

Peacetime

Congress needs to put end to Cold War

Canada's announced withdrawal of its forces from Germany and has European NATO members worried that the United States will follow suit.

They have little to fear from our shortsighted leaders. Canadian officials told their NATO allies that all 6,600 Canadian troops will go home as part of Canada's peace dividend. The withdrawal represents a \$1.9 billion savings from the \$10.8 billion Canadian defense budget for 1992-93.

The British and German governments appear to be the most upset that the move symbolizes a new North American isolationism, which will soon leave Europe to fall back on age-old petty rivalries.

But the U.S. defense program, led by pork-barreling Congress members and fed by the military-industrial complex, won't be trimmed down as easily.

The Pentagon has been at work lately putting together scenarios detailing outrageous future conflicts that would require continuing our Cold War armada. Congress is slow to close down any bases or programs that would put constituents out of jobs in the recession.

Some are arguing for a renewed public-works program to lift the nation out of the economic doldrums. It already exists. President Bush is requesting \$286 billion in 1993 for the program, which will produce weapons and warriors.

Planned reductions will shrink the defense budget to an inflation-adjusted figure of \$255 billion by 1997. If Pentagon officials have their way, Europe doesn't have to worry about losing the American occupation force.

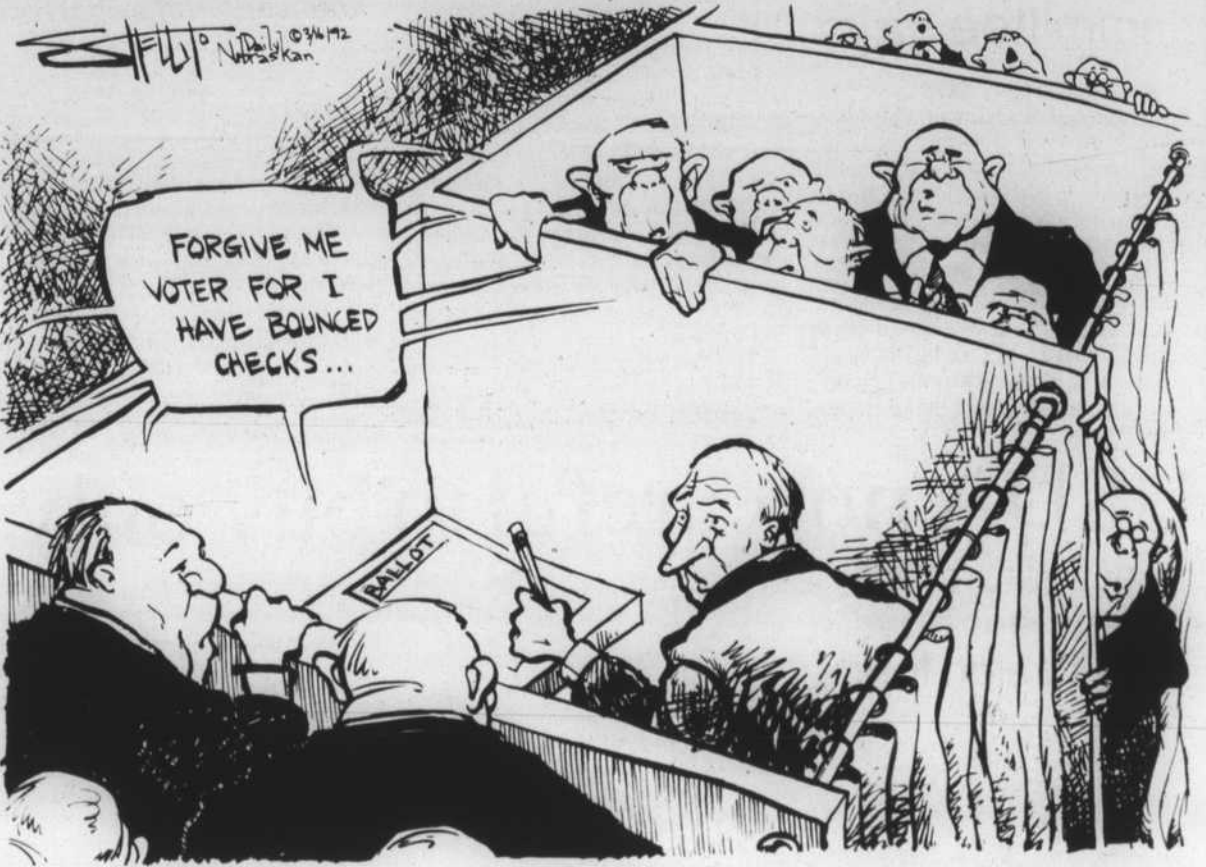
No thinking person is arguing for no military or even a Canadian-sized force. But \$255 billion is simply ludicrous. While members of congress know this, they never have been prone to do what was good for the nation over what was good for their chances of re-election.

It does take time to convert a wartime economy to a peacetime economy. But a mere 10 percent reduction over the next five years will not do while our debt grows and our economic competitors try to shove American firms off the high ground.

Canada doesn't have to consider a large defense program because of the American commitment to the defense of the entire world. The United States doesn't have the luxury of a big brother to watch over it. But what our leaders evidently have forgotten is there really is no force to defend against.

Canada has recognized the end of the Cold War. They don't believe that maintaining peace in Europe requires a force strong enough to battle the military myth of the Red Army streaming across Germany. It is past time for our leaders to do the same.

While total withdrawal of U.S. troops from Europe is not in our best interest, a sizable reduction is.



ALAN PHELPS

Nobler mission debatable

Rep. Fred Grandy, R-Iowa, made the news recently as a member of the House of Representatives ethics committee that investigated the big, bad check-bouncing scandal.

Fred has come a long way. Readers will recall that our little Mr. Grandy used to play the character of "Gopher" on the long-running "Love Boat" television series.

I can remember the days when "Love Boat" was on. I used to watch it with my family. I grew used to the way there were always three plots on every episode, and they all almost always ended up with happy cruisers.

At the time, I never would've guessed that Gopher would someday be a leader of Iowa and a member of the prestigious but oxymoronish House ethics committee.

The only show I watch with any regularity anymore is "Star Trek: The Next Generation." I wonder if one of the characters on Star Trek one day will sit in Congress.



Basically, while the Enterprise crew seems intent on learning about other cultures on faraway planets, the Princess crew seemed intent on not losing any of the passengers' luggage.

Actually, the two TV shows are alike in a lot of ways. Both are about ships on missions to distant places, although one travels the cold depths of the galaxy and the other floats around in the warm waters off the coast of Mexico.

Parallels exist, however, in many aspects of these, two of America's greatest shows of all time.

The Mission: Capt. Jean-Luc Picard says at the beginning of every episode of Star Trek that the mission of the Enterprise is to explore strange new worlds, etc., etc. The Enterprise is a peaceful ship that zooms around the galaxy making friends and cooperating.

The mission of the Pacific Princess isn't stated as explicitly at the beginning of every Love Boat episode. However, by listening to the theme song, one gets the idea: Come aboard, we're expecting you, blah blah blah, the Love Boat... soon will be making another run, blah blah, something about "life's sweetest reward," love won't hurt anymore, blah blah.

The Pacific Princess usually goes to a few specific destinations along the coast of Mexico, such as Puerto Vallarta. Gavin McCloud, who played Capt. Stubing, didn't have the sophisticated communications technology on hand to contact the local residents as Picard has, although occasionally he might have "hailed" the port authority.

Basically, while the Enterprise crew

weren't any phasers on board the Princess, so Doc never really had the chance.

Crusher also has a son named Wesley, who is almost as annoying as Stubing's kid, Vikki, who used to be on the Love Boat. But while Wesley is a computer whiz who entered Starfleet, Vikki was a spoiled brat who usually got lost in Puerto Vallarta.

People they meet: The Enterprise encounters many alien cultures on its travels in the Federation and beyond. Some are more advanced than others, but all have knowledge to share with the Enterprise.

The Princess carried hundreds of passengers, but they were all from the planet Earth and wore old clothing. The crew of the Princess were friends with a lot of washed-up comedians who regularly made the voyage to Mexico.

Charro, a bubbly Latin beauty, was on the Pacific Princess a lot. There is no one like Charro on the Enterprise, luckily.

Minorities: The Enterprise is a very progressive ship of the future, where all people can live up to their potentials without facing stereotypes. An android, Data, is very valuable to the mission. A Klingon, Worf, is accepted as a friend by all.

Isaac, the bartender, is the only minority I remember from the Love Boat. Although he was a good bartender, and could be at every bar on the ship simultaneously, he never saved the Princess from certain destruction. He always had a steady supply of paper umbrellas on hand, and he had a cool costume to wear in the Pirates' Cove.

The ship: The Enterprise is capable of speeds a little over Warp 9. It is a self-contained city, with schools, recreation areas, living quarters, a park and Whoopi Goldberg.

The Pacific Princess was also a self-contained city, although it was designed for much shorter missions. It was not capable of moving faster than the speed of light, as it still was trapped in the laws of the Einsteinian universe.

The big question is which is the better ship.

The Enterprise spreads goodwill from the Federation of Planets to unknown societies. The Princess evidently cranks out congressmen named Fred.

You decide.

Phelps is a sophomore news-editorial major, the Daily Nebraskan opinion page editor and a columnist.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Cleaning complaints not shared

Mr. Kane, it took you and your organization how long to clean up the Sports Center ("Cleaning up own messes saves time, trouble," DN, March 13)? Eight hours, and you had 50 people working! Even if this was the first time you (and I'll assume your group) ever cleaned the sports center, I can't help but wonder, what in heaven's name were you doing for eight hours?

Perhaps I can save you some time in the future. Instead of running up and down taking the mop to the bucket, why not take the bucket to the mop? What a concept! But after eight hours I can imagine how tired you must have been, too exhausted to lift a bucket of heavy water several flights (Boo Hoo). Also, try mopping before you sweep. That way you won't have "to be careful not to sweep through a

spilled malt or soda and drag it through the whole row, making more of a mess to mop up."

Mr. Kane, please consider the implications of my next sentence carefully. Half of the people in half the time. Over the past three years I've helped clean that place nine times. My group supplies 28 people to clean, and we average four hours. I checked our records to be sure.

To conclude your thought-provoking letter, you suggested we, the readers, "think about who cleans it up." Well, I did, and I think someone who whines as much as you ought not to do it again.

Troy P. Christensen
junior
mechanical engineering

EDITORIAL POLICY

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