

Beam-weapons initiative at center of campaign

by Richard Cohen in Washington, D.C.

According to Washington intelligence sources, a confrontation is brewing over President Reagan's Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI) and thus the entirety of the administration's policy of developing antiballistic-missile defenses based on directed-energy beam technologies. These sources report that key Democrats, under the prodding of the Soviet KGB, have committed themselves to make what they call Reagan's "Star Wars" a central target of attack in the upcoming campaign.

Reportedly, powerful Democrats including former Kennedy administration National Security Adviser McGeorge Bundy, former Carter administration Arms Control and Disarmament director Paul Warnke, and Kennedy family operative Sargent Shriver—a network with long-term assets on Capitol Hill—are committed to bringing the SDI onto the Senate and House floors for its first trial immediately before the Democratic National Convention in July, and making the convention an orgy of attacks against energy-beam defense.

The Weinberger speech

A small group of Reagan loyalists centered around Secretary of Defense Caspar Weinberger has also decided to bring the SDI into the center of the presidential campaign.

On May 1, Weinberger took the occasion of a National Press Club speech not only to tell the news media that the SDI reflects a profound strategic doctrinal change for the United States, but also to directly attack, for the first time, presidential candidate Walter Mondale, who on April 24 at Case Western Reserve University in Cleveland launched a frontal assault on the SDI, charging that it is "dangerously destabilizing," would not work, and would escalate the arms race "into the heavens" (see *EIR*, May 8). Mondale launched the attack immediately after his advisers concluded that he is close to clinching the Democratic nomination; hence Mondale's vow that he would make a ban on the "militarization

of space" his top priority if elected President was a preview of one of the major lines of attack Carter's Vice-President will mount against Reagan.

At the National Press Club, the defense secretary charged that Mondale's attack was "politically motivated." He said that Mondale's "offhand comments" on beams and his attempts to dismiss efforts to "build a safer place in the world that is already endangered by nuclear weapons . . . ignore . . . that the Soviets for many years have been developing weapons that do indeed use the heavens. I think it's unfortunate that these comments would freeze our defense research program." Weinberger also blasted two recent reports which attempted to discredit the Strategic Defense Initiative, one issued by the Pugwash Conference's Union of Concerned Scientists and the other by the congressional Office of Technology Assessment.

Thus, for the first time, by attacking Mondale, an administration official brought the Strategic Defense Initiative issue directly into the center of the 1984 presidential campaign. Weinberger was trying to undercut the web of intrigue and impotence that had been strangling the program. White House sources confirm that the President's re-election Brains Trust, headed by White House Chief of Staff James Baker III and Deputy Chief of Staff Michael Deaver, has been committed to burying the SDI as a campaign issue. However, the Baker-Deaver group did not intervene to try to temper Weinberger's counterattack, hoping that it might scare the Democrats off the issue. Washington intelligence sources agree that such hopes are vain, because the Soviet leadership has made it clear to the "arms-control" Democrats that "Star Wars" must be defeated before the November elections.

The Baker-Deaver refusal to push for the SDI was blasted on April 27 by Dr. Lowell Wood of Lawrence Livermore Laboratory, one of the architects of the directed-energy-beam

program. "The fact of the matter is that the bureaucracy is in the process of defeating the President's initiative. It is not the President's opponents who are doing it—it is the President's own men," said Dr. Wood, addressing a forum sponsored by the Heritage Foundation in Washington. Foot-dragging and sabotage of the program have left the United States "way back behind" the Soviet Union, he added.

Only a week before the Weinberger May 1 address, senior Pentagon sources who support the program were unanimously reflecting the Baker-Deaver grip over Reagan's re-election strategy and reporting that keeping beam-weapon defense out of the election campaign would ensure that the program would not be killed on Capitol Hill! These sources argued that while large cuts in SDI funding were likely, the new program and program mandate would remain intact. Then, they reasoned, following Reagan's re-election, massive funding would be sought.

The effort against the SDI was launched in the spring of 1983 by the Harriman-Bundy wing of the Democratic Party under the leadership of Senate Minority Leader Robert Byrd (D-W.Va.) and a formidable gaggle of House Democrats typified by Reps. Les Aspin (D-Wisc.) and Albert Gore (D-Tenn.), as well as the Kissinger wing of the Republican Party under the guidance of Sen. Larry Pressler (R-S.D.) and Henry Kissinger's business partner Brent Scowcroft (whose Bipartisan Commission on Strategic Forces was used as a doctrinal and legislative counterweight to the SDI), in concert with forceful internal sabotage of the program from Shultz's State Department and key quarters of the Pentagon.

Now, President Reagan will be forced to choose between a re-election effort based on backing Weinberger's commitment to the new doctrine, or backing down.

'Quail at doing anything'

In his National Press Club speech, Weinberger also delivered the strongest commitment to date by an administration official to the new strategic doctrine. He chose a forum before the national and international media—under conditions in which the U.S. defense budget, particularly areas of strategic modernization, faces a dangerous attack on Capitol Hill—to devote the entirety of his presentation to the SDI. Flanked by the director of the newly created Office of Strategic Defense, Lt. Gen. James Abrahamson, Weinberger bluntly asserted that the "safest and most secure way for the future is strategic defense. . . . We are shifting away from MAD [Mutually Assured Destruction] once and for all to Mutual Assured Survival."

He continued: "I have no doubt we have the skill, the knowledge, the resources, and the people to do it. We just must make sure we have the political will to do it." Finally, going beyond previous statements, Weinberger lashed out not only at the critics in Congress, but also indirectly at the network of forces operating within the Reagan administration itself which has sought for over a year to bureaucratically cripple the program by restricting it to research. Weinberger

noted that these opponents "quail at doing anything after the research is successful."

"We propose a policy of deterrence based on destroying weapons, not people," he declared. "This President was never afraid of violating the conventional wisdom. In California when he was governor people would say, 'You cannot do that if you want to get re-elected.' But Reagan never accepted that. He'd say, 'I'm not here to get re-elected, but to do what I said I would do.' . . . We owe it to the American people, to our allies, and freedom-loving people everywhere to continue working, as we intend to, to develop a defense designed to protect us all. . . . There is always the argument that we should not develop defense because it will provoke the Soviets. But they have been working on these systems since 1967. The President has said that it will be shared and the Soviet Union has not made that offer to us—so it is vital that we pursue it. . . ."

Then on May 3, Reagan-Bush '84 campaign adviser and former high-level Reagan National Security Council member Dr. Norman Bailey unleashed another salvo. Representing the Republicans on a panel at the annual Washington conference of the American Institute of Aeronautics and Astronautics, Bailey identified defensive technologies as the military issue on which the two parties differ most.

Assuring his audience that this administration is dedicated to the development of beam technologies for strategic defense, he stated, echoing recent nationally televised addresses by *EIR* founder Lyndon LaRouche, that rapid development of beam technologies would lead to "a rapid and extensive fall-out on the civilian economy," likening this effect to those of the World War II mobilization and the original U.S. space program, and stressing that the SDI is not just a program for defense, but for economic revitalization. Bailey added that even were these civilian benefits unavailable, America would have to seek beam defenses, because the Soviets are developing them as fast as possible, and if they get them first, the United States could indeed reduce its defense budget—down to zero, since its weapons would then be useless. Speaking for the Democratic leadership, former Carter adviser Stuart Eizenstat affirmed that there is a complete consensus among that party's leadership and leadership-accepted candidates against "Star Wars."

Then, on May 4, Weinberger, testifying on Capitol Hill, moved to protect the entirety of the SDI and strategic modernization program by identifying as acceptable ground for cuts only those areas that represent traditional defense strongholds for congressional districts, all entirely in the conventional range.

Cranston, Brown, and Aspin

Alongside Mondale's announcement that "Star Wars" will be a central campaign issue, a frontal attack on the SDI is now the highest priority for the Democrats. Alan Cranston will be resurrected, taking the lead on this issue.

Immediately after his withdrawal from the presidential

race on March 15, Senator Cranston announced that he would dedicate himself to inserting a "peace plank" in the Democratic Party Platform; he may also promote it in the Senate. It calls for a "nuclear freeze," the banning of anti-satellite weapons, and the banning of "beam-defense" weapons. The plank was first endorsed by McGeorge Bundy, Sargent Shriver, Ohio Governor Richard Celeste, arms controller George Kennan, and "science popularizer" Carl Sagan. Democratic sources report that forces associated with the presidential efforts of Jesse Jackson are certain to force a platform fight that would even further radicalize the party position on military spending and beam defense systems.

Cranston co-thinker Rep. George Brown, who recently formed the Coalition for Peaceful Uses of Space with Sen. Paul Tsongas (D-Mass.), 18 congressmen, the KGB-linked Women's Strike for Peace, and others (see *EIR*, April 10, Congressional Closeup), is now conferring with Aspin, who is a key link in the Scowcroft congressional apparatus.

Brown and Aspin are trying to decide which amendments to the FY85 budget first outlined by Aspin in April will be pushed forward in the House. A severe cutback in SDI funding that would restrict the program to research and the banning of anti-satellite (ASAT) testing is viewed as highly possible. The Department of Defense requested \$1.78 billion for SDI, and the Department of Energy, which funds Lawrence Livermore, Los Alamos, and Sandia national laboratories, requested an additional \$210 million for work at the labs; it is reported that approximately one-fifth of the entire Lawrence Livermore budget is devoted to directed-beam weapons. This would amount to approximately \$150 million, or 75% of the publicly known Energy Department SDI budget.

A secret meeting

It is no exaggeration to say that the instigator of the anti-beam escalation is the Soviet KGB.

On the weekend of May 6, the Federation of American Scientists, an anti-growth environmentalist group; and the Union of Concerned Scientists, which is intimately involved with the Cranston-Brown operation, will hold a secret conclave. Sources say that 24 American scientists and 12 Soviet scientists will attend, and the Soviet delegation will be led by Academician Yevgenii Velikov, the leading scientific architect of Soviet beam defense and the leading Soviet scientific propagandist against U.S. strategic defense. Velikhov, who leads Soviet research-and-development of laser technologies, termed U.S. antimissile beam-defense plans "very dangerous" in the pages of the April 30 *Pravda*. Washington is spreading "illusions" to the effect that these systems are of a "defensive nature," wrote Velikhov. In reality, laser weapons are "unable to defend the overwhelming majority of the population. They are designed for the offensive, to reduce the power of the opponent's retaliatory strike."

On the American side, a speech by Paul Warnke, the former director of the Arms Control and Disarmament Agen-

cy under President Jimmy Carter, and who has close connections to the Cranston operation, is reported to be on the agenda.

In addition, Carol Rosen, who has intimate contact with the Soviet Embassy in Washington and the Soviet government, and who played an important role in arranging former Soviet President Yuri Andropov's last public meeting with a group of U.S. Senators headed by Claiborne Pell (D-R.I.) last year, has successfully insinuated herself into the heart of Democratic operations on the Hill. Rosen, the director of the Institute for Security and Cooperation in Outer Space, is now coaching many liberal Democratic congressmen. Most recently, she was at the side of Rep. Mel Levine (D-Calif.) as he railed against strategic defense at a House Foreign Affairs Subcommittee on International Security hearing on May 3.

That the pro-SDI Reagan loyalists have to fight more than just the Democratic Party leadership was reconfirmed in the May 7 issue of former Secretary of State Henry Kissinger's mouthpiece, *Time* magazine, in which Kissinger's crony from the Council on Foreign Relations Strobe Talbott unleashed one of the fiercest attacks yet on strategic defense, quoting Mondale's "dangerously destabilizing" denunciation and attacking the President for having "often been drawn instinctively to simplistic, gimmicky solutions to problems that entail layers upon layers of historical background and technical complexity. . . . He has clung [most] stubbornly to the idea of space-based defenses. . . ."

Gerard Smith's falsehoods

Reinforcing this message from Kissinger to the President (who still thinks he has an election deal with the former secretary of state based in part on ignoring strategic defense for the duration of the campaign), former Trilateral Commission director Gerard C. Smith, testifying on the Hill May 2, attacked the SDI and General Abrahamson, lying that "The SDI is lighting warning signals abroad, especially in the Federal Republic of Germany. Images of Fortress America and the Maginot Line come quickly to mind. The French and British must view with anxiety what Soviet programs to match our SDI will mean for their modest strategic forces. . . . Although our officials console European leaders with the promise that their countries will come under the defensive umbrellas that we are reaching for, I believe the folk sense of Europe's populations will tell them that inevitably SDI signals a decoupling of their security from ours."

And finally, Kissinger Republican Howard Baker, the Senate Majority Leader who controls the access of bills and resolutions to the Senate floor, decided to let Larry Pressler (R-S.D.) bring to the floor his resolution to ban U.S. ASAT development. These are Kissinger's shots across the bow, an early warning to the White House that if the President does not back down on his commitment to strategic defense, Kissinger-directed electoral backing for the President may be in jeopardy.