

Letters

David Hafemeister Responds to a letter sent by *Howard Morland* in response to his article: “A Secrecy Primer” (May/June 2005 *Bulletin*)

Morland implies that the Progressive H-bomb article increased anti-nuclear war demonstration levels exponentially in four short years, greatly exaggerating his article's impact.

It is useful—but not vital—to know the weapon's schematics. We don't need to know what's under a Hummer's hood to understand it's adding to the country's gasoline woes. I believe increased citizen involvement was a response to President Ronald Reagan's nuclear weapons buildup and to the demise of arms control negotiations in the early 1980s. The Nuclear Freeze movement illustrated the absurdity of 70,000 U.S. and Soviet warheads; Physicians for Social Responsibility graphically displayed the effect of a 1-megaton explosion on a city; and the American Physical Society showed that the “Star Wars” Strategic Defense Initiative was a dream.

These events heightened citizen concerns in the 1980s. However, I agree that too much secrecy quells honest debate. The potential threat of Soviet attacks on the U.S. triad were exaggerated, and the dangers of launch-on-warning were understated. These issues were more important to the debate than an H-bomb sketch.

- David Hafemeister