

# opinions

The Daily Collegian  
Tuesday, April 19

## editorial opinion

### Nix the MX

President Reagan just can't take no for an answer. And in the case of the MX missile, his stubbornness could lead the country closer to the nightmare of nuclear confrontation.

The controversial deployment of the MX missile has been debated for the past decade and Congress has rejected every previous attempt to implement the missile program. The most recent defeat for the MX missile came last December when the House voted 245-176 not to give money for the production of the first five MX missiles.

After the defeat, Reagan formed the Scowcroft Commission to propose a new basing plan for the missile and also to make the new land-based missile system more acceptable to Congress.

The commission did just that in a report released last week.

The commission — whose members included four former secretaries of defense — made two basic recommendations.

The first is a repackaging of the MX missile program. The commission came up with a proposal to put 100 MX missiles (each armed with 10 warheads) into existing Minuteman missile silos in Wyoming and Nebraska by 1986.

The commission apparently found little danger in advocating the placement of the nation's largest, most destructive, multi-warhead missiles in the same silos that Reagan has warned are vulnerable to attack.

The commission's second recommendation calls for the development of the "Midgetman" missile — a small, single warhead missile to be deployed by 1993.

Because the missile is mobile and contains a single warhead, the missile appeals to many in Congress. Even arms-control advocates in Congress — who have steadfastly opposed the MX missile — favor the Midgetman system because it would limit the number of warheads on missiles.

Reagan — political operator that he is — has packaged the debatable MX proposal with a sensible and needed Midgetman missile. Reagan figures that no harm can be done by proposing the package deal to Congress.

Reagan is wrong.

While Reagan continues to argue that the MX is needed to protect the United States,

even his own commission saw through the rhetoric and clearly labeled the MX the first-strike capability weapon it is.

The MX missile has one clear purpose: to threaten Soviet land-based missiles and command centers. But the missile could not be protected if the Soviets strike first, and the Soviets could be tempted to launch such an attack.

The MX missile is not, as Reagan has argued, a way to safeguard U.S. missile silos.

Rep. Joseph P. Addabbo, D-New York, who led the fight against the MX missile last year, makes a convincing argument against deployment: "Basing in Minuteman III silos was tested three years ago and found vulnerable. If that's true, all we'd do is put a \$20- to \$30-billion weapon into vulnerable holes and leave the Russians with the impression that it is a first-strike weapon."

Reagan is maneuvering this country into a direct nuclear confrontation with the Soviets. And the MX missile would lead to escalation of the nuclear arms race.

Reagan also wants to use the MX plan as a bargaining chip in arms control talks with the Soviets.

Under the administration's version of arms control, Reagan hopes to force the Soviets into an arms control agreement by holding the threat of the MX missile deployment over their heads.

But building more missiles is not the way to reach an accord in the arms race — it is a way to escalate the already uncontrolled nuclear arms race.

There is little difference between the latest MX plan and previous proposals — except that the latest plan places the missiles in fixed silos, making them more vulnerable to destruction.

What Congress should do is separate the MX production proposal from the development of the Midgetman missile.

The money wasted on the MX proposals takes away from real defense needs; more useful military programs have to be deferred to accommodate the new missiles.

As for the MX missile proposal, the strategic arguments for it are still weak.

The MX fiasco has been around for a decade. Congress should put an end to a \$20 billion plan for destruction once and for all.

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### Fighting for the freeze

"The destructive capability of nuclear arms is simply overwhelming. We have unleashed the strongest force in the universe. To overcome it amounts to a challenge that literally defies imagination."

— Jan Lodal, Former Director of Program Analysis, National Security Council

The nation now faces great uncertainties in developing a workable defense system. Worried about a possible loss of military prowess, the country also faces unrelenting Soviet threats of new military moves.

But when President Reagan stated last month that, militarily, the Soviets boast a "margin of superiority," the condition of the country's defense system has come seriously into question.

In only a few days a nuclear freeze resolution will go before Congress. In the proposal lies a message of moderation — an attempt to convince Soviet leaders that military equality is the optimal solution to world peace.

As part of the recent Undergraduate Student Government presidential elections, University students had the opportunity to vote on a proposed nuclear freeze referendum. The proposal asked for a halt of

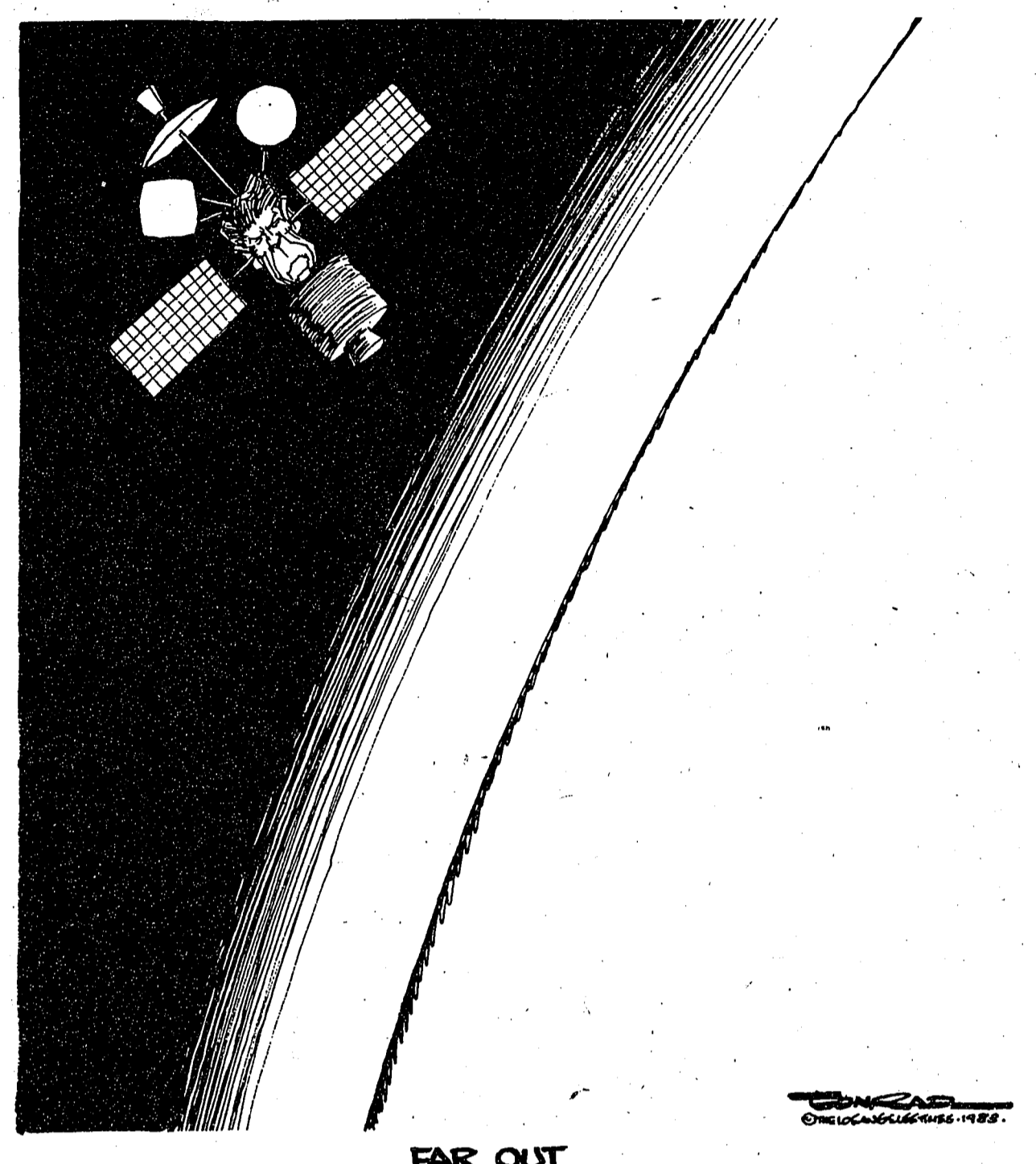
nuclear weapons development in an attempt to improve national and international security.

About 65 percent of the voting student body favored such a freeze. This University support was forwarded to U.S. Sens. John Heinz and Arlen Specter earlier this month. And the nation is in agreement.

According to a recent Time-Yankelovich poll, President Reagan has lost the confidence of many Americans with his defense budget. As he continues to fight to sustain increases in military spending, Americans continue to oppose increases — 62 percent of the voters polled said "substantial cuts can be made without jeopardizing national security."

Securing passage of the nuclear freeze resolution will be a first, symbolic step toward halting the arms race. And it's the only step — the step one country must take first — if our ultimate goal is to avoid nuclear catastrophe.

If the U.S. government is truly to be the voice of the people, Congress must heed the messages concerning the nuclear freeze referendum and act accordingly. It must fight for the freeze.



## reader opinion

### REAL challenge

This is a letter from a shuttle-toting (only quite eaters call them birds) and supposedly non REAL man. It's also an invitation to put your ego and wallet where your obviously unenlightened mouth is.

I challenge you to a duel. Raquets at 10 pieces — a case of brew to the loser. The proposed match will be the best of three games to 15. I'll GIVE you 12 in each. Or don't REAL men accept charity? Just for fun and editor-willing, we'll publish the results right here for all your friends to see.

Surely, a REAL man won't turn down a chance to win a case of so many a drink or the opportunity to put a lowly quiche eater in his rightful place.

Besides, we badminton players try our best to lose, right?

The name is Curt Henry. The number is 865-0068. Bring a crying towel.

Curt A. Henry, 9th-aerospace engineering April 18

### Uncheerful

I can understand the cheerweeding letter because my story directly relates.

A friend convinced me to try out for Penn State's cheerleaders. She was good, but she got hurt and still didn't make it. I, on the other hand did and am not too thrilled about it.

Sometimes I stop and wonder how it happened. Could it have been my great experience thought I have no experience?

Maybe it was my adoring fans. Then again, it could have been that warm glow and extra color I gave that made me stand out among my teammates.

I guess recruitment is needed everywhere. Nevertheless, all the excitement of being a cheerleader doesn't fascinate me at all; as a matter of fact, I wouldn't care if I wasn't a cheerleader at all.

But since I am, I guess I have to deal with it.

I would, however, like everyone to

### Bad attitude

I would like to point out a few fallacies and irrelevant points in Mr. Simkins's letter titled "Worse elsewhere."

The first irrelevant point is Mr. Simkins's claim that the African National Congress is "unashamedly Marxist in sympathy and thought process." My first response is, "so what?"

Unfortunately, the reactionary attitude at Penn State is such that apartheid is acceptable if the alternative is Marxism. The truth is that any majority rule government would result in some form of socialism. This is not difficult to understand given the blatant economic exploitation of blacks by most whites in capitalist South Africa.

The black man in South Africa is nothing more than a labor resource. In order to increase productivity he is separated from his family, often housed at the workplace (sounds like the antebellum South) and paid subsistence wages. All this is done in the name of increased profits. Why else would multinationals, like Ford Motor Co., be located in South Africa?

Capitalism and racism go hand in hand in South Africa so it is no wonder blacks wish to eliminate both. The "Marxist threat" can not be used as an excuse to deny Africans social economic justice.

A second fallacy is that Chief Buthe is the most influential black in South Africa today. Unquestionably the most influential leader of all oppressed peoples in South Africa is the imprisoned president of the ANC, Nelson Mandela. If Mr. Simkins doesn't believe so, I urge him to ask any black South African.

Thirdly, Mr. Simkins would have us believe that Chief Buthe's silence about the ANC is a condemnation of the organization. The truth is that any

open support of the ANC by anyone, black or white, is a crime punishable by death. Silence about the ANC is not a sign of condemnation; on the contrary, it is a sign of support.

By listing acts of persecution in other areas of Africa while ignoring persecution elsewhere in the world, Mr. Simkins implies that under a black government conditions would be worse in South Africa. By doing this he insults the African people and tries to divert attention from the issue of South African racism. Nothing could be worse than apartheid, and majority rule is the only alternative.

In closing I would like to defend the ANC by pointing out that it is the only political organization that condemns racism and supports equal rights for ALL South Africans.

Philip T. Vilaro, 6th-foreign service April 18

### Spirit booster

Kudos to Mike Fellei for his fair, yet tender, treatment of the Cleveland Indians, a team I have cheered and suffered with for more than 20 years.

It is reassuring to know that the Collegian will, if only occasionally, turn its myopic eyes away from the Pirates and Phillies (and Yankees, I dare say) to bring news from some other teams.

Being a graduate student, life tends to get burdensome, even in springtime. Still, when baseball comes around, it's time for the Indians and every win, melted out one at a time, boosts my spirits (when you're a Cleveland fan, every win is appreciated and savored, unlike jaded Phils or Yankees fans).

P.S. Would you please move Kelly Fracassa's column over to the comics section, where it belongs? He may be college-educated, but knowledge and understanding do not appear to be his forte.

Ira Beckerman, graduate-anthropology April 14

# What everybody should know about the MX

Average people — including students — are usually being told that the arms race is too complicated for them to understand. Certainly, President Reagan and his experts would be happier if you'd just accept what they say and forget about it. But you don't have to do that.

While it is difficult to understand the acronym-laced arguments of the "experts," to understand Reagan's recent decision on MX missile basing you don't need to be an "expert" — you just need common sense.

"The right missile at the right time," is what Reagan has called the MX missile. But Congress refused to fund production of the first five missiles on Dec. 19, 1982 because they rejected Reagan's proposed "Dense Pack" base for the missile.

These are the same silos Defense Secretary Caspar Weinberger has told Congress and the public could be destroyed in a Soviet first strike. But Congress insisted that the MX be a "secure force" and refused to fund these schemes. So, in December 1982 Reagan submitted the "Dense Pack" plan, which he claimed would make the MX a "secure force."

But if Reagan were truly interested in making the MX secure, why didn't he propose "Dense Pack" in the first place? Why did he ever propose basing the MX in existing silos that he also tells us are vulnerable? Perhaps the reason was best summarized by Richard DeLauer, the Under Secretary of Defense for Research and Engineering:

"We wanted to build the MX — that was given," he said. "There was no survivable basing scheme we could count on right now and so what we said was we'll put 'em in existing holes (silos)."

In his Dec. 11 radio address, Reagan said, "the basing mode is not an issue... what we need now is a clear positive vote on the missile itself..." It would seem that the "basing mode" is the issue, not the basing mode.

The MX missile itself carries 10 highly accurate and very powerful nuclear warheads. They are so accurate that one launched from the other side of the world would have a good chance of landing inside Beaver Stadium.

Just as easily, the same warheads could land on Soviet missile silos or command centers. This ability makes the MX one of the "nuclear war-fighting" weapons that the Reagan people believe the United States must have. This ability also makes the MX a first strike weapon, which is a weapon that could be used first against Soviet missiles in their silos.

According to Air Force Chief of Staff General Lee Allen, this "would be devastating to them. They would have to consider a

U.S. first strike whether we think we would do that or not."

They certainly would because 74 percent of their warheads are carried by missiles protected in land-based silos. These silos are vulnerable because they are at a fixed location on land and, using satellites, we know exactly where they are.

During a crisis, Soviet leaders might conclude that launching these missiles was the only way to keep their warheads from being destroyed by the MX. Far from reducing Soviet incentive to strike first, the MX would be the best reason they've ever had for striking first.

Indeed, if the MX were only intended to be used in retaliation, then Reagan should never have proposed basing it in existing Minuteman silos — the same silos his Defense Secretary says are vulnerable to a

threshold thus making it harder for the United States to use nuclear weapons first without suffering Soviet retaliation. Finally, the theory predicts that the higher nuclear threshold will allow the Soviets to be more "adventurous."

Proponents of this policy are quick to overlook the fact that in 1961, a vastly inferior Soviet Union tried to put nuclear missiles in Cuba — an adventure that brought the world close to the brink. Nor do these proponents explain exactly how an MX missile will help us get the Soviets out of Afghanistan or Eastern Europe.

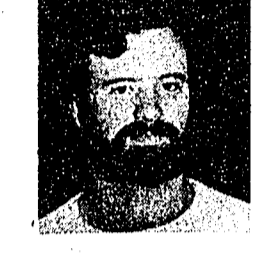
Rather than a world where nuclear weapons are less likely to be used, Reagan wants to give us a world where the use of nuclear weapons is very likely.

The MX is supposed to add to our deterrent by being able to survive a Soviet first strike, thus preventing them from even considering such an attack. But as we have seen, the administration is not really interested in making the MX a "secure force." Moreover, by threatening the bulk of the Soviet deterrent, the MX increases exactly what it is supposed to decrease: threat of a Soviet first strike.

Therefore, the MX should not be built because it cannot contribute to the strong nuclear deterrent President Reagan wants to build. The MX could weaken deterrence if the Soviets adopt a policy of launch-on-warning. This would increase the possibility of an accidental nuclear war by entrusting the decision to launch Soviet missiles to a computer.

Though dangerous, the Soviets might adopt the policy because it would be the cheapest way to counter the MX (as opposed to building a mobile missile) and also most worrisome to the United States. Such a policy, spurred by the deployment of the MX missile, would gamble the security of the United States on the reliability of Soviet computers.

We are like two people who hate each other sitting at either end of a rowboat in the middle of the ocean. Rocking the boat to try to throw the other overboard is the best way to capsize. But we can't afford to capsize, because we only have one boat.

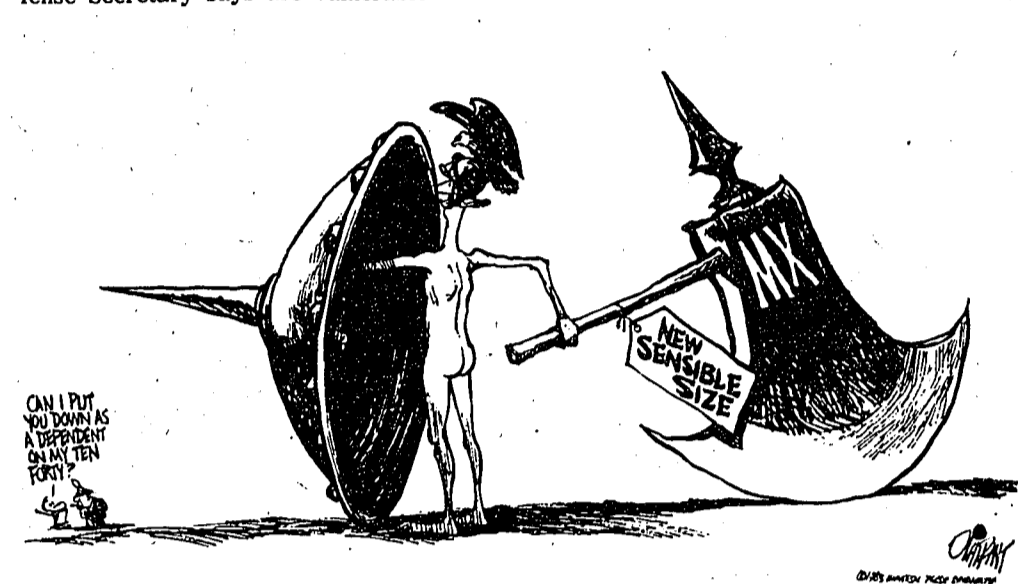


John Dougherty

Despite this setback, Reagan remains determined to build the MX. On April 11 the president's advisory commission recommended basing 100 MX missiles in existing Minuteman silos in Wyoming and Nebraska. In addition, they recommended that we develop a new, mobile missile that would be smaller than the MX and carry a single warhead. These plans will soon be presented to Congress.

Is this a good idea? If it is, the proposal should be logical and should not be contradictory. To reach a decision, we need to review Reagan's handling of the MX missile issue.

In his Nov. 22, 1982 speech on arms control, Reagan said, "Some may question what modernizing our military has to do with peace. Well, as I explained earlier, a secure force keeps others from threatening us and that keeps the peace. The basing mode is the key to making the MX missile a 'secure force' — secure from destruction in a Soviet sneak attack or 'first strike.' Theoretically, a secure force of American nuclear weapons deters Soviet attack by



the contrast, the United States does not face a similar threat from the Soviet SS-18 missile because only 31 percent of our warheads are carried by land-based missiles based in fixed silos. The bulk of our warheads are carried on invulnerable submarines at sea and on airborne bombers. The vulnerability of our land-based Minuteman missile silos is a problem, but putting the MX in those vulnerable silos is not a solution.

Even without a crisis, the threat posed by

way to get them deployed. He thinks we need them to maintain our policy of nuclear first use.

This policy holds that to deter the Soviets we must be able to threaten to use nuclear weapons first in a local or regional conflict. For this threat to be credible, the theory continues, we must have the ability to destroy Soviet nuclear weapons at intercontinental range if need be. Hence the attractiveness of the MX.

The growing Soviet nuclear strength worries Reagan because it raises the nuclear



**the daily Collegian**

Tuesday, April 19, 1983

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Judith Smith  
Business Manager

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An Evening With  
**ARTHUR WASKOW**

One of the prominent voices in contemporary Judaism. Editor of *Menorah*, a monthly journal of Jewish renewal

April 21, 1983  
7:30 pm

Eisenhower Chapel — Frizzel Room

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Tuesday, April 19

Sports: women's lacrosse vs. Lock Haven, 6 p.m.  
Gamma Sigma meeting, 6 p.m., Room 202 HUB.  
P.S. Singers meeting, 7 p.m., Room 111 Chambers.  
P.S. Water Ski Club meeting, 7 p.m., Room 169 Willard.  
Circle K meeting, 7 p.m., Rooms 323-324 HUB.  
P.S. Science Fiction Society meeting, 7 p.m., Room 317 Boucke.  
Sigma Iota Epsilon meeting, 7 p.m., Room 319 Boucke.  
PSOC Mountaineering Div. meeting, 7 p.m., Room 109 Boucke.  
College Democrats meeting, 7:30 p.m., Room 318 Willard.  
College Republicans meeting, 7:30 p.m., Room 106 Boucke.  
Youth for Energy Independence meeting, 7:30 p.m., Room 314 Boucke.  
Lion Ambassadors Burrows Committee meeting, 7:30 p.m., Room 204 Boucke.

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