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LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS LOBBIES AGAINST SDI

"League mounts campaign to stop SDI" is the headline on a current League of Women Voters publication. It provides conclusive proof that this organization, though pretending to be "nonpartisan," is just another liberal anti-defense lobby group working against the Reagan Administration.

The publication makes no pretense of objectivity. Let's examine the League's "four fundamental reasons" against SDI.

"SDI will accelerate the arms race." The League claims that the Soviets will respond to SDI on "two tracks," first by developing defensive weapons of their own, and second by building more offensive weapons to "overwhelm" SDI.

The truth is that the Soviets are building both offensive and defensive systems as fast as they can bleed the financing out of their economy. Nothing we do or don't do has the slightest effect in altering their goal of offensive and defensive superiority.

The Soviets have spent more money on their defensive systems than we have on ours, and also more money than they have spent on their own offensive weapons. As Defense Secretary Caspar Weinberger said, we can't afford NOT to build SDI because we know the Soviets are going ahead with their own defensive programs.

The boogeyman that the Soviets can "overwhelm" our SDI with more offensive weapons was exposed by Dartmouth physicist Dr. Robert Jastrow. If we build 100 SDI satellites, the Soviets would have to build an additional 5,000 expensive ICBMs. If the Soviets did this, we could counteract them with only 100 additional SDI satellites.

The cost factors of that "acceleration" are so favorable to the United States and unfavorable to the U.S.S.R. that it would be irrational for the Soviets to do it.

"SDI will violate the ABM Treaty." Our Defense Department and State Department lawyers have reexamined the ABM Treaty and concluded that this is false. The ABM Treaty prohibits only ABM systems "currently" in use in 1972.

The joker word in the ABM Treaty is "currently." The American negotiators tried to

get the Russians to agree to ban "future" defensive systems, but they obstinately refused.

"SDI will not work." After this bold, unprovable statement, the League then waffles its claim by asserting that there is "doubt" about the "effectiveness" of SDI and that a "perfect" defense is not possible.

The Defense Department test on June 10, 1984, which accomplished the intercept of a missile in space, proved that we have achieved the technology for the most difficult part of a defensive system. If we can do that, we certainly can build SDI.

The League inserted its own joker word in the argument by creating the strawman of a "perfect" defense. Of course, SDI won't be perfect; nothing is perfect in this world! But SDI will certainly be more perfect than any treaty and, furthermore, can protect us against accidental missile launches or attacks by non-Russians such as Castro.

The League then asks what it thinks is a rhetorical question: "Can we afford to take a chance on an unproven and untested system that must work perfectly on the first try?" Good question. The trouble with the League's argument is that the question is not relevant to SDI because SDI will be fully tested before it is built; but the question is relevant to our present predicament of living under Mutual Assured Destruction (MAD), which is the 1972 ABM Treaty strategy of retaliation. We cannot afford to take a chance on the untested system of MAD that must work perfectly on the first try.

"SDI will break the bank." The League claims that research and development of SDI over the next ten years will cost $70 billion and that full-scale deployment could cost a trillion dollars. On the contrary, SDI's first phase will cost $12 billion a year for five years, and the later phase $20 billion a year for ten years. That compares favorably with the $40 billion a year we are currently spending to threaten retaliation under MAD.

The League of Women Voters proudly asserts in its literature that the League is a "very vocal advocate of stopping SDI" and that it "pushed for legislation that would undercut the President's SDI budget request." Make no mistake about which side the League of Women Voters is on. It certainly is not nonpartisan.

The 1988 Republican nominee for President should remember this when the subject comes up about nationally televised debates. He should reject all proposals to allow them to be sponsored by such an anti-Reagan organization.