FROM: Phyllis Schlafly

68 FAIRMOUNT, ALTON, ILLINOIS 62002 / (618) 462-5415

RELEASE: MAY 31, 1985

SDI: THE ONLY WAY TO ACHIEVE ARMS CONTROL

"The critics of Ronald Reagan's SDI are so illogical. In the same breath, they say 'it won't work' and 'it will accelerate the arms race.' But they simply can't have it both ways, it's impossible for both criticisms to be true."

That was the comment of a mathematician friend of mine. Mathematicians are so logical. They live in a world where everything is rational and adds up. They recognize that the critics of SDI don't make sense.

The claim that SDI won't work is proven false by the successful test in the South Pacific on June 10, 1984. That test accomplished the intercept of the missile in space, obviously the most difficult part of the system.

The claim that SDI will impede arms control is the most ridiculous of all. SDI is the only way to achieve arms control. It is the only route to fulfill Ronald Reagan's vision of making the threat of nuclear war obsolete.

Consider this scenario. The United States builds an SDI -- a defensive system to shoot down incoming nuclear missiles before they hit us. It isn't perfect, of course (what is perfect in this world?), but it can shoot down 98% of incoming missiles.

With our defensive shield in place, the President then gives our defensive technology to the Soviets. Or, alternatively, the Russians steal it and build their own "SDI."

At that point, it is clear that the tremendous arsenals of offensive nuclear missiles on both sides have been rendered almost worthless. Not only will there be no incentive to build any more expensive ICBMs, but there would be no real disincentive to scrapping, say, 500 missiles a year in a mutual build down.

That's real arms control, and SDI could bring it about! Conversely, so long as there are no defensive systems and nuclear weapons have a "free ride" to their targets, there is every incentive to keep and increase those nuclear arms. Both nations believe it is too dangerous to reduce their present levels and not cost-effective to scrap weapons on which they have spent so much money.

Every now and then one hears an anti-SDI activist pontificating that defensive weapons are worthless because they are always and easily overwhelmed by offensive weapons. One wonders if these people have read any history or traveled abroad.

The walled cities of medieval Europe, standing on a hill and often surrounded by a moat, are examples of a defensive system which kept their people safe from attack and defied all offensive weapons for hundreds of years. Just look at Carcassonne, for example, in southern France and you will see that it is obvious that, prior to the invention of the airplane, no offensive weapons existed which could overwhelm the defenses of the 13th century walled city.

Like the walled cities, SDI is a defensive system. The reason Mikhail Gorbachev rants and rails against it every time he opens his mouth is not because it threatens the Soviet Union, but because it threatens to reduce the value of the Soviets' $500 billion nuclear weapons investment to zero.

In a recent ABC-TV "Viewpoint" special, in which various people were allowed to voice their complaints about media bias, the question was asked, did the media hang the label "Star Wars" on Reagan's SDI (instead of using the name he gave it, or "High Frontier" which was the original name) in order to make the American people believe that the system would "take war to the stars" and conceal the fact that it is purely defensive? Ted Koppel pronounced that a "legitimate" question and tossed the ball to ABC's Sam Donaldson to reply.

After trying to claim that he uses "Star Wars" in order to help "people understand," he then resorted to a cop out. He said to the questioner, "I like your red dress."

The interesting part of the "Star Wars" semantics is that, after President Reagan launched his March 23, 1983 SDI proposal to make nuclear war obsolete, the next morning the press reported it accurately and made no mention of "Star Wars." But when Senator Edward Kennedy attacked Reagan's plan and tagged it with the label "Star Wars," the media universally picked it up and has been using it massively ever since.

A much more accurate label for Reagan's SDI would be "Star Shield." It is not warlike in any way; it is a shield against war. According to the President's Science Adviser, Dr. George Keyworth, the Soviets are spending more than $3.7 billion on their defensive system, and we can't afford to do any less.