

opponent. However, if you are ahead, there is no need to negotiate".

But there is a need to negotiate. The arms race hurts.

In the Soviet Union, the land of central planning, Ivan stands in a long line to buy a toaster. Why? Because there are only so many factories in the country and some of them have to build missile guidance systems. There is growing evidence that the increasing pressure on the Soviet Union to pour ever more of its gross national product into defense will eventually drive the whole system into something akin to bankruptcy. This in itself could destabilize the country, destroying the balance of power and inviting catastrophe.

Americans, for all of their relative affluence, are often astounded when they come to Canada. The see clean, well lit streets, good public facilities, free medical services and ask, "Where does all this money come from?"

The place where Canada's money is not invested, for the most part, is in things like aircraft carriers that have crews which exceed the population of some Canadian cities.

What's more, this tremendous investment in arms and technology does not even win friends. The U.S. arms supply to Iran was virtually a bottomless pit, but when the collective consciousness of the country

socialist features built into it. So why is communism the American's enemy? Is the Russian system more inefficient, more repressive, more secular? Maybe. Maybe not.

It hardly constitutes a moral basis for risking a holocaust, or sacrificing the nation's young.

The irony is that the basic profound differences which separated the systems have largely faded away. All that is left is a great void of fear and distrust.

But Reagan with his '50s haircut and tunnel vision, continues to see Red peril. The real menace, of course, is the growing division between two opposing camps, neither of which has anything approaching a moral foundation.

The bill for all this madness is the inflation and debt that threatens to lead the economy of the United States and, through close economic association, Canada, into a quagmire.

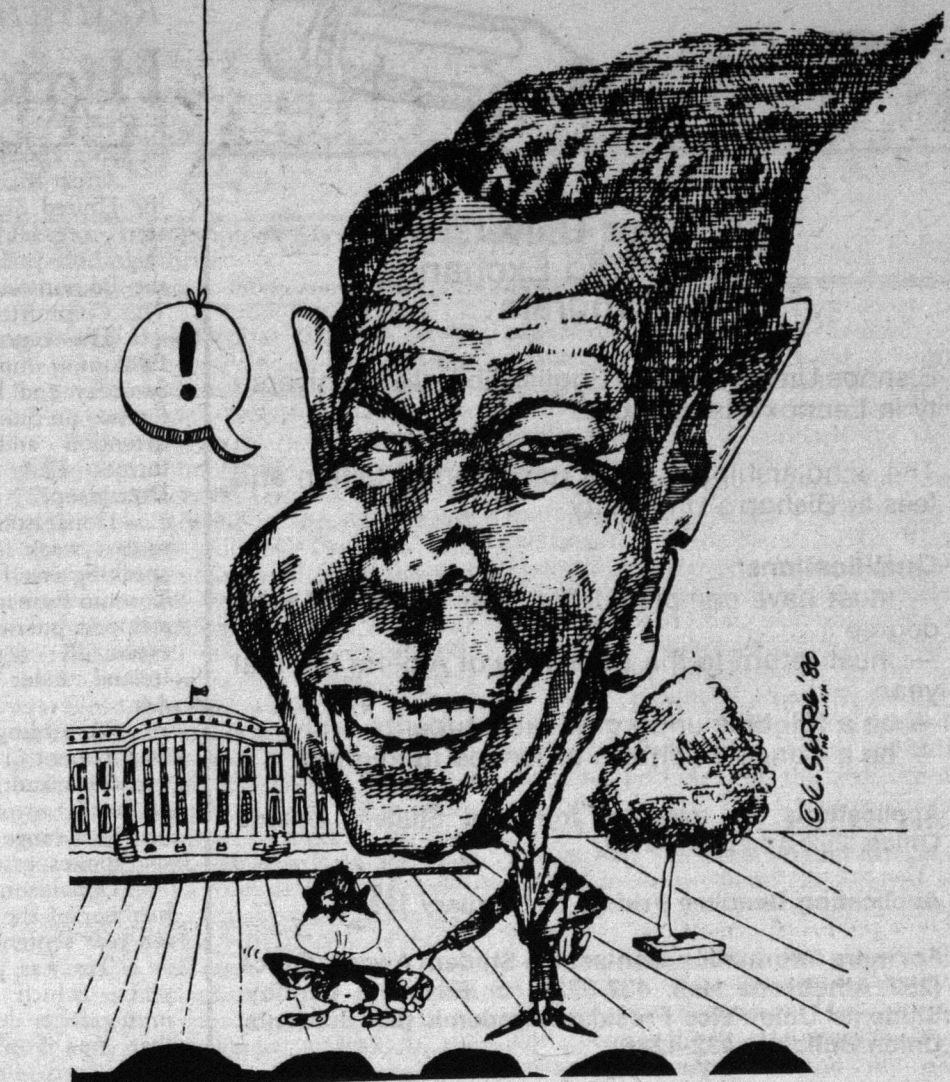
To combat this, Reagan has employed an imaginative supply side economic theory which was first sketched out on a piece of toilet paper by a man named Arthur Laffer. The pity is that it wasn't flushed.

Reagan once told a reporter that the role he most coveted was the one for which George C. Scott won an Oscar in "Patton". Patton was the Second World War General who had to be restrained from marching right across all of Germany and into Moscow. He was convinced that he had learned exactly how to take Russian from studying Napoleon's errors and actually entertained an ambition to do so. Patton was a talented and brilliant man who is often characterized as being born several centuries too late.

There probably isn't any connection between Reagan's aspirations as an actor and his current frame of mind as a world leader, we should hope.

What cannot be said about Reagan is that he is in any sense a failure as a politician. He projects strength and competence. He has the popular support and respect of a large majority of the U.S. population of all ages and social classes. Many Canadians admire him as well.

Reagan, in fact, seems to grow younger and more vigorous in the job. There is no other world leader who can



possess his skills of human persuasion without seeming overbearing or tyrannical. Reagan just comes across as a nice guy, who is full of good will. In that sense, he is a true statesman.

Reagan has the potential to be, possibly one of the most effective world leaders in history. The timing, however, is off. Reagan is exactly the right man, but, like Patton, at exactly the wrong time.

What is worse, he has assumed office just at the point when there is a strong backlash from a period of popular

liberalism. It has left the United States nationalistic and prone to irrational and simplistic patriotism.

When Ronald Reagan leaves office, it will likely have become a world of sharper class divisions, receding human rights and undoubtedly, two opposing piles of arms spiralling madly out of control.

Perhaps that is why a remark made by sometimes activist Shirley MacLaine becomes hard to forget, once you hear it. "Ronald Reagan", the actress said unequivocally, "is the most dangerous man in the world."

t's his substance

turned anti-American, it didn't mean a thing.

The rationale for Reagan's foreign policy, which one U.S. Senator calls "spewing arms all over the place," seems to be nothing more than the old Cold War fear of communism. It was an irrational fear to start with and continues to be so. In Reagan's case it has become pathological.

The Western world is running out of reasons to hate communism. The Soviet type does not work. The Chinese are friends. There is not a single well functioning democracy anywhere without

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