

Soviet attacks against the SDI seek to mask Moscow's own beam program

Lieutenant General James Abrahamson, chief of the Pentagon's Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI), reported to the Congress in August that the Soviet Union has repeatedly ignored U.S. offers for cooperation in the development of antiballistic-missile defense technologies. "The United States has twice proposed substantive discussions with the Soviet Union. We have received no reply to our proposals," he said, according to the *Defense Daily* Aug. 7.

The first U.S. offer of collaboration came in President Reagan's famous March 23, 1983 speech, and was immediately rejected in an interview to *Pravda* given in the name of then Soviet President Yuri Andropov. Denunciations of the U.S. initiative continued through the summer, culminating in an Aug. 10 commentary by Andropov adviser Fyodor Burlatskii in the weekly *Literaturnaya Gazeta*, calling U.S. development of beams a *casus belli*.

Then on Aug. 23, 1983, in Erice, Sicily, Moscow's top laser scientist Y. P. Velikhov and Dr. Edward Teller signed a document which, had the Soviets been acting in good faith, could have provided the foundation for a U.S.-Soviet agreement to develop defensive technologies and replace the strategic doctrine of nuclear terror (Mutually Assured Destruction) with Mutually Assured Survival. At an international conference of scientists on "The Technological Bases for Peace," they agreed to set up a commission that would investigate the feasibility of defensive beam-weapon development.

Ten days later, Moscow's cold-blooded murder of 269 civilians aboard Korean Air Lines Flight 7 dashed any possibility for such negotiations. The Soviet marshals were immediately catapulted into public prominence, and the countdown for a global confrontation with the United States began in earnest.

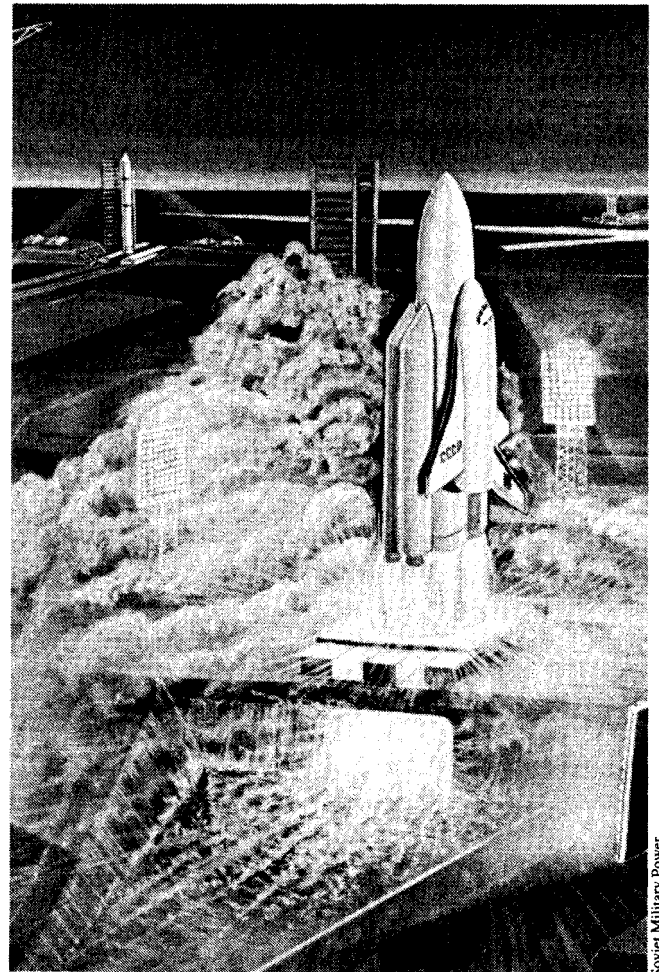
Since then, the Soviets have proceeded with single-minded resolve to accelerate their own strategic defense program and to put a halt to that of the United States, at all costs.

A propaganda barrage

During the past year, hundreds of articles in the Soviet press and statements by the top leadership have denounced the SDI and warned darkly of retaliatory measures (despite the U.S.S.R.'s lingering official insistence, for public rela-

tions purposes, that beam-weapon defense is impossible). Of these, the following are among the more significant:

- Nov. 15: *Izvestia* denounces a conference held by *EIR* and the Fusion Energy Foundation in Rome, on the strategic implications of the SDI for Western Europe. A featured speaker was *EIR* founder Lyndon H. LaRouche, Jr., whom *Izvestia* attacks as a "troglodyte." "The Reagan administra-



The secret Tyuratam space complex is being modernized to support launchings of the Soviet space shuttle, which experts believe may be superior in performance to the U.S. shuttle.

Soviet Military Power

tion wants to bind Western Europe even more closely to its criminal policy in the areas of nuclear and space armaments," the paper concludes.

- April 29: Chernenko states in a speech at the "Hammer and Sickle" steel factory in Moscow that "new defense technologies . . . will make it possible to defend our country."

- April 30: Academician Velikhov writes in *Pravda* that Washington is spreading dangerous illusions about the "defensive nature" of space-based ABM systems.

- May 9: Marshal Nikolai Ogarkov, Chief of the General Staff, writes in *Krasnaya Zvezda* that weapons are under development "based on new physical principles," which are "more destructive than any existing weapon, and work on them is going on . . . in the United States. . . . Their creation is a reality in the immediate future."

- May 3: A delegation of 19 Soviet clergymen and theologians arrives in the United States for a 19-day tour on behalf of "peace." Sponsored by the National Council of Churches, the delegation preaches that the American Strategic Defense Initiative is a devilish plan that threatens world peace.

- May 13: Academician Velikhov, visiting in Washington, gives an interview to the Associated Press comparing the U.S. beam-weapons program to the Nazis' plan for a surprise attack on the U.S.S.R.

- May 25: *Pravda* features a letter from Chernenko to U.S. anti-beam-weapons scientists Richard Garwin and Carl Sagan, calling for a treaty banning the militarization of space and insisting that "American propaganda has launched a false version by claiming that it is the Soviet Union which is the instigator of a cosmic arms buildup."

- June 29: The Soviet government proposes talks in Vienna to the United States on banning space weapons—but refuses absolutely to discuss any other military issues, notably strategic weapons and the intermediate-range missiles deployed in Europe. U.S. National Security Adviser Robert McFarlane retorts that the first "space weapon" was the ICBM!

- Aug. 10: The Soviet military newspaper *Krasnaya Zvezda* attacks the "science hawks" at Lawrence Livermore Laboratory—notably Dr. Edward Teller—for their work to develop the x-ray laser. In the fall of 1982, the paper states, Teller met with President Reagan to propose the "Star Wars" program. "At that time work was already being conducted on a program for the further expansion of offensive nuclear weapons on which the U.S. administration was basing its plans for acquiring a first-strike capability. . . . This capability could not be implemented unless they could hope for impunity [which] could be guaranteed by third generation weapons for the new ABM system."

The paper quotes a statement by Soviet President Konstantin Chernenko that, "faced with the threat from space, the Soviet Union will be compelled to take measures to reliably guarantee its own security."

Krasnaya Zvezda's attack on the x-ray laser program is

particularly ironic in view of Soviet research advances in this field during the past year. Indeed, the Soviet propaganda offensive has been accompanied by unrelenting progress in Moscow's own ABM program.

Soviet research breakthroughs

Only the most naive Mondale supporter could take seriously the Soviet offer of a "ban" on space-based weapons, given the U.S.S.R.'s record of treaty violations. While the Moscow press was busy denouncing President Reagan as a "new Hitler," reports began to surface in the West of the true extent of the U.S.S.R.'s own space-based ABM research and development effort:

- Jan. 16: *Aviation Week and Space Technology* magazine reports that, according to a high administration official, "what seems clear is that there is in progress a pattern that places [Soviet] activity very close to the line in terms of a breakout. . . . We might find this year that we have zero time to respond to an ABM Treaty breakout by the U.S.S.R. with no way to provide in a timely way a parallel capability."

- March 28: U.S. Adm. (ret.) before the Subcommittee on Defense of the Senate Committee on Appropriations that "the Soviet Union is . . . 10 years ahead of the United States in anti-ballistic missile defensive capabilities. The Soviets may, in just another year's time, be able to defend over one-third of both their population and offensive forces from the U.S. retaliatory deterrent. The Soviets may also at any time launch the first anti-ballistic missile battle station into space, where they have long been superior in anti-satellite capabilities."

- April 2: *Aviation Week* reports that the Soviet Union has launched an intensive program at the Lebedev Physics Institute and the Kurchatov Institute of Atomic Energy to develop a nuclear-pumped x-ray laser. Progress is also reported in computerized guidance systems, laser communication with submarines, and laser optics.

- July 25: Cosmonauts aboard the Salyut-7 space station take a "space walk" and test a 66-pound tool for metal-cutting, welding, coating, and soldering in space. The Soviet press describes the tool as effective for "assembling and erecting space stations and parts of stations."

- Aug. 14: The London *Times* writes that the Soviets may be preparing "the next great space coup . . . the planting of the red flag in the red sand of Mars." Soviet cosmonauts have stayed in space for up to seven months, about the time needed for a flight to Mars. They are also testing a 14-million-pound thrust booster. The Soviet equivalent of the space shuttle, nicknamed "Shuttleski," "may have a much greater performance capability than America's space shuttle," according to some experts. It has a lighter lift-off weight and a larger payload—and "could be in regular use within a decade." Spy satellite photographs of the "secret Soviet launch complex at Tyuratam" show what is thought to be the Soviet shuttle landing strip under construction.