with a

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The Battalion also serves as a laboratory newspaper for students in reporting, editing and photography courses within the Department of Communications.

Questions or comments concerning any editorial matter should be directed to the editor.

LETTERS POLICY

Letters to the Editor should not exceed 300 words in length, and are subject to being cut if they are longer. The editorial staff reserves the right to edit letters for length, but will make every effort to maintain the author's intent. Each letter must also be signed, show the author's name and phone number of the writer.

Columns and guest editorials are also welcome, but are not subject to the same length constraints as regular editorials. Address all inquiries and correspondence to Editor, The Battalion, 216 Reed McDonald, Texas A&M University, College Station, TX 77843.

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