

# opinion

## Will White House security go too far?

by Steve Gerstel

United Press International  
WASHINGTON — A security shroud envelops the nation's Capitol, turning that magnificent edifice into a besieged garrison.

Dogs sniff for bombs, police check for identification, machines probe for metal, entrances are sealed to visitors, corridors are off limits.

The state of siege, so grim, seems inevitable in a time when the setting of explosives in public and corporate buildings has become commonplace.

Security in the Capitol, once almost non-existent, was tightened noticeably after a middle-of-the night bomb in 1971 demolished a shroon and barber shop on the first floor.

But that was only a pale forerunner of the stringent security measures which were imposed the day after another explosion two weeks ago.

That explosion, set off within steps of the Senate chamber, inflicted minor structural damage and damaged priceless paintings. Fortunately, the blast came late at night, when the Capitol was virtually empty.

That same explosion, as little as four hours later when the Senate was still in session, would very likely have claimed some wounded, perhaps some dead.

The force of the explosion, set off in a heavily-traveled corridor on the second floor, sent shrapnel-type missiles rocketing into the Republican cloakroom, an off-floor retreat for GOP senators.

The new security measures were quick to go into effect but they were not actually a response to the bombing.

The desire for new safeguards were prompted by reports, never substantiated, that Lybian hit squads had infiltrated the country. It was in response to that danger that security officials first made their plans.

The security measures now in effect are, by and large, little more than a nuisance although they take away from visitors the privilege of roaming the second-floor corridors.

The measures will be tightened even more when Congress returns Jan. 23 by further restricting the access of outsiders to the Capitol and requiring badges for staff and media.

Although the feeling of greater safety may be reassuring to the lawmakers, many are bothered by the necessity of the unprecedented precautions.

House Democratic leader Jim Wright said, the day after the bombing, that he was "earnestly concerned" about restricting the Capitol to the point it would interfere with visitors.

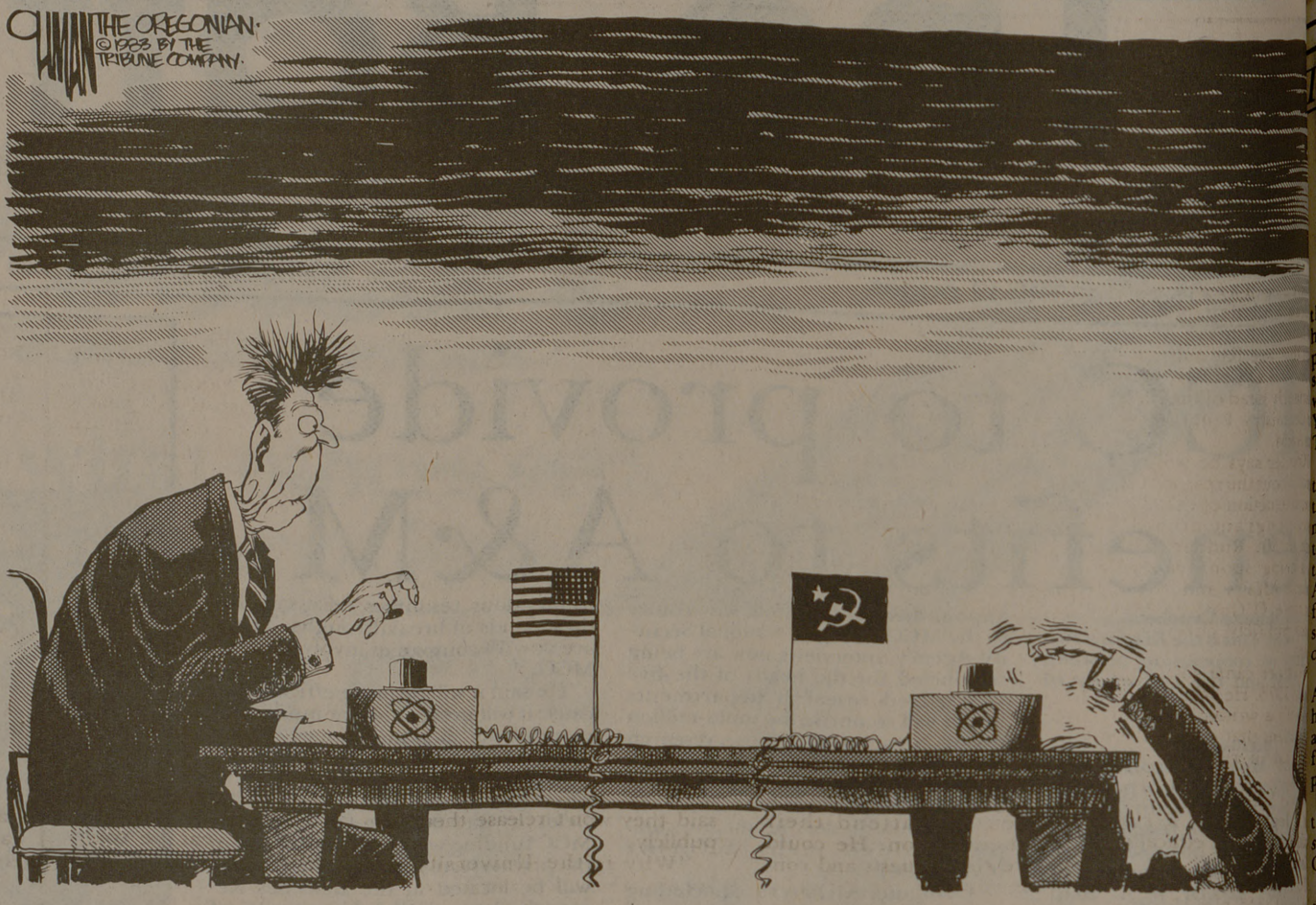
"A free society such as ours owes a degree of access to its citizens," he said. "It is not our building. This building belongs to the people of the United States."

Hopefully, Wright's concept of the Capitol is widespread and strong enough to head off the tunnel-vision security types who would not be adverse to turning the building into an off-limits fortress.

These types have suggested putting a fence around the lush Capitol grounds, which also belong to the people, and enclosing the House and Senate chambers with a form of plexiglass bubble top.

Almost absolute security can be provided for the Capitol.

But the price in terms of access for the thousands of Americans who come to see the one building uniquely theirs is far too high.



## Reagan confident of policies on nukes after 'The Day After'

by Helen Thomas

United Press International  
WASHINGTON — The president and White House aides are breathing a sigh of relief. They do not believe that "The Day After," a television drama showing the horrors of nuclear war, had any major negative fallout as far as administration's nuclear arms policies are concerned.

Home free is the way the aides have been reacting. They feel it did not lay a glove on the White House, politically speaking, although it was considered a "national happening."

They concede they feared the worse, particularly with some reports before ABC-TV aired the film Nov. 20 that there might be mass hysteria.

"The best thing about 'The Day After' was that the country was mature enough to deal with it," said one top official. He recalled that a similar film had been banned in Britain in 1965 out of concern that it would scare the public.

"There was nothing like that," he said following the showing of "The Day After," adding, "There's been a healthy debate. I thought it was good for the country."

He said that Reagan thought the movie was "depressing" and repeated the public White House statement that his policies are designed to prevent a holocaust.

Meanwhile, Cabinet officials such as

Defense Secretary Caspar Weinberger are keeping up the counterattack charging that while the United States has reduced its nuclear arsenal, the Soviet Union has built up its stocks, believing that it can win a nuclear war.

"I only wish the Soviet leaders would allow their citizens to see a film like 'The Day After,'" Weinberger said.

Weinberger has not spent enough time in Moscow, if any, or he would know that war has been on the Soviet minds since World War II. No one can visit the Soviet Union without hearing of the 25 million casualties suffered in that devastating war.

Official visitors, and tourists alike are taken to the Leningrad memorial to commemorate the untold suffering of millions when their city was blockaded on three sides for three years.

Soviet citizens may not be told what their leaders are up to. But they are told about the horrors of nuclear war.

The White House received some 600 calls that they labeled preponderantly pro-Reagan about his policies. Aides admit the number was a drop in the bucket considering that tens of thousands watched the movie, and stayed glued to the television for the pro and con debate afterward by administration officials and former government chieftains.

Americans are not in a protest mood. To White House aides, there is a general

acceptance of where the nation is and a belief that Reagan is doing his utmost to reach a nuclear arms reduction agreement with the Soviets.

To other observers, there is a resignation and passivity to what they feel they cannot do anything about.

The administration's solution is through strength. Only matching superior arms, Reagan's advisers believe will hold the Soviets in line.

As for the political repercussions official said, "There's no reason to believe it will become an issue in the campaign."

With Pershing-2 and cruise missiles being deployed in Europe, the powers appear to be approaching a point of no return. The need for agreement on arms reduction becomes more urgent.

So far the Soviets have not made any major conciliatory gestures. Soviet leader Yuri Andropov has not been publicly flexible, indicating that he is not well disposed to asserting leadership.

In his farewell statement before going on his six-day Asian swing, Reagan said "We live in a dangerous world."

That appeared apt. He also told a Jewish group a few weeks ago that it appeared "we were going down the road to Armageddon."

With doomsday possibilities all around us, no attempt is being made for a dialogue to get started between U.S. and Soviet officials.

## Verbal sexual abuse often a judgment call

by Art Buchwald

There seems to be more talk and lawsuits concerning sexual harassment in the office. A recent survey indicated that while few women complained of being physically harassed by males, many maintained they were verbally abused by their male co-workers.

Unfortunately, verbal sexual harassment is still a much cloudier area than anyone wants to admit.

When I go to lunch by myself I have the bad habit of listening to conversations at the next table. When two or three girls are lunching together the conversation seems to concern the various men in their office. "Tommy is a teddy bear, but Harry is a dirty old man."

Wanting to know where a man should draw the line when it comes to harassment in the office, I turned to three female office workers sitting next to me at Scholl's Cafeteria the other day and said, "I beg your pardon, I'm doing a story on sexual harassment and I was wondering if you ladies could help me define the difference between verbal harassment and old-fashioned flirting in the office."

One of the girls replied, "If you like the guy and think he's cute, he's flirting with you. If you don't like him, he's harassing you."

A second girl said, "If Arnie, whom you've had your eye on, asks to have dinner with you, tell all the girls in the office."

## Slouch



"Frisbees! After all this time, you've been carrying around nothing but frisbees! I thought you were carrying books!"

If Charley, whom you can't stand, invites you, tell your boss."

"Then what you're saying is that verbal harassment in the office is really a judgment call. It isn't what's being said but who says it?"

The third lady in the party said, "There's a lot more to it than that. Lilly was dating a fellow from our office, and he stayed over at her apartment once or twice a week. Then he dumped her and wouldn't talk to her. His silence was far more harassing than anything he had ever said to her."

"Correct me if I'm wrong," I continued, "but it seems to me in the old office mating game, many men and women who are now married admit they didn't even like each other at the beginning, but eventually fell in love. If office harassment had been as big an issue then as it is now, maybe the couple would have never gotten together, and the guy, instead of cutting the lawn for the girl of his dreams, could be doing five years in the county workhouse."

"The difference is that in the past," one of the girls said, "a girl had no choice of who harassed her. Now the law says it's our decision."

One of the other ladies added, "It's also a question of who holds the power. If your superior implies your position with the firm depends of how nice you are to him, that's harassment of the worst kind."

"But if you like him, would that still be harassment?"

"If he's married, that's one thing. If he's fun and single, it could be a different story."

"Are there cases in your office," I asked, "where women harass men they are attracted to?"

They all laughed. "We're not made of stone. Why are you writing an article on this?"

"Because if women can go to court over verbal harassment in an office environment, men may become too frightened to say anything to you girls. It could take all the romance out of your jobs, and no one would look forward to coming to work anymore."

"Do you have a solution?" one of the women asked me.

"Yes, I do. I think when you first apply for a job you should be asked on your personnel questionnaire if you want to be verbally harassed or not. If you say yes, then you must describe the type of guy you want to be harassed by and the type you wouldn't be caught dead with. Your superior could then notify all the males in the office accordingly, and everybody would be spared the consequences."

The girls thought this over. Then one of them said, "It will never work. We might not want to be harassed by George on Monday, but when the weekend rolls around, and we don't have anything to do, we should have the right to change our minds"

## People should bother to find out about toxic wastes near residence

by Children's Express

Children's Express, a privately funded news service, is real world journalism reported entirely by children 13 years of age or under whose tape-recorded interviews, discussions, reports and commentary are edited by teenagers and adults.

United Press International  
NEW YORK — People like their homes. They like their normal lives. They just don't listen. They don't want to hear that their homes are in danger, their jobs and their children, their whole lives; they don't want to hear that kind of thing. So they disregard it. They say, "It won't happen to me." Some people are just naive.

But do you notice that your kids are sick very often? Is this happening to a lot of people that you know? Are there women you know who have had miscarriages? These may not be freak accidents. It could be that there are toxic waste sites around you, maybe even in your own backyard.

"I never thought that the environment was a problem," Lois Gibbs told us. "I always thought that the odors I smelled were odors that made work and jobs and money. Nobody told me that they were dangerous."

Gibbs is the founder of an organization called the Citizen's Clearing House for Hazardous Wastes. One day she got home and picked up the paper and she was told that 20,000 tons of toxic waste were dumped three blocks from her house under the playground of the school where her son went.

"My kids were so sick but it didn't make sense to me," Gibbs went on. "I read in the newspaper that these chemicals create diseases, which were also listed in the newspaper. I could check off every one of my kids' problems. That's when I became aware. And I was very scared."

The people of Love Canal panicked. It was like why, why my town? But Love

Canal is not an isolated incident. "Nor is it a special case," Gibbs added. "There are 15,000 uncontrolled waste sites very similar to Love Canal." And there are many dump sites around the country which are unknown and dangerous.

Gibbs feels that people need to know

and they need some kind of guidance. She founded the Citizen's Clearing House two years ago to help people understand what's happening and react and not just sit around in houses and wait for the thing to go over.

## The Battalion

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