

Soviet bluff seeks to block the SDI

by Konstantin George

The Soviet leadership has delivered an ultimatum, that the United States either scrap its Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI)—the program to develop and deploy a layered anti-missile defense system—by the beginning of next year, or else face an all-out Soviet onslaught to force a strategic capitulation by the Western alliance. To force the United States to scrap the SDI, the Soviets would even risk nuclear war.

The ultimatum was issued on Dec. 5 by Soviet leader Konstantin Chernenko, in a widely publicized reply to a letter from the "International Physicians Against Nuclear War." Chernenko declared: "The solution to the question of space-based weapons is of paramount significance. If we don't succeed in stopping the militarization of space, this will nullify everything which has so far been achieved in the field of limiting armaments, and push the arms race into other directions, and sharply increase the threat of nuclear war."

With this statement, the die has been cast for the upcoming Shultz-Gromyko talks in Geneva set for Jan. 7-8. Chernenko is saying that anything short of Shultz walking into that meeting with a firm commitment to scrap the SDI, will lead inexorably into a Russian-staged strategic confrontation, risking World War III. Whether or not this occurs depends in large degree on which forces prevail in the ongoing bitter factional struggle in the Reagan administration.

The *Pravda* ultimatum

On Dec. 9, the lead editorial of the Soviet Communist Party newspaper *Pravda* not only restated the content of the Chernenko ultimatum, but, in precise foreign ministry-style language, declared that failure of the United States to scrap the SDI would cause the Soviet Union to declare all arms limitation treaties previously signed with the West to be "null and void." "Implementation of a U.S. space-based weapons program," according to *Pravda*, would "render null and void everything achieved so far in the realm of arms limitation and sharply increase the danger of a nuclear war."

The Soviets, in the context of years-long ongoing war preparations, have been systematically violating these treaties in any case, and would use the SDI pretext to make

official their already current practice.

High-level U.S. intelligence sources report that Soviet war preparations have culminated in an operational nuclear war-fighting plan, the "Ogarkov Doctrine," devised by former Soviet Chief of the General Staff Marshal Nikolai Ogarkov, now the commander of the Western Theater of War. This plan provides the Soviet leadership with the requisite military options, should their campaign of nuclear blackmail fail in forcing a U.S. capitulation on the SDI question.

Ogarkov's primacy was underscored by Soviet Central Committee member and spokesman, Vadim Zagladin, in an interview in *Der Spiegel* magazine, published Dec. 9. Asked about the widespread speculation over Ogarkov's "demotion" during the summer and subsequent reemergence, Zagladin declared boldly, "Marshal Ogarkov is now active at a very high level, where you need intelligence and experience."

Another signal came from KGB Colonel Radomir Bogdanov, a deputy of U.S.A. and Canada Institute Director Georgii Arbatov. At a meeting of the Aspen Institute in West Berlin early in December, Bogdanov said that the Soviet Union would cut its citizens' bread rations *in half*, if necessary to meet the requirements of the ongoing military buildup. Another signal delivered to the modern-day Neville Chamberlains was the demonstrative non-appearance of Vadim Zagladin and Aleksandr Bovin, an *Izvestia* commentator and unofficial Politburo mouthpiece, at the latest Pugwash Western-Soviet "back-channel" talks in Geneva, Switzerland.

The Soviets are only interested in sitting down at a table with someone who can deliver to them on a platter the U.S. SDI program. They will wait and see what Shultz brings on Jan. 7.

The road to world hegemony

The imperial ambitions behind the Russian strategy were laid out in a Dec. 10 speech by Mikhail Gorbachov, at 53 the youngest Politburo member and reputed "Crown Prince." Keynoting an ideological conference in Moscow, he expounded on the theme of Russian world domination. After the ritual Blood and Soil incantation, "No feeling is more rewarding than that of love for one's Motherland and one's devotion to international duty," Gorbachov delivered the political code words of the Ogarkov Doctrine: "The Soviet Union must enter the next millenium as a great and flourishing world power."

Gorbachov was scheduled to arrive in London on Dec. 15, heading a 30-man delegation for one week of talks, including meetings with Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher and Foreign Minister Geoffrey Howe. Accompanying Gorbachov is Yevgenii Velikhov, vice-president of the Soviet Academy of Sciences and one of the Soviet Union's foremost experts on space-based missile-defense laser technology. An attempt to work out a dirty deal with certain British oligarchical circles to jointly try to torpedo the American Strategic Defense Initiative is the top item on the Soviet agenda.