



ARIZONA NEWSLETTER

DOCTORS FOR DISASTER PREPAREDNESS

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WHAT DO THE RUSSIANS THINK?

Ask somebody who speaks Russian and has visited the Soviet Union many times.

Dr. Del Phillips of the University of Arizona Russian Department, who has led many American tour groups in the Soviet Union, will speak at the next DDP meeting on the subject "Soviet Attitudes Toward National Self-Preservation." The meeting will be held Thursday, April 11, at 7:00 p.m., in Dining Room C, entered from the main cafeteria at University Medical Center.

Plenty of time will be allowed for discussion. Bring your questions about the feelings of Soviet citizens toward Americans, the military, civil defense, or other subjects.

"STAR WARS" DEBATE

You are cordially invited to a debate on the topic
RESOLVED: That the United States should develop and deploy active defenses against nuclear weapons.

For the Affirmative:
Bill Anderson
Diffraction, Ltd.

Jane Orient, MD, Associate in
Medicine, University of Arizona
Vice President, DDP

For the Negative:
Peter Goudinoff, Ph.D.
Dept. of Political Science
University of Arizona
Representative (D) District 11
Coauthor of The People's Guide to
National Defense, aka What Kind
of Guns Are They Buying for
Your Butter?



Where: University Medical Center, Room 5403

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When: Thursday, May 9, 7:30 p.m.

A man-made satellite? "Utter bilge"--British Astronomer Royal.

An intercontinental rocket? "We can leave that out of our thinking." --Vannevar Bush, director of government's science effort during World War II.

An atomic bomb? "That bomb will never go off."--Admiral Leahy, explosives expert.

"Star Wars"? "Reckless"--Sen. Kennedy; "Pie in the sky"--Robert McNamara; "It won't work"--Richard Garwin; "(The President is) The April Fool"--James Reston

CIVIL DEFENSE LEFT HOMELESS

When three Florida emergency operating centers closed down, the American Civil Defense Association (TACDA) was (temporarily) homeless.

Rather than folding, as some predicted, or paying exorbitant rent, TACDA bought a building for \$20,000. This required dipping into operating funds--\$12000 from the annual order of METTAGs, \$3500 from the next issue of the Journal of Civil Defense, and so on. This gives you an idea of the austerity of the TACDA budget.

Our faithful secretary Janice Tyliczka and her husband have been spending their evenings and weekends renovating, painting, and repairing the plumbing.

If you can't give her a hand with the work, perhaps you'd like to send a tax-deductible contribution to TACDA, P.O. Box 1057, Starke, FL 32091.

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE ISSUES REPORT ON "NUCLEAR WINTER"

The headlines said: "'Nuclear winter' theory accepted by Pentagon"--Baltimore Sun, and "Pentagon agrees nuclear warfare could block sun, freezing earth"--New York Times.

Carl Sagan said: "If this were a paper I assigned in my graduate seminar at Cornell University, I think I would give it a 'D,' or maybe a 'C-minus' if I was in a good mood."

The report said: "For any major nuclear war, some decrease in temperature may occur over at least the northern mid-latitudes. But what this change will be, how long it will last, and, of much more importance, whether it will lead to effects of equal or more significance than the horrific ... short-term effects of nuclear war, ... currently is beyond our ability to predict, even in gross terms."

STRATEGIC DEFENSE INITIATIVE FUNDS RESEARCH ON ASTEROIDS

What could asteroids have to do with defense?

Early work by some of the authors of the "nuclear winter" or "TTAPS" report involved the consequences of a 10 km asteroid colliding with the earth. A severe climatic change, comparable to that of a "nuclear winter," is theorized to have caused the extinction of the dinosaurs and many other species. The impact probably released about 250 million megatons of energy and created about 1 gm of dust/sq cm of earth's surface, nearly five times as much as the Tambora eruption, which generated 200 billion tons of dust, in contrast to the 1.2 billion tons of dust and smoke assumed by TTAPS for the "baseline" nuclear war. (For further details, see Perspectives in Biology and Medicine, Winter, 1985, p. 218--the lower bound calculated there for energy release was indeed low, by a factor of about 10).

Could such an impact happen again? Of course. A smaller impact would be more probable, and could also be terribly devastating. Could it be prevented? Studies of the near earth asteroids might allow us to predict a potential collision, and perturb the asteroid's orbit--perhaps with a small H bomb! And while studying the asteroids, we've discovered they are rich in strategic minerals, such as platinum. And in space, even mundane sand and gravel are valuable, considering the expense of lofting them into orbit. From the asteroid mines could come material for space habitats--or for shielding strategic satellites.

That is one reason that funds from SDI have been granted to the University of Arizona's Lunar and Planetary Lab. The science fiction dream of mining the Belt may, however, still be years in the future.