

# Need more talk, fewer weapons

House Republicans detailed some of their policy objectives this week, including continued research in space weapons and continued production of the MX missile and the B-1 bomber.

With the deficit as it is, the government needs to put a lid on spending. If research is continued in space weaponry and the MX missile and B-1 bomber continue to be produced, the government will only be facing more headaches.

The U.S. wants to invest at least one trillion dollars on the Star Wars research alone. Even if it's a foolproof defense system against nuclear attack, what good is it if the U.S. economy collapses?

Defense Secretary Casper Weinberger said Wednesday if the U.S. does not increase its military spending by more than 3 percent to 4 percent — which seems to be as high as Congress may be willing to go — it will, in effect, endanger national security and prevent an arms talks agreement with the Soviets.

But in reality, continuing production of the MX and B-1 bomber and continuing research in space weaponry would be destabilizing to world peace because it would upset the precarious arms balance between the U.S. and the U.S.S.R.

The U.S. has to do more than ensure its own national defense. It must take into account how its actions and rhetoric will be perceived by the Soviets, because their perceptions can affect future relations between the two superpowers.

The Reagan administration says its military proposals are defensive. But the Soviets see these proposed build-ups as offensive, not defensive. The Soviets fear — and rightfully so — that the U.S. is trying to establish first strike capability, one which the Soviets have pledged not to use.

If the U.S. perfected its Star Wars dream and was able to effectively destroy approaching Soviet missiles, that would leave the U.S. with first strike capability. That thought makes the Soviets' blood run cold.

Weinberger says if the U.S. does not develop space weapons, it will not be able to use that system as a bargaining tool with the Soviets in arms negotiations.

But even if it could be used as a bargaining tool, it couldn't be used as a serious threat for decades. The U.S. shouldn't spend trillions of dollars and who-knows-how-many years on a concept that may never be utilized.

Why not use it as a bargaining tool now? Why not agree in the upcoming arms talks with the Soviets to at least slow down research on Star Wars? The Soviets certainly would be more cooperative in arms talks if their fears of U.S. military superiority could be eased a little.

Such a threat is as serious to them as it would be to the U.S. if the situation were reversed.

This administration also advocates continuing production of the MX missile and the B-1 bomber. But there is no evidence that there is any real need for another generation of mobile land-based missiles like the MX.

Replacing the B-52 with the B-1 bomber is just as ineffective. There is no new technology involved with the B-1 bomber. It is just a newer, more expensive model and is no more capable of penetrating Soviet airspace than is the B-52.

If the U.S. wants to funnel money into an aircraft system that could penetrate Soviet airspace, it should direct money away from the B-1 bomber and into research of Stealth aircrafts. At least those planes, supposedly undetectable by radar, might stand a better chance of not getting blown out of the sky.

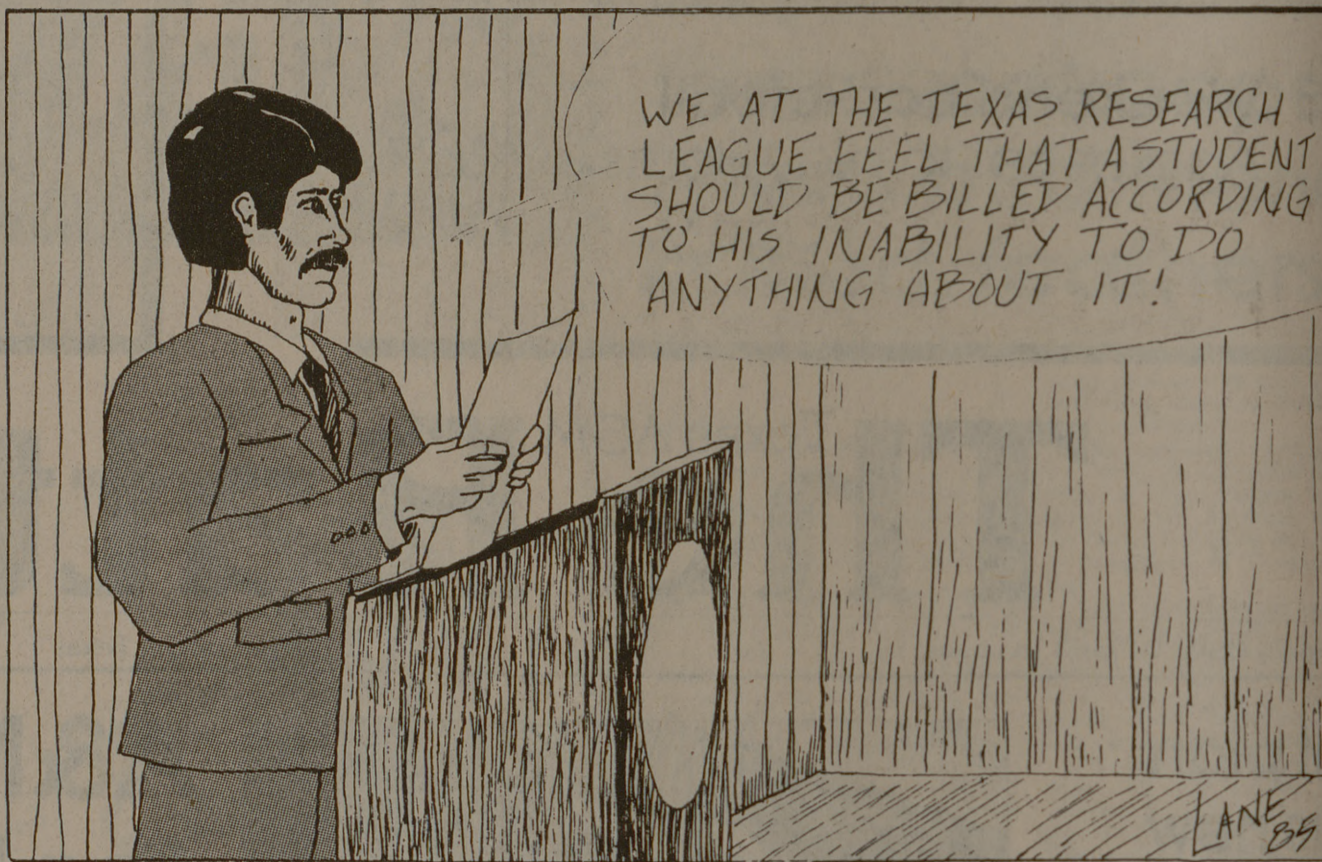
In addition, Weinberger wants to re-establish anti-aircraft radar installations and planes to protect against bombers and cruise missiles that might slip in under an anti-missile space shield — chalk up another 50 billion dollars, at least.

By slowing down Star Wars research and discontinuing production of the MX and the B-1 bomber, the U.S. would not be exposing itself to the risk of nuclear blackmail by the Soviets. The U.S. has enough nuclear weapons now to protect itself. The two superpowers can blow each other away numerous times as it is.

Someone needs to take the first step in nuclear disarmament. If the U.S. agrees to slow down research on Star Wars, then the Soviets would certainly be more eager to negotiate.

Actions often speak louder words. And in this case, the Soviets would certainly be more cooperative if they saw the U.S. take the first step toward ensuring world peace, instead of just hearing more U.S. chatter.

The Battalion Editorial Board



# A little American know-how can go a very long way

By ART BUCHWALD

Columnist for The Los Angeles Times Syndicate

At the end of the year I always have a three-vodka-martini lunch with my mole from the Soviet embassy in Washington. His code name is "Nutcracker."

"So tell me, what's new in the Kremlin?" I asked him.

"We cutting defense research budget by 75 percent," he said.

"Come on, Nutcracker, planting KGB disinformation with me will get you nowhere."

"Is true. Politburo made decision early this year to stop developing new weapons because they were getting too expensive."

"So how do they expect to keep up the arms race if they don't spend trillions of rubles for research and development?"

"Is simple. We plan to let Americans spend money to do scientific dirty work and then buy it from you."

"You don't think the United States is going to sell the Soviet Union our military weapon secrets?"

"Not directly from manufacturer, but we can always go through the middleman."

"What middleman?"

"Somebody who works for defense contractor and wants to make little extra money to achieve American dream."

"What exactly do you mean by that?"

"Take Stealth bomber. You people spent billions of dollars to develop airplane that could escape Soviet radar. We had choice of spending twice as much to find answer, or buy plans from one of your people in California. We found engineer who delivered blueprints to us for \$25,000. Was a lot of money, but still cheaper than starting from scratch and building Stealth bomber of our own."

"That's dirty pool," I said. "In an arms race each side is expected to pay top dollar for developing its own weapons. It's not fair of the Soviets to make us do all the work and then go out to California and buy the system for a song."

"Sue us for patent infringement," Nutcracker said. "Comrade, I will tell you dark secret. Russian computers lousy, and if we had to depend on them for new weapons, we would have dropped out of arms race long ago. The only thing keep Russian war machine going is American know-how."

"How do you find these middlemen who sell our secrets?"

"Is easy. We plug into credit rating system on cheap Apple computer, and find California defense worker who can't make payments on house. Then we go to him and pay mortgage in exchange for plans to guidance system for MX missile."

"Why have you concentrated on California?"

"Because nobody can pay his mortgage in California."

"You would think the Soviets would have too much national pride to reproduce a weapons system Americans have worked on for years."

"Is not a question of pride. Is question of cost. Soviet taxpayers getting tired of paying so much money for defense. Moscow can deliver bigger rumble for a ruble, Soviet peoples don't care who came up with idea first."

"Is \$25,000 the highest price the Kremlin will pay for an American weapons system?"

"That's all Moscow has allotted in R&D military budget for 1985. But if someone wants to sell us secrets of Star Wars we would go to \$50,000, even if we had to take money out of Soviet school lunch program."

## LETTERS:

### Possible tuition hike questioned

EDITOR:

In reference to Gov. White's announced investigation into the possibility of increasing tuition costs for students attending state supported universities, he noted that the Texas Research League found the median income of families with a student in a Texas public college or university to be \$31,730.

I'd like to know how they arrived at this number, since only those students who apply for financial aid are required to submit data on their parent's financial status; data which is supposed to be kept in confidence by those organizations which rate students on eligibility for financial aid. (Though it seems obvious that such a high income figure was not that of students in financial need.) Nor does Texas have an income tax from which such information would be gleamed. Finally, even our federal income tax returns would require that their confidentiality be breached by Gov. White's "Research League" — a dangerous precedent.

The study also assumes that parents are legally obliged to put their children through school. I know many students from upper middle-class families who work their way through school, because their parents can afford only minimal subsistence beyond their usual fiscal burdens. Even those students from families in higher-income brackets often pay a substantial portion of their expenses, taking pride and self-satisfaction in doing so — and therefore better preparing themselves for the rigors and responsibilities they will encounter upon graduation.

The Research League found that the tuition paid by a Texan attending a uni-

versity in California is more than double that paid by a Californian attending a state university here. An unjust burden on we Texans, having to support students in California (residents there attend school free); Gov. White doesn't complain about out-of-state students bringing their money and enthusiasm to enrich Texas college communities — a value which far exceeds the tuition that reaches state coffers.

As for raising professional and graduate tuition for Texas residents, we have a hard enough time as it is — and often with poor earnings, even employment opportunities after graduation! Take away that little extra incentive of reasonable tuition costs, and Texas industries may have to depend on out-of-state schools to provide qualified professionals to support the technological boon of the decade, as local students pursue careers which are more fiscally sound.

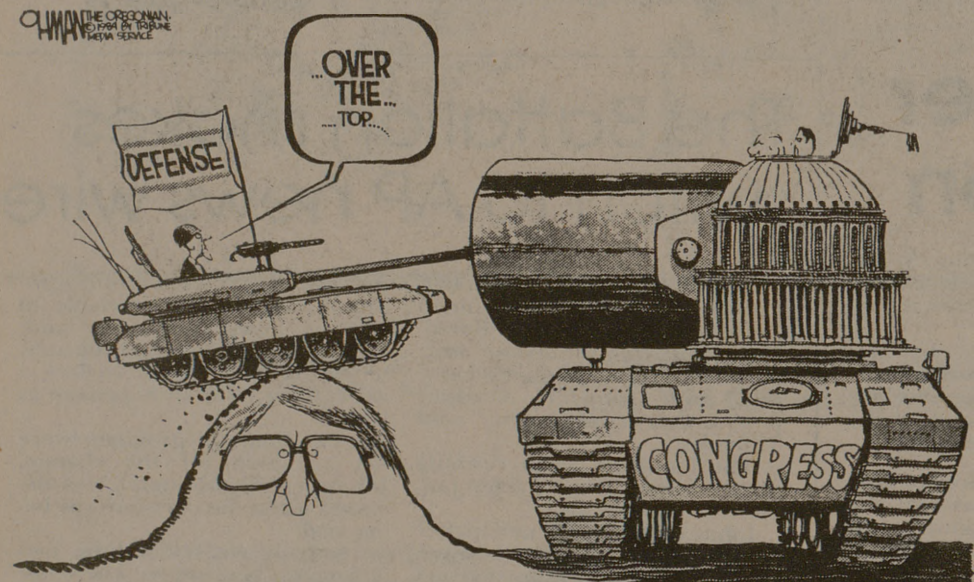
William H. Clark II  
Physics

### Ring returned; faith intact

EDITOR:

Here is a story that reflects the true spirit of Aggieland. January 16th, I left my diamond ring, given to me by my boyfriend, on the piano in the MSC. Three hours later I discovered that it was missing from its usual place on my finger. When I frantically arrived back at the piano I found a note that said, "If you left your ring here, I have turned it in the main office at the MSC. Signed, the Good Ag, '88." To whomever this "Good Ag" is, I say thank you from the bottom of my heart. Thanks also to Silvia Andrews for her kindness and honesty.

Lana Poyner



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

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Letters to the Editor should not exceed 300 words in length. The editorial staff reserves the right to edit letters for style and length but will make every effort to maintain the author's intent. Each letter must be signed and must include the address and telephone number of the writer.

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