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Sanction shut-off

When President Ronald Reagan announced Saturday that he was lifting the economic sanctions he had imposed on the sale of U.S. technology for the Soviet natural gas pipeline, he was admitting what had been obvious for months — they weren't working. Rather than putting any appreciable pressure on the Soviet Union, the sanctions had instead created a rift between the United States and Western Europe. If there is one lesson to be learned from the pipeline mistake, it is that the United States cannot operate an effective foreign policy without considering its allies.

The ban on the sale of pipeline equipment by American companies was announced in December 1981 after martial law was imposed in Poland. During the summer, the sanctions were expanded to include foreign companies licensed to sell American technology. But because the sanctions were unpopular with European allies, the president's actions were doomed to fail from the start.

When the ban was first enacted, the president said he wanted to pressure the Soviet Union and Poland into relaxing the martial law crackdown begun in Poland late last year. When Reagan's actions failed to have any effect, the president switched emphasis and declared that the sanctions would help stop the flow of money into the Soviet Union that could be used for an arms build-up. But the United States could not, by itself, pressure the Soviet Union into any concessions.

The president also failed to take into account the economic need for the pipeline in Europe. Like the United States, Europe is mired in an economic recession; the pipeline will mean jobs and a source of energy to Western European countries. But at the same time he was asking U.S. allies to make economic sacrifices, the president was agreeing to sell American grain to the Soviets. Had the president dropped the sanctions then, he could have blunted the justified criticism of the United States by its allies.

Reagan's actions make it difficult to tell what U.S. foreign policy is — except that it is not good. The beginning of the reign of Soviet leader Yuri Andropov gave the president a good opportunity to show some goodwill toward the Soviet Union and try to encourage more steady, practical relations. Instead the president skipped Leonid Brezhnev's funeral and took the same Cold Warrior position against the Soviet Union. The economic sanctions against the pipeline were just a few of the Reagan administration's many foreign policy blunders.

The damage to U.S. relations with its allies has already been done. Now it's up to the Reagan administration to concentrate on building up allied trust in U.S. economic and foreign policies. With an economic summit scheduled for next summer between the United States and its allies, Reagan cannot afford to ignore their economic interests any longer.

The contender

Sugar Ray Leonard could have made \$15 million had he decided to box Marvin Hagler. But he got out of the game to save his sight.

Duk Koo Kim's manager will keep the \$20,000 his fighter would have taken home had he survived Saturday's lightweight title bout.

Doctors at the Desert Springs Hospital in Las Vegas said Tuesday they would probably cut off the life-support system of the 23-year-old South Korean, knocked out in the 14th round by Ray "Boom-Boom" Mancini of Youngstown, Ohio. Kim has no known relatives. His father left when he was very young, his mother is dead, and his manager speaks no English.

It's happened before, and death should not be so shocking in a sport which, stripped of its trappings, could pass for simple crime. Outside the small circle of the television spotlight, boxing is a shady world populated by violent, desperate men and the violent, desperate men who live off them.

And when they retire, there is only pity. Former heavyweight champ Joe Louis' obituaries were filled with it, and anyone who hears Muhammad Ali talk today is filled with it. The most poignant scene in the brutally lyrical film "Raging Bull" is a bloated Jake LaMotta reduced to doing Marlon Brando impressions, psyching himself for a performance by shadow boxing.

So now the calls come again for a federal boxing commission, more thorough pre-fight medical examinations, stricter regulation of promoters and licensing. But Americans still cling to the romantic "Rocky" mentality. Clad in mink stoles and silk ties, they go watch men pound each other unconscious.

The Romans watched gladiators hack each other to bits in the Colosseum. Today they call it Caesar's Palace. Perhaps the last thing Duk Koo Kim heard, just as Boom-Boom landed a left-right to his head, was the Las Vegas crowd, rising to its feet, screaming for blood.

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BY ALAN CHAPPLE

You might say that I lost my video game virginity last weekend, when after 22 years of existence, I finally fed a quarter into a Zaxxon machine.

As expected, that first quarter went fast — between the beers in my system and the fact that I never had played, losing quickly was a foregone conclusion. But with my second two bits I came closer to getting my money's worth, flying the plane over the walls and around forcefields to blow up oil storage tanks and annihilate buildings. I was discovering that video games indeed could be fun.

Millions of Americans have caught "Pac-Man fever," a recent craze that has boosted video games to being more than just a favorite leisure pastime. For some people, getting an Asteroid's fix is a psychotic obsession. Because of this "disease" and its possibly harmful effects, videomania has erupted in controversy.

Teenagers and young adults — by far the greatest segment of those who play video games — talk of the fun, challenge and mental relief gained by zapping the inanimate spaceships and aliens from the playing screen. But parents have taken a much different approach: They are concerned that the video games their children play for recreation actually cause detrimental side-effects.

The outcry against video games during the last year has intensified to the point that many municipalities have enacted laws either banning or, at least, restricting the proliferation of the games. Besides the effects on their children, parents also oppose the games because they tend to attract "undesireables," who bring noise, litter and drunken and rowdy behavior to residential areas.

U.S. Surgeon General C. Everett Koop said last week that video games can be addictive and harmful to young people. "Everything is zap the enemy. There's nothing constructive to the games," Koop said. He added that symptoms brought on by the games included tension and sleeplessness. Other

and cause learning afflictions, especially among children.

Despite the parental and medical outcry against the games, other authorities have cited gains from using video games.

The U.S. armed forces use the games as a tool to increase the hand-eye coordination among air force fighter pilots and army tank gunners. Some private schools have found that certain games are effective in helping learning-disabled students improve basic motor skills. Even nursing homes have adopted their use for physical therapy.

But the folks who most opposed the recent wave of video game protest — even greater than those people who play them — are the manufacturers (especially Pac-Man makers, whose game ate nearly \$1 million worth of quarters in its first 15 months).

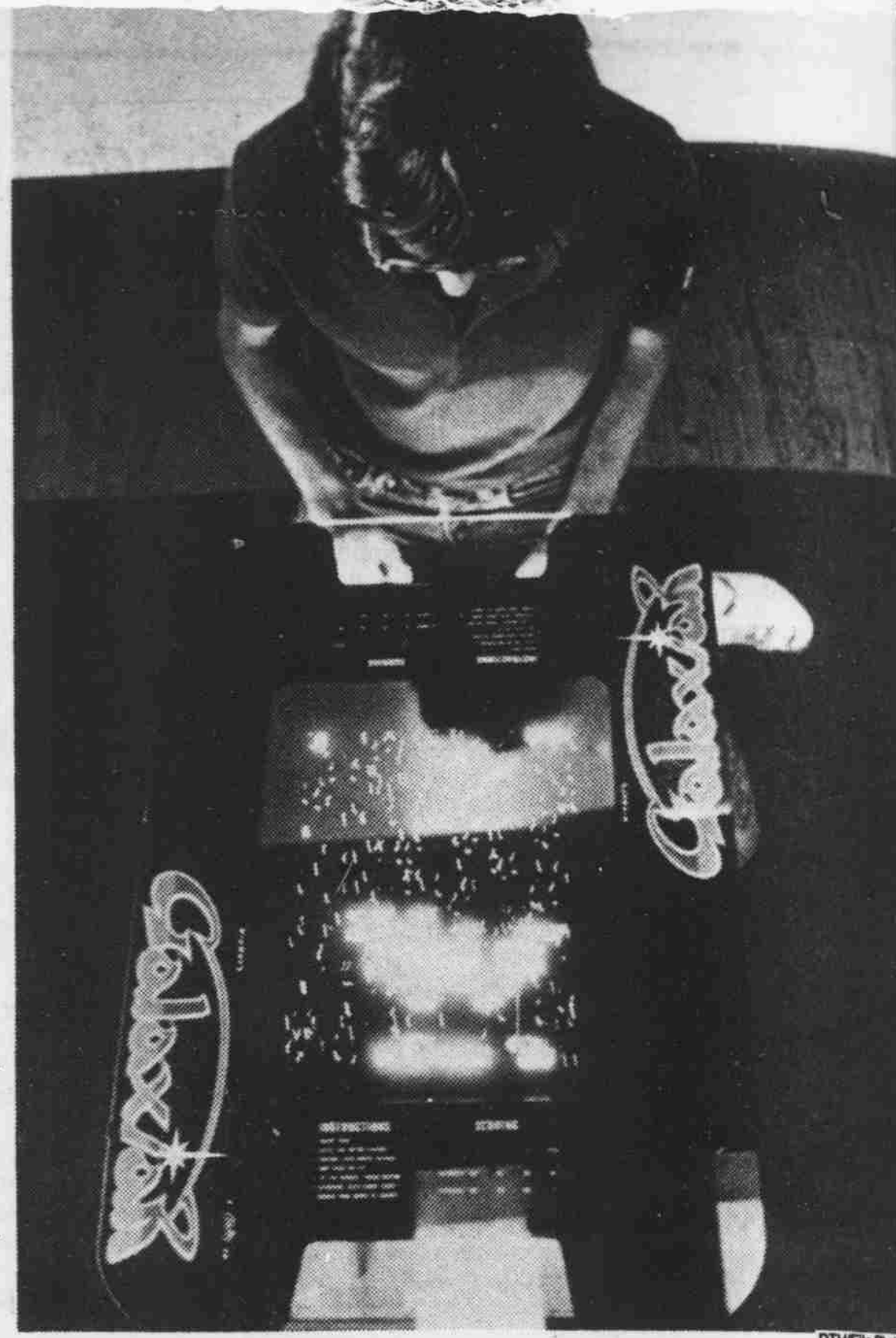
A spokeswoman for Mattel Electronics, which makes Intellivision home video systems, said there is no evidence of a cause-effect relationship between the games and health problems. Other manufacturer representatives agree. "Most of the top-selling games are non-violent and involve sports, science fiction and fantasy themes," said Jack Wayman, an Electronic Industries Association spokesman.

The controversy swirling around video game machines has many issues: health hazards, addiction and the amazingly high cost to the player, who drops quarter after quarter into the machine without thinking about it.

But like anything else, until there are documented facts pointing out the abominations of the machines, the games must go on. And at the same time, those with the "fever" at least should remember to save a quarter for a call to the family doctor.

My third quarter was better than the first two. I was getting the knack of the game, destroying everything in sight and getting all my frustrations out of my system.

I was having such a good time, after my third 25-cent piece, I reached into my pocket to get a fourth. Then, some-



thing occurred to me: "Why? Why do I want to feed another quarter into this machine?"

Sure, I had enjoyed several moments of challenge against the machine, and no, I was not thinking of what noble cause could have used my efforts or money. Actually, I had just decided

that instead of playing this video-armed-bandit, I would prefer to eat and go out during the next week.

Alan Chapple, a senior journalism major from Leesburg, Va., is an editorial assistant for The Daily Tar Heel.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

S.L. should be 'ashamed'

To the editor:

Boy am I glad Valerie Lynn Moore is taking a stand against nasty column writers like that of S.L. Price. Moore's "Column misportrays New Mexico" (DTH, Nov. 16) was so true. New Mexico is a lovely, beautiful state and Price had the nerve to pick on it for its alleged faults. (In all truthfulness I've never been to New Mexico before; my cousin once sent me a postcard when he was passing through, but what a beautiful postcard it was.)

Any idiot knows New Mexico has no prisons because, after all, New Mexico is loaded with such law-abiding, friendly citizens there's no need for prisons. Even if there were prisons, the riots would probably be started by the damn Yankees who had to be shipped to the Southwest because the Northern prisons are overflowing with rapists and murderers.

Price must have gotten his facts wrong when he accused the New Mexico basketball team of doing all those illegal things. How could any team with the nickname the "Lobos" (isn't that cute?) do such horrible things? It's a known fact only California teams pull such indecent stunts like that because they play in polluted, big, gross cities with no natural beauty whatsoever.

Why don't you leave well enough alone, Price? Stop rocking the boat. Nothing's wrong with New Mexico so quit making up lies.

When all you beautiful people go to New Mexico for the Final Four, you'll see the real loveliness of this state. And by the

way, spend lots of money because the city of Albuquerque is planning on making a bundle on this extravaganza; but if anyone is deserving of your money it's the clean, wholesome people of New Mexico. Check out Mildred's Massage Parlor, for instance. Millie's a real doll . . .

Tim Mooney
Carrboro

Price not unfair

To the editor:

I am writing in response to Valerie Lynn Moore's letter concerning S.L. Price's "Out of control in New Mexico" (DTH, Nov. 11).

In her letter, she immediately points out the problems of the entire prison system of America and not just New Mexico's. She then proceeds to correct Price for not including the National Collegiate Athletic Association violations of California schools.

Obviously, Moore feels that Price should not have written such an anti-New Mexico article. But, as she admits, she did not understand the article and missed the entire point.

Price used these two incidents to highlight the corruption of college sports. The examples of violence in the prison underline the outlandish behavior of the University of New Mexico basketball program.

Certainly Price's column was not

distasteful or unfair toward the state of New Mexico. I don't feel that he, in any way, was attacking the culture of the state. He used these particular incidents to make a point. The point being that college sports are headed in the wrong direction. I am sure that he agrees with Moore that New Mexico is a beautiful place to live, as do I.

However, I think that Price would agree with me that it is Moore who lacks the insight and expertise. The article was written in a manner that makes the reader think and not have the writer do it for him.

Come on Moore, you're a senior. Let's hope you learn to think a little for yourself before May. I have spent some time in New Mexico and enjoyed it thoroughly. However, that does not change the corruption found in college athletics. I thank you, Price, for your column and I hope that you, Moore, get an education.

Jon Schmidt
Chapel Hill

Selective spokesman

To the editor:

Although not a member of one of the traditional peace churches, I must object to the extremely one-sided account in "Draft sign up has merits" (DTH, Nov. 5). Enten Eller, the first to be convicted for refusing to register, and Mark Schmucker, the latest, are among many members of the peace churches who refuse as a matter of religious conviction to cooperate in any way with the business of war.

They so inform the government and are willing to face the consequences. They do

not believe that "registration is in the best interests of the nation." They are already conscientious objectors, not only to serving themselves but to the whole making philosophy. Their ancestors in the tradition gave witness and suffered the consequences; it is to them that we owe the current legality of conscientious objection.

The DTH could provide a forum for discussion of this real issue which affects so many of us, rather than acting as spokesman for the Selective Service System and the U.S. Department of Justice.

James Stashev
Professor of mathematics

Who needs 'em'?

To the editor:

This letter is written in response to Alan Chapple's recent column regarding the legalization of marijuana. "Pot smoking should be legal" (DTH, Nov. 3). Chapple's argument, asserting that marijuana is just another way of achieving one's "pursuit of happiness," is totally absurd.

Maybe marijuana isn't any worse than alcohol, but who needs 10 million more "alcoholics" in today's society? Chapple fails to realize that the last thing this country needs is a large percentage of its population on drugs of one form or another.

Scott McMahon
Jerry Whitaker
614 Ehringhaus

Ignorance by degree

By DAVID SIMON

Editor's note: This column is reprinted by permission of the University of Maryland Diamondback.

In my chosen trade, it takes the common man very little to learn the routine. Add one cup hot water to one tablespoon instant college student, place the mixture in close proximity to a newspaper office, and allow two weeks to solidify into a working journalist.

Alas, if the student happens to be a journalism major, then it takes a full month. In the campus journalism college, you see, they teach you to type about 30 words a minute, reduce and enlarge a photograph, and lay out a tabloid-sized newspaper page using mid-1950 design standards.

Assuming the students muster the appropriate reverence for such endeavors, the upper-level instructors teach them to define libel in 20 words or less, to try to avoid writing things that aren't true and to rationalize the contradictions between civilized society and a free press.

In short, you can spend four years at the University learning a process. A goddam process, with a bit of rambling invective about the First Amendment thrown in. You may or may not learn how to observe, how to think, how to adopt a logical perspective on issues, or most of all, how to write.

In my three years as a journalism major, I never experienced a professor who even touched on such questions. No doubt they aren't part of the job description; no doubt such things can't be taught. You begin to learn to write when you sit down at the typewriter and think; you stop learning when you get up to discuss it for a grade.

When I enrolled at the University in 1978, a dumb farm boy from Silver Spring, I was under the naive impression that a degree from a higher education institution represented both raw knowledge and the ability to apply it. I wasted a lot of time and money learning the self-evident how-to's of a profession that could care less about

its own manipulations. And when I went to work for the Baltimore Sun six months ago, I told my editors, rather timidly, that I might be interested in changing my course of study. I was encouraged, and told, in no uncertain terms, that my employers could care less whether I knew the four theories of the press, or whether I could explain the role of the "gatekeeper" in a modern mass communication model.

"You're there to get an education," said one editor. "There's no need to waste college studying what you're going to learn anyway."

Instead, they asked, what did I know about economics? What are the current trends in urban planning? How systematic are the current methods of studying criminology? Where has the New Deal failed and where has it succeeded? Who is this guy Shakespeare, and why does everyone say such wonderful things about him?

In short, the real world introduced itself by picking me up and shaking loose the pretensions of modern academe. No, no, they said, we don't care what you're learning to do. In an almost classical sense, a collection of newspaper editors (hardly the vanguard of a second Renaissance) were asking me what I knew about the world.

Ouch. I'd been in college so long that I'd forgotten why.

Now it's sad enough that the journalism college lets loose every year a herd of graduates that can size a photo and read a press release, but couldn't think or write their way out of a wet Diamondback. Yet higher education as a whole seems hellbent on specialization as a permanent trend. Engineering students are taught to build, but are left without social implications; business majors are taught to make money and little else; and rare is the physics student who can tell the difference between Camus and an expensive brand of perfume.

The stereotype is certainly not applicable to all students, and the campus's efforts to encourage distributive curricula is a halting step in the right direction. Nonetheless, I've come to the conclusion, and it's been tested by bar-room research, that the many of those who leave this place sheepskin in hand are not only educationally in-

competent, but downright boring to talk to. And I would limit the criticism to others. I, for one, can't answer all those questions that editors want to know, and I could kick myself for wasting so much time with professors who wanted me to pay membership dues to the Society of Professional Journalists and recite the Associated Press stylebook from memory.

While the technological revolution has certainly made detailed and limited curricula a necessity, the willingness of educators to allow such changes at the expense of broad classical and eclectic learning amounts to little more than cowardice. If it takes five years to teach a physics student his profession, as well as a meaningful understanding of social, psychological and artistic endeavors, then stand up and say so. To do otherwise is to devalue the University diploma.

Outside the University, no one is fooled. They know the difference between the bachelor's degree and the knowledge that so rarely comes with it. Beyond the tiny realm of Terpland, they know what to expect from the average journalism grad with a shiny new pica ruler, or the average pre-med student with a singular obsession for biology.

They nearly did succeed, however, in fooling me, the dumb farm boy from Silver Spring. With little effort, could have walked out of this place in four years without any vestige of a higher education, and worse yet, without any idea that the emperor was running around naked.

Of course, there are all sorts of general University requirements designed to assure that undergraduates learn something or two, and I know that there are those professors who are good enough to push their students beyond the required boundaries. But to say that the University is producing class after class of well-rounded, educated people is just silly. Eventually, even the dumbest of farm boys comes to know bullshit when he sees it.

David Simon, a junior general studies major at the University of Maryland, is a former editor of the Diamondback.