

Opinion

Right choice, but the wrong reasons

The message behind the 22nd Amendment is that if the public elects the same president more than twice, they are incapable of selecting the best candidate. The amendment insults the integrity of American voters and should be repealed.

The founding fathers considered a limited-tenure presidency and decided not to tie the hands of future generations. Even staunch two-term proponents such as Thomas Jefferson realized that situations may occur when a longer stay in office is necessary.

Ironically, the driving force behind the amendment's ratification was Republicans who were upset with Franklin D. Roosevelt's four-term presidency. Now the Republicans want the amendment repealed to allow Ronald Reagan another term. In both cases, the Republicans' actions are misguided.

The ringleaders of the third-term movement claim that since many consider Reagan one of the greatest presidents, the voters deserve another chance at electing him. But FDR also was considered by many to be one of our greatest leaders.

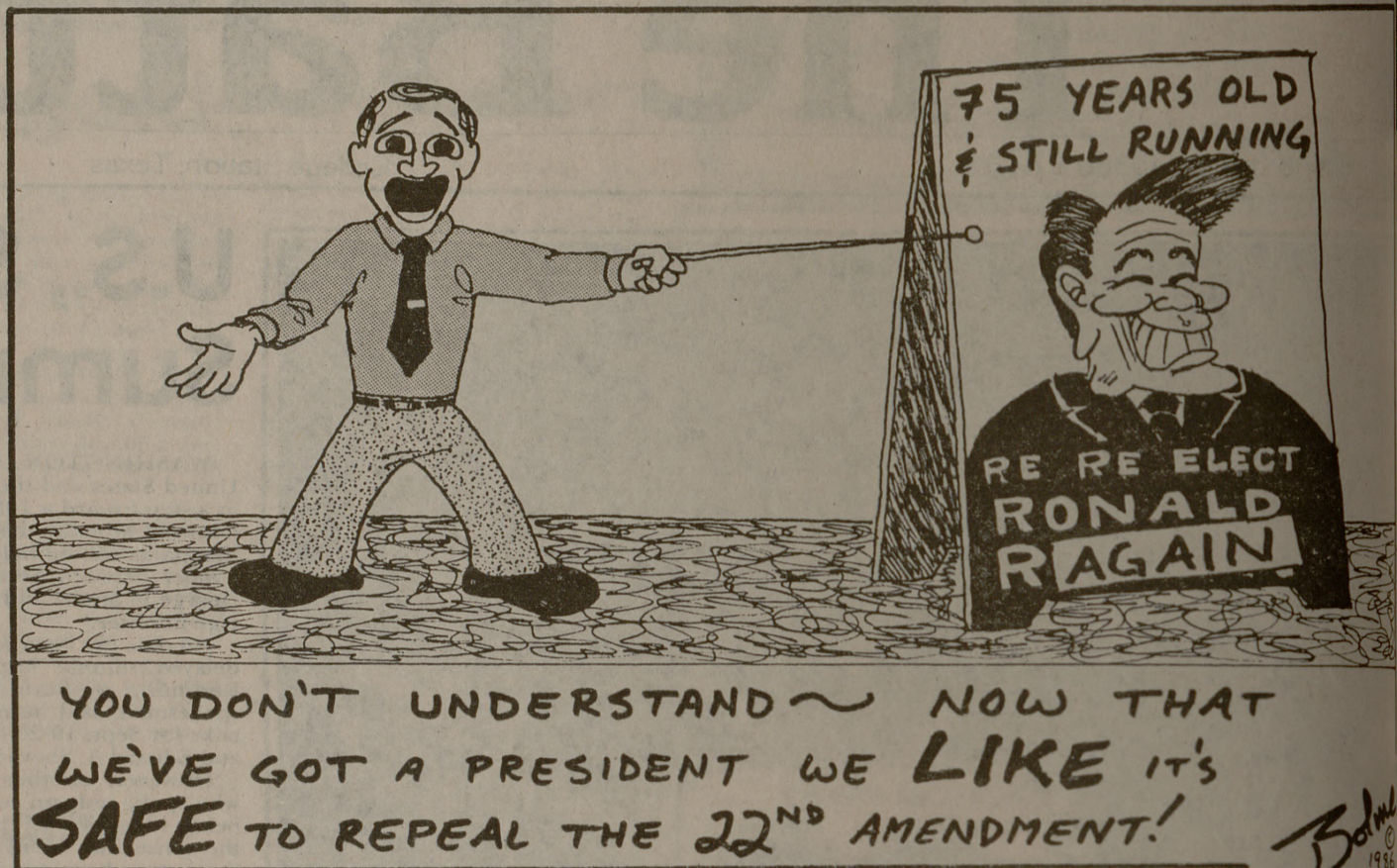
Reagan previously supported the 22nd Amendment, going so far as to try to adopt a similar policy for California governors when he held that office. But as time runs out, he has shown support for amendment opponents, whose primary objection is that the measure creates a lame-duck president. Reagan, however, claims his motives aren't selfish: "...any president who will try to get the Constitution changed should not be doing it for himself — he should be doing it for those who will follow him."

It's good the president feels that way because despite the Republican hoopla, a repeal would have no effect on the Reagan presidency. First, two-thirds of the House and Senate must approve the measure, then three-fourths of the state legislatures. When the 22nd Amendment was implemented, it took four years from the time of congressional approval to state ratification.

But a third Reagan term should not be the criterion for ratifying the Constitution change. No limitation on presidential tenure should be instigated with a specific president in mind. To do so would be to repeat the mistake of the 80th Congress Republicans who mistrusted voters because they kept electing FDR.

If voters can make intelligent decisions twice, why not three times? We need to repeal the 22nd Amendment, not to keep Ronald Reagan in office, but to restore American voters' ability to govern themselves effectively.

The Battalion Editorial Board



Opponents attempting to kill SDI by extending ABM treaty

Professor Robert Jastrow, the renowned astrophysicist who teaches at Dartmouth but lectures to a universal audience in his enthusiasm for the possibilities of a strategic defense system, writes now (in *National Review*) that the opponents of President Reagan's space shield are adopting tactics designed to kill the program without appearing to do so. Their principal weapon is to stress the years and years that lie ahead of us before deployment is even thinkable. If we announced a program to land a man on Mars by the year 2012, the tactical appeal of husbandry can be pleaded to postpone that to the year 2015 without greatly upsetting anybody.



William F. Buckley Jr.

It is a version of this kind of thing that is going on, and Jastrow perceives the extraordinary subtlety of it.

Consider that basic question of the ABM treaty. As previously discussed in this space, there are two understandings of its bearing on our Star Wars research. The so-called restrictive version (adopted by the United States, notwithstanding a ruling by the legal counsel of the State Department that the permissive version is the correct legal reading of the treaty's provisions) prohibits certain kinds of testing, and, of course, deployment.

Well then, crafty opponents of SDI look up at you with wide-eyed innocence, since deployment of the system is at least five years away — more probably 15 years away — and since testing at the critical phase is years away, why not just go ahead and reaffirm the ABM treaty for another five years? That way we make some points with the Soviet Union and with world opinion, and delay our program not at all.

"A five-year extension of the ABM treaty," writes Professor Jastrow,

"would stop SDI cold. In 1992, the SDI team still would be several years away from the results needed to make a decision on deployment. Add five to 10 years to that — for the time needed to build and deploy — and we are well into the next century. Congressmen call that: 'Research forever and deploy never.'"

Jastrow adds a widely neglected point. It is that regulations of the Department of Defense "forbid initiating a program which, when brought to fruition, would violate an arms-control treaty. A five-year extension would mean not only that we could not deploy for five years but that we couldn't get any closer to deployment for five years."

Presumably, the regulations of our own Department of Defense could be altered by executive fiat, but one can hear the hue and cry that would bring on. The utterly bewildering failure of the Reagan administration to sweep that preposterous cobweb (the ABM treaty) out of the way hinders us at every turn. It encourages a heavy fog that obscures the penetration of our objective, which is to make free people secure. Consider the matter of SDI's budget. The administration asked for \$4.8 billion, the congressional committees came up with \$3.4 billion and \$3.6 billion. So what does it matter if we slow down a little bit, given that we're talking about something that was off there in the late '90s?

The Department of Defense had scheduled for the near future the test of an airplane called the AOA. Think of it as a super-complicated AWAC. Its mission? To detect an enemy warhead, calculate its trajectory and send that information to our land-based smart bullet. "It fires a beam of fast-moving atomic particles at the oncoming warhead, scrambling its electronics so that the nuclear weapon inside cannot explode. Progress is so rapid that the SDI team plans an in-space test of a neutral-particle beam in 1990."

Now, the AOA would be the heart of the European defense system, designed

as it is to intercept Soviet tactical missiles. European technology is not up to launching an AOA. Either we do it or it does not get done. "Putting a ceiling of \$3.4 (billion) to \$3.6 billion on the SDI budget is a way of seeming to vote for the program while actually killing it."

They talk of the need to curb spending, to cut defense 50 cents, non-defense 50 cents in pursuit of lower budget deficits. But defense, which used to eat up 50 percent of the budget back in the 1950s and 1960s, now takes up 25 percent. In plain dollars (i.e., not counting for inflation), defense spending has risen 425 percent in the last 25 years; non-defense spending, 1473 percent. No, it isn't fear of a misspent dollar. It is that asphyxiating fear of a technological breakthrough that would concentrate the human brain on how to frustrate nuclear destruction. Strange and increasingly strange that Reagan should be so acquiescent in these maneuvers.

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Reagan steering for Gorbachev summit

President Reagan says his letter to Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev "underlines my determination to keep the momentum going."

Barry Schweid
AP News Analysis

The president meant the drive on both sides to make sure Gorbachev comes here to see Reagan by year's end for their second summit meeting.

After months of delay, the chances of fulfilling the commitment the two leaders made last November in their Geneva fireside chat suddenly are high.

But the energetic procedural activity, leading up to a visit here in September by Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze, does not guarantee results. And in the euphoria of finally getting preparations on track, intractable problems may be temporarily overlooked.

"Star Wars," for instance. The war in Afghanistan. And human rights.

All are certain agenda items. And all are extremely difficult and possibly unsolvable.

It's one thing to have a summit meeting, but quite another to reach understandings that reduce tensions and produce concrete results. In fact, curbstone critics have suggested through the years of U.S.-Soviet summitry that it may be worse to raise expectations and not deliver than to have no summit at all.

Reagan has indirectly touched on the first obstacle to a productive outcome by calling the U.S. space-based defense program a "pillar" of the American effort to reduce nuclear weapons.

In fact, the president wants Gorbachev to think defense, too. The idea is that the two superpowers would work together to reverse a generation of arms control strategy and shield the United States and the Soviet Union from missile attack.

The problem is Gorbachev has denounced Star Wars, formally known as the Strategic Defense Initiative, as a dangerous potential extension of the arms race. He not only would have to do an about-face, but find ways to squeeze out of the hard-pressed Soviet economy the vast resources required to develop a modern missile defense. The rubles just might not be there.

And yet, the Soviet leader already has given in a little bit to Reagan by acknowledging it's really impossible to stop American research. The question now is whether he can be persuaded to give a lot more ground and accept U.S. testing of futuristic technology in space.

If he refuses to yield, it is hard to see how a summit can produce meaningful progress toward curbing the nuclear arms race.

Similarly, Gorbachev's announcement that he would withdraw six regiments from Afghanistan is a far cry from the complete pullout of the Red Army that Reagan would like to negotiate at the summit.

The Soviet leader has offered a concession, about proportional to his acquiescence to U.S. Star Wars research, but not the capitulation sought by the Reagan administration.

The third big obstacle to a successful summit is human rights. Reagan hopes to improve the lot of Soviet Jews and other minorities, while Gorbachev takes a traditional Russian stance against Western intrusion.

Despite Gorbachev's position, however, this and previous U.S. administrations have been able to secure the release of some prominent dissidents, reunite some divided families and concentrate international attention on the Soviet situation.

Barry Schweid covers diplomacy and national security for *The Associated Press*.

And now, Mikhail Gorbachev and his hilarious "pathological liar" routine...

Yeah...we're pulling our troops out of Afghanistan...that's the ticket...and we'll cut back on nuclear forces, yeah, that's it...

