

Opinion

Arms treaty won't provide path to peace

Hopes for nuclear disarmament have been boosted substantially by the recent talks between U.S. Secretary of State George Shultz and Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze, in which they have reached a tentative agreement that would eliminate all intermediate-range nuclear missiles.



Brian Frederick

Though these missiles make up only a small percentage of the superpowers' nuclear weapons, many are hailing the agreement as a major breakthrough. In a recent speech, Shevardnadze declared, "Today we are taking the first major step towards a nuclear-free world."

For the treaty to be signed, only two questions remain to be resolved: the timetable for removing the weapons quickly and a means to prevent cheating. Negotiators will work to resolve these questions before the summit proposed for later this fall between Ronald Reagan and Mikhail Gorbachev.

Shevardnadze has predicted that, if signed, this treaty will stimulate disarmament in other areas. He foresees a reduction in long-range

missiles — if the United States abandons SDI — a complete ban on chemical weapons, and cutbacks on conventional weapons in Europe.

Are such sanguine hopes warranted? Is this the first step down the road to the world peace for which mankind has waited so long?

Though the treaty seems to be a splendid achievement, it is seriously flawed. The West Germans have said that, with the removal of the nuclear weapons upon which their defense depends, they will be open to a conventional attack since the Soviets and the Warsaw Pact have an overwhelming preponderance of conventional forces in Europe. Though reductions in conventional arms could mitigate this concern, an agreement to that effect may be some time away. In the interim, the defense of Germany and all Western Europe would be compromised.

Though the Soviets have made themselves look good by abandoning their traditional hard line and offering these significant reductions, it may be only for show. There are reports that they have developed a new missile that is carried and launched from railroad cars. This missile, which is not covered in the talks, gives the Soviets an effective replacement for the missiles they are so generously eliminating — and undermines the entire basis for the treaty.

Even if this were not the case, the Soviet interpretation of the treaty may differ from ours. We may be distressed to discover later that they have taken liberties we did not intend.

Furthermore, there is no practical way to hold two nations to a treaty. We are right in insisting upon inspections to verify that the treaty is kept, but even if we are able to work out a system for inspections, what are we going to do if we discover a violation? Should we politely ask the Soviets to rectify the situation? What if they don't comply? Should we deliver a strong rebuke? Impose sanctions? Cry that they don't play fairly?

History shows that treaties usually are temporary expedients which are repudiated at whim. They lull the vigilance of a nation into a feeling of false security and thus are poor repositories for national security. This is especially true when the signatories of the treaty are avowed enemies. A scrap of paper will not prevent one from assailing the other if the opportunity presents itself.

While the Soviets have loudly

proclaimed their desire for peace, they do not necessarily want the same peace we want. Communism declares that there is an irreconcilable class conflict both on a national level and on an international level between communist and capitalist nations. This conflict can be ended only when the old capitalist order is destroyed and the communist classless society prevails. For a communist, peace means communism's conquest of the world. Until then, a state of war, namely the class struggle, will remain. For us to base our negotiations on the premise that the Soviets want peace is unsound.

Even if, in the face of reason, we retain this premise and by treaty successfully eliminate the world's nuclear weapons, the knowledge to produce them will remain. Who could possibly ensure that this knowledge would not be again employed to build weapons? If one power were to rebuild nuclear weapons, it would put the rest of the world in an untenable position. Surely disarmament is a futile road to peace.

Nuclear weapons are with us and

evermore will be. It is up to us to find ways to live with them and neutralize the threat they pose to us. In the past, new advances in weaponry were countered by new technologies and tactics. Tanks, for example, ended the dominance of the machine gun on the battlefield in World War I. Instead of throwing up our hands in despair that nuclear weapons represent the end of the world, we should work to develop ways to counter them. Reagan's SDI proposal, though by no means the whole answer, is a step in the right direction.

Rhetoric about a "nuclear-free world" sounds nice and soothes exaggerated fears of nuclear war. It does not provide real answers to our problems. Treaties give politicians something to display when seeking re-election but offer no guarantees of peace. Human nature will continue to find ways to circumvent treaties — as it always has. Only strength, resolve, and wise policy can secure peace and security.

Brian Frederick is a senior history and Russian major and a columnist for The Battalion.

Dentist jokes end following session with 'Born to Drill'

I went to see my dentist, Dr. Marvin "Born to Drill" Fillmore, for my semi-annual probing, picking and gouging.



Lewis Grizzard

Dr. Fillmore is a beady-eyed little man with the touch of an anvil. His pet peeve is a numb gum.

"You will get Novocaine only if I say you will get Novocaine," is his customary greeting to patients.

Dr. Fillmore is the father of the square-headed drill and the author of the recent article in Dental Floss Weekly titled "I'd Rather Do a Root Canal Than Have Sex."

When I sat down in Dr. Fillmore's chair and was strapped in by his nurse, former East German Olympic weightlifter Hildegard Brooze, who took so many steroids while training she has an extra ear, I noticed an even more sinister smile on his face than usual.

Dr. Fillmore revved his drill, touching it to the bottom of his jackboot, bringing off a dull, gray smoke and a retching, grinding sound — all for effect.

"Is anything wrong?" I asked apprehensively.

"Nothing is wrong," he replied, his left eye twitching as it often does just before he goes for a nerve.

"I just want to remind you of one thing," he went on.

I hadn't paid my bill?

"There will be no more dentist jokes. Do you understand?" he screamed suddenly.

"I am telling all my patients," he continued, both eyes twitching diabolically now, "that you do not have dentists to kick around anymore."

Then I remembered. Johnny Carson did some dentist jokes on "The Tonight Show" recently, and a tooth fairy in New York is suing him for several million dollars.

"Is this about Johnny Carson?" I asked Dr. Fillmore.

"The swine!" he screamed into my face. "His tongue should be cut from his mouth and..."

"But Dr. Fillmore," I interrupted, "you can't blame all your patients for what Johnny Carson said."

"Silence, you cavity-ridden scum!" he shot back.

"For years all of you have made sport and poked fun at my profession. But no more!"

"Now open wide, infidel, and prepare to pay the price!"

Moving quickly, I unfastened the straps from around my chair, head-faked Dr. Fillmore and his drill, stiff-armed Nurse Brooze and dashed out of the office and into the safety of my car.

I'm not certain what I'm going to do about my teeth in the future, but until this Carson thing blows over, I think I'll take them to a chiropractor.

At least those guys have a sense of humor. If they didn't, they wouldn't do those silly television commercials.

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Mail Call

A display of fascism

EDITOR:

Rarely have I seen such fascism so prominently displayed, even in *The Battalion*. Brian Frederick's columns on AIDS and the public schools grate on my mind like the cool rationality of Hitler in his youth. Yet Frederick seems to be gathering followers, as evidenced by the Sept. 22 letter by Don Griffiths, "Put 'em in California."

In both of Frederick's columns there is freedom, but only for the few, the proud, the healthy and the rich. What of the poor? What of the many who don't have the option to travel miles to school? Desegregation and busing were designed to ensure the best education possible. All that is necessary is to pay the teachers more money, to attract intelligent people.

And since when has America been turning its back on the sick? AIDS must be fought like all other diseases — with preventive measures, not by imprisoning the ill. What kind of jelly-spined coward needs to victimize the ill to feel secure — and slanders California in the process?

It seems that both Brian Frederick and Don Griffiths need to either open their eyes to our social goals, or, and I

hope this is not true, they actually would go forward with such measures and believe in them seriously.

Brian Donovan '87

One honest person

EDITOR:

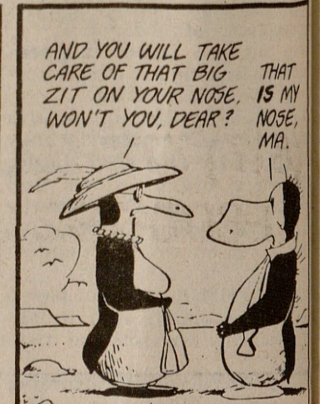
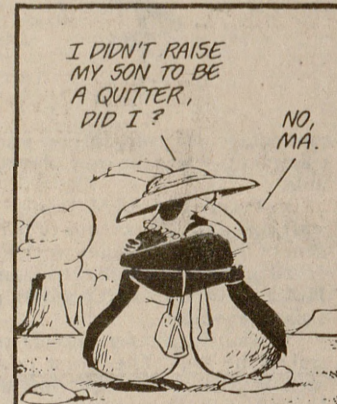
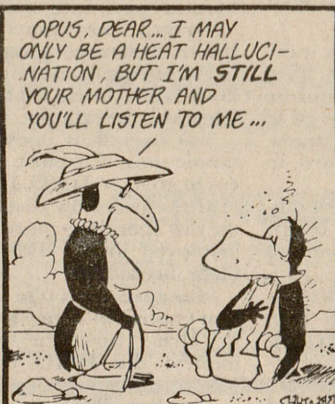
Last week I came out to my car parked in Lot 19 only to find that someone had hit the car and damaged the bumper moulding strip. I drove off in a foul mood, wishing death and destruction on the culprit. During the drive home I noticed that a note had been left on the windshield of my car. I wish to commend Cristina Gonzalez for leaving me the note explaining the damage. The damage was minor, but my good feelings about this honest person are great.

Paul Wellman
associate professor of psychology

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 classification, address and telephone number of the writer.

BLOOM COUNTY

by Berke Breathed



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