

Editorial

World leaders must be flexible to protect peace

While "Star Wars" might be President Reagan's solution to the arms race, his unwillingness to bargain on the defense system jeopardizes the future of the human race.

Going into the summit talks in Geneva this week Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev said that a halt on the development of space-based missile defense is the central issue of the talks. Reagan, however, refuses to budge on the Strategic Defense Initiative.

For progress to be made in arms control, Reagan must be flexible on the Star Wars issue. All other agreements between the two leaders and future U.S.-Soviet relations hinge on Reagan's compromises.

Reagan maintains that the Star Wars system is purely defensive. He claims that its development would not escalate the arms race.

Reagan tells the Soviets that after the United States deploys the SDI, ballistic missiles would be useless and reductions could be made on both sides, said Leo Sartori, a UNL physics and astronomy professor who was a special adviser to the U.S. SALT II delegation in 1979.

The Soviets, on the other hand, view the deployment of the SDI as a chance for the United States to have better first-strike advantage, Sartori said.

A space-based missile defense could be used to destroy any missiles left after the initial U.S. land-based attack, Sartori said.

Maybe the Soviets are familiar with the words of William Jennings Bryan, one of Nebraska's most famous politicians and congressional representatives: "We dare not trust the peace of the world to those who spend their time in getting ready for wars that should never come."

If the United States continues its Star Wars development, an arms buildup will take place. The Soviets think they have no choice but to develop and expand their offensive forces to counteract SDI, Sartori said. Star Wars presents such a threat to the Soviets that they also would escalate their research and development of their own space-based defense system.

By supporting SDI, Reagan advocates a plan that will strain the economies of the United States and the Soviet Union and weaken relations between them.

Americans should urge Reagan to change his attitude. If the Soviets propose an attractive arms-reduction deal, the European allies should pressure Reagan into modifying his SDI stance.

A fair agreement that satisfies both sides would require flexibility by both Reagan and Gorbachev, but the purpose of the summit is to negotiate and compromise.

The Soviet Union already has proposed a 50 percent reduction in strategic arms. However, Reagan threatens the productivity of the summit with his staunch position on Star Wars.

As the two talk about the world's future, they should remember the words of Nebraska's Bryan: "Preparedness provokes war."

U.N. acts as 'coffeehouse' International talk hasn't ended aggression

This last summer the 40th anniversary of the founding of the United Nations went largely unheralded by most Americans.

The convening of the 40th U.N. General Assembly in September also has gone popularly unnoticed, yet it isn't so obvious that the attitude is all that unjustified — evidence of the organization's impotence abounds.



Jim Rogers

The preamble to the U.N. Charter emphasizes the goal of saving "succeeding generations from the scourge of war." Yet aggression still flourishes in the world — and is perhaps more vicious than ever. Even this week's summit between the U.S. and the Soviet Union, given that it is not occurring under the auspices of the United Nations, manifests a belief that the United Nations is essentially irrelevant to the predominant conflict of the last half of this century.

There has been some justified scaling down of the goals of the United Nations during the last generation from those of actually "practic(ing) tolerance and liv(ing) together in peace with one another as good neighbors. . . ." to one where nations can at least come together and talk. (The organization also has made quite impressive gains in health and disaster relief, but that's scarcely mentioned in the preamble.)

Such a scaling-down of vision, however, does not mean that the United Nations is no longer important. It means simply that it is a sadder, but



wisser, institution. In a recent interview, U.S. Ambassador to the U.N. Vernon Walters affirmed that the organization is still important: "First, because people all over the world think it is important, and second, because it is a forum in which every nation, no matter how small, can make its voice heard."

Granting that the United Nations is important does not entail bringing a wide-eye naivete to the organization. The West cannot allow itself to be sedated by the narcotic belief that talking is necessarily a substitution for conflict.

Also, problems abound for the United Nations in the immediate future, not the least of which is the conceptual difficulties the organization faces in outlining a proper response to the specter of terrorism spawned by claims of national identity and a right to self-determination.

Yet such a claim seems patently absurd. No one can reasonably believe, for example, that Uganda was better off "self-determining" under Idi Amin or that Kampuchea (Cambodia) guaran-

teed more rights under Pol Pot and the Khmer Rouge.

Also, there is substantial ambiguity within U.N. documents as to which people actually are to enjoy this right to self-determination while other groups have only the right to protection as "minorities."

Because the United Nations is unable or unwilling to resolve this basic ambiguity, it actually may serve to heighten tension and violence in the world by terrorist groups that have proclaimed themselves prosecutors of their "rightful claim" for self-determination.

Instead of its original messianic and absurdly grandiose vision, the United Nations today has more manageable goals of aiding nations with emergency needs and providing a sort of coffeehouse for the world's nations to come and talk, argue and condemn. But then, who laments that the heated discussions at a coffeehouse pass by largely unnoticed by the rest of the world?

All is, in fact, as it should be. Rogers is a UNL graduate economics student and a law student.

Soviets not just spouting off U.S.S.R. still aims at Lenin

In a century of steel and war, Switzerland has made industries of chocolate and the pursuit of peace. Above-the-fray Switzerland thinks of itself as unoffending.

But it has much to answer for: It was Lenin's haven until Germany sent him in a sealed train to Russia to ignite the revolution that would take Russia out of World War I. Germany used Lenin (in Churchill's phrase) "like a typhoid bacillus." It found the disease in squeaky-clean Switzerland.

While in London, Soviet First Lady Raisa Gorbachev vetoed a visit to Marx's grave in Hightower Cemetery, preferring instead to visit the crown jewels in the Tower. But she will go as a pilgrim to Lenin's Geneva haunts. She will celebrate the man who vowed to purge Russia of "harmful insects" and ordered "shooting on the spot one out of every 10 found idling." Lenin pioneered modern genocide by ignoring individual guilt, enforcing collective guilt against "class enemies," also known as "harmful insects."

The Gorbachev family's division of labor is between theory and practice. She is a university lecturer in "Marxist-Leninist philosophy," which is an oxymoron. He is concerned with practice. While she is genuflecting at Geneva's 10 Rue du Foyer, where Lenin lived with Krupskaya, Mikhail Gorbachev will, we are asked to believe, be seeking world tranquillity, to enable him to build communism in one country.

The theory, advanced by many Western intellectuals, is that the Soviet elite does not mean what it says when it says, as it constantly does, that it embraces Lenin. He did not believe there could be communism in just one country. Lenin said: "As long as capitalism and socialism exist, we can not live in peace. In the end, one or the other will triumph." However, there never is a shortage of Westerners eager

to assure the West that Soviet leaders do not mean the menacing things they say, that what they really mean is . . .

Today's theory is that Gorbachev wants a respite from the arms race, and especially from one involving technologically exotic defense systems, so he can "solve his economic problems." But it is absurd to say that military spending is causing the regime's economic problems. Military spending is the regime's raison d'etre. The regime has never given priority to the comforts of the masses. It has never made a serious effort to provide a Cuisinart in every apartment, or even a separate apartment for every family.



George Will

Yet the West's wishful thinkers insist: Gorbachev wants to build communism. Which means . . . what?

In "Travesties," Tom Stoppard's antic play that turns on the fact that Lenin, James Joyce and the Dada artist Tristan Tzara were in Zurich during 1917-18, a character is told that a "social revolution" has erupted in Russia. He asks: "A social revolution? Unaccompanied women smoking at the opera, that sort of thing?" He is told: "Not precisely, sir."

Even communists have had trouble saying precisely, or even vaguely, what communism is supposed to be. Lenin said, with nice concision: "Communism is Soviet power plus electrification of the whole country." If Lenin was right, communism has come to Russia. Is Leninism right? Ask Raisa Gorbachev, who teaches the stuff.

Lenin liked electrification but loved terror, and said: First things first. Trotsky said, "We shall not enter into the kingdom of socialism in white gloves on a polished floor." Lenin said you do not make an omelet without breaking eggs. He established an egg-breaker: Cheka, the secret police. By 1919, Cheka was killing 1,000 people a month for political offenses. In the preceding 80 years, the number of executions in the Soviet empire had averaged 17 a year.

When the First Lady of the Soviet state makes pilgrimages to places made sacred by association with Lenin, she reaffirms the iconographic role of the man who unified the theory and practice of mass murder. She is not a peasant; she is what passes for a philosopher in a society where the humanities are illegal. She knows what Lenin said and did, and what she is doing. Let us do her and her husband the honor of taking them seriously when they say they take Lenin seriously, even reverently.

In 1907, Lenin wrote to his mother from Geneva, saying he was weary, but was getting a "wonderful rest" in restful Switzerland: "No people and nothing to do is the best thing for me." Indeed. But by March 1908, he had his pep back. He told a Geneva meeting that during the Paris Commune, the proletariat was guilty of "excessive magnanimity. . . . It should have exterminated its enemies." His placid Swiss listeners probably murmured, "Well, of course, by 'exterminated' he really just means . . ."

We know what he meant. And we know what Soviet leaders mean when they say they are Lenin's children.

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