

Reagan's Soviet policy 'dangerous'

By TIM HANSON

Staff writer

President Reagan's policy toward the Soviet Union is not only "extremely dangerous" but has helped bring U.S. relations with that nation to the lowest point in more than 30 years.

Arthur Macy Cox, an expert in U.S.-Soviet affairs and former member of the Central Intelligence Agency, delivered that assessment Wednesday in a speech at Eastern Washington University.

Cox, author of "Russian Roulette: The Superpower Game," told an audience of 50 that the tough, threatening rhetoric of the Reagan administration must stop and that serious talks on arms control must begin.

If not, he said, the risk of nuclear war will continue to grow, he said.

"The risk-taking by this administration is unbelievable," Cox said. "You only have to look at the actions of the administration to see that we're on a steady course to build and deploy weapons for nuclear war fighting."

Reagan still is laboring under the belief that the Soviet Union is preoccupied with domination of the world, Cox said.

"We're at the threshold of change," he said. "If we get the right leadership in the U.S., we can get back on the right track."

Since it appears Reagan is not going to change his attitudes toward the Soviet Union, the only solution is a change of administrations, Cox said.

Almost all the Democratic presidential candidates have gone on record say-



ARTHUR MACY COX
Risk-taking 'unbelievable'

ing that, as president, they would abandon the MX missile program and get back to serious arms negotiations with the Soviets, he said.

Although many political observers believe Reagan will have no trouble winning a second term, things will change in the coming months, Cox predicted.

"Just watch the polls," he told a reporter. "I'll predict he drops 10 points (in the next few months) ... things will be different than in 1980."

For example, the labor force was strongly behind Reagan in 1980, but this

year he'll be lucky to get 25 percent of their votes, Cox said.

He said Jimmy Carter's image was that of a "wimp," and that most Americans in 1980 were really voting against Carter, not for Reagan.

"This time," Cox said, "we'll have a real ideological battle ... for the first time since (President William Howard) Taft we've had a real right-winger in office."

A big danger facing the world is "unintentional nuclear war," Cox said.

"Our computers make frequent errors," he said. "And the Soviets' technology is behind ours and their computers make many more errors."

"When we get to this point, we're taking a tremendous risk because we're putting the Soviet Union in a corner. They could launch on a first warning" without checking for computer error.

Cox said world political conditions are getting too serious for "boy scout games" and that the "time has come to start talking seriously" with the Soviets.

"One thing we'll have to give up," he said, "is this idea that we're going to bring the Soviet Union to its knees. Things are better there for the people than 10 years ago. There is not going to be a revolution."

"We despise their system, but we've got to learn to live with it."

Cox, who served with the CIA from 1952 through 1961, has written three books. He also writes regularly for the New York Times, and his syndicated column appears in some 200 newspapers.