

Arms-control lobby strives to save Gorbachov's offer

by D. Stephen Pepper

After five days of stunned silence at the poverty of the "Gorbachov offer" at Geneva, the arms-control lobby finally grimly set itself to doing the Soviets' work for them, to make credible the new Soviet offer.

The task was frankly acknowledged to be a heroic one. National Security Adviser Robert McFarlane had bluntly stated that the Soviet offer would increase Moscow's ability to achieve "a first strike capability." But Ted Warner, the Rand Corporation's analyst of strategic systems, a former U.S. Air Force expert on the subject, writing in the *Washington Post*, flatly contradicted McFarlane by describing the offer as "providing 'a better chance to make a retaliatory force highly survivable' after an enemy attack, thus adding significantly to strategic stability."

How could the same offer produce such diametrically opposed analyses? Because the arms-control lobby has an absolutely urgent task to redeem the Soviet offer in the eyes of the world; otherwise the administration will feel no pressure to retreat from its commitment to the research, testing, and development of the advanced technologies involved in the Strategic Defense Initiative.

The testimony of a highly placed White House official at a press conference on Oct. 8 made clear how impoverished the actual Soviet offer is. He ticked off the following points: "We are concerned that the Soviet first-strike capability would be strengthened. . . . It would insure that the Soviet Union would retain major advantages in the number of nuclear weapons, nuclear delivery vehicles, and ballistic missile throw-weight. . . . It would prevent key areas of needed U.S. modernization while it would allow the considerable Soviet modernization and buildup, which began 10 years ago, to be carried to completion. . . . The Soviet proposal seems designed to fulfill the long-standing Soviet goal of totally removing the United States nuclear deterrent from the protection of our friends and allies in Europe and Asia, while

not inhibiting the Soviet forces which threaten those allies. . . . Finally, the Soviet insistence that the U.S. drop its SDI program presents a serious obstacle to progress in Geneva, and must be dropped."

The Soviet proposal calls for the reduction of strategic arms by 50%, and then defines such arms as all weapons that can hit the territory of the other superpower. Under this definition, Soviet SS-19 and SS-20 missiles are excluded as tactical weapons, whereas U.S. Euromissiles, cruise missiles, and forward-based bombers would all be included on the grounds that they could reach Soviet territory. If, under the Soviet plan, the United States is entitled to 1,680 strategic nuclear delivery systems, 1,149 of these based in Europe would have to be eliminated or withdrawn.

The consequence of this proposal would thus be that the United States would be left with only 531 strategic missiles and bombers left for deterrence against a nuclear attack. Further, as the spokesman emphasized, it would leave Europe without U.S. protection, while leaving Soviet tactical missiles in place.

While this is the most obvious flaw in the Soviet proposal, it is not the key one. The demand to cease SDI research and testing is crucial. The ABM Treaty allows research and development of systems based on "new physical principles," and the administration has definitively accepted the interpretation of the treaty which says that this provision covers the antiballistic-missile systems now under development by SDI researchers. The arms-control lobby is screaming bloody murder; retired ambassador Gerard Smith, the negotiator of the 1972 ABM Treaty, declared that the treaty is now a "dead letter," for this interpretation would permit almost unlimited testing and even "building" of the space-based anti-missile system. Right on cue, House Foreign Affairs Chairman Rep. Dante Fascell (D.-Fla.)

appear before the House to "explain" the Reagan administra-

tion's "new interpretation."

But a far more sophisticated adversary of the administration's SDI policy has emerged, namely Lord Peter Carrington, secretary-general of NATO. Carrington after holding private discussions with President Reagan and Secretary Shultz emerged to tell the press, the latest Soviet offer was, "greatly to be welcomed," even though the specific proposals were clearly unacceptable. Carrington stressed that he had always described the Geneva talks as a long process, "and they [the Soviet proposals] are the beginning of a long negotiation. . . . And in a long bargaining process you have to give and take, and I imagine that both sides will give and take during the process of negotiation."

Arms-control spokesmen are quick to point out that, in the bargaining for the 1979 treaty, the Soviets stoutly maintained for months that U.S. European-based arms should be included, before finally giving way to allow for an agreement. Thus a long-range trap is set. Arms-control experts expect that the Soviet inclusion of medium-range weapons is just an opening gambit.

As Carrington says, in a long process there is give and take on both sides, and there is little doubt what the United States will be pressured to contribute as its side of the bargain: the SDI.

Documentation

Pentagon campaigns for strategic defense

As the Soviet propaganda campaign against the U.S. Strategic Defense Initiative intensifies in preparation for the November summit between President Reagan and General-Secretary Gorbachov, administration defense spokesman have taken to the stump to build support for the beam-weapon program, which the President has insisted will never be a "bargaining chip" at the Geneva arms talks. Defense Secretary Weinberger and SDI Director Abrahamson, in particular, are warning of an imminent Soviet "breakout" from the ABM Treaty.

Why we changed our strategic doctrine

Speech by Secretary of Defense Caspar W. Weinberger to the Philadelphia World Affairs Council, Oct. 3:

This afternoon, I would like to describe how we see our research into defensive technology fitting into our overall strategy for peace and stability, why we consider it such a

bright hope for mankind, and why we cannot regard SDI as a bargaining chip to be negotiated away.

My goal this afternoon is to correct a fundamental deficiency in the debate over SDI—a deficiency shared by expert and layman alike. And that is the lack of strategic perspective that is brought to bear on this complex issue. Too frequently critics isolate SDI from the international environment and the threats we face. They fail to look at strategic defense research as a part of America's over-arching strategic design. This tunnel vision is born of the simplistic idea that there is really no substantial difference between the doctrines and capabilities of the U.S. and Soviet Union. Indeed, if you read only domestic critics and Soviet propaganda, you would think that SDI emerged full-blown from our minds without reference to Soviet capabilities or strategic history.

In fact, our research into the possibility of a defense against nuclear attack results from the Reagan administration's broad assessment of our foreign and defense policies, which asked the question: What must we do after a decade of neglect of our forces? . . .

When President Reagan took office, one component of our strategy was in particular need of attention—nuclear doctrine and capability. Our broad examination of the strategic nuclear context led to a very troubling conclusion: The Soviet Union had rejected the notion of deterrence through agreed mutual vulnerability. In fact, the Soviets had been modernizing and increasing their offensive arsenal and simultaneously stepping up their defensive programs—all with the clear aim of gaining a first-strike capability. . . .

Since strategy cannot be isolated from the threat, we had to consider both Soviet doctrine on nuclear war, *and* their capabilities. And although a great many people joined us in this assessment, a good many stayed behind. A host of analysts persisted in calling for strategies and forces based on the amazing premise that the United States was largely responsible for the arms race, and that it was America who threatened the peace, and that it was we who sought to destabilize the delicate balance of deterrence. This is the "blame American first" school, and its thinking is characterized by a casual dismissal of Soviet doctrine, and the raw facts of the Soviet build-up. . . .

Though many Western analysts believe that offensive technology will forever dominate defensive efforts, that is not the case in Soviet military doctrine. Adopting a rather traditional view of warfare in the nuclear age, the Soviets did not let their massive build-up of superior offensive forces—like those now facing our allies in Europe and Asia—preclude seeking the advantages of purely defensive systems. They did both. And this is right in line with their doctrine.

Since history and technology do not stand still, the Russians believe a defense against ICBMs, though difficult to contemplate today, will be a reality in the future. Consequently, they have not locked their forces into an offense-

only strategy. . . .

The hope in the West for an end to the Cold War was pervasive and comforting. Unfortunately, this hope was based on illusion. The arms-limitation agreement proved little more than a fleeting record to the existing balance of forces. . . . This Soviet build-up flew in the face of what many had expected to happen after SALT I. In what can only be described as supreme arrogance, some policymakers thought they had educated the Soviets on the realities of nuclear deterrence. Defense against a missile attack, we were told, was impossible, and the only real deterrence was the threat of mutual annihilation or mutual suicide. But if the Soviets had agreed, they would not have engaged in this massive and costly build-up, and at the same time spent roughly as much on strategic defense systems as on their enormously expensive offensive strategic systems. . . .

The ABM Treaty

Had the ABM Treaty signified Kremlin acceptance of mutual vulnerability, their actions would have been roughly similar to our own. We abandoned our single ABM site, reduced expenditures on defense-related research, and virtually gave up our efforts in defensive systems of any kind.

We expected and bargained for one thing, but we got quite another. Far from abandoning the ABM site allowed under the treaty, as we did, the Soviets continued to improve it. Today they have the world's only operational ABM system—a system that is even now being upgraded. . . .

The Soviet Union has also developed rapidly deployable ABM engagement radars, and interceptor missiles. They have probably tested surface-to-air missiles, normally used against bombers, to intercept ballistic missiles. All of this threatens a very rapid Soviet "breakout" from the ABM Treaty.

Additionally, Soviet research into advanced strategic defense technology—such as particle-beam weapons, radio-frequency weapons, kinetic-energy weapons, and high-energy lasers—has been extensive. . . .

Our uneasiness with the strategic doctrine and programs developed in the 1960s is therefore perfectly consistent with our goals and principles. And with the Soviets clearly rejecting the concept of agreed mutual vulnerability (although many nurtured in the ways of the '60s still can't seem to admit it), there was only one prudent course of action: Change our own doctrine and programs. We must seek and secure a defensive capability that could ultimately lead to the end of nuclear missiles. This is not only prudent; it is far more in keeping with our democratic ideals, than a mutual suicide pact. . . .

If the Soviet leaders ever contemplated initiating a nuclear attack, their purpose would be to destroy U.S. or Allied retaliatory capability, and the military forces that would blunt Soviet aggression. Even partially effective defenses that could deny Soviet missiles their military objectives, or shake the Soviets' confidence in their ability to achieve such dire ob-

jectives, would discourage them from considering such an attack, and thus be a highly effective deterrent. . . .

And let me stress the choice is not between protecting military forces or cities. The goal of our strategic defense research program, the vision and hope of the President, is to stop Soviet missiles *before* they could destroy *any* targets—be they in the U.S. or anywhere. The goal is noble and straightforward: to destroy weapons that kill people. . . .

I know that some of our allies fear that our pursuit of the defense initiative would tend to "decouple" America from them. This is quite wrong. The security of the United States is inseparable from the security of our allies. In addition to strengthening our nuclear deterrent, such defenses would also enhance Europe's ability to deter Soviet aggression by reducing the ability of Soviet intermediate-range ballistic

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missiles—both conventional and nuclear—to put at risk either our allies, or those facilities essential to the conventional defense such as airfields, ports, depots, and communications networks. The same is true with respect to Japan and Korea. An effective defense against ballistic missiles would create great uncertainty in the mind of the aggressor, reduce the likelihood of a conventional attack on Western Europe, and thereby reduce the chance the Soviet Union would contemplate such an attack in the first place.

If such a system can be developed, we will offer the Soviets a strong incentive to reduce their investment in offensive forces. And this is precisely what President Reagan is seeking—even now we are asking the Soviets to join us in deep reductions in offensive weapons. But if we stop our work on strategic defense, and give it away at the negotiating table, we will forever lose one of history's best chances to end the shadow and the fear of nuclear weapons. . . .

Progress in SDI research program

SDI Director Lt.-Gen. James A. Abrahamson gave the speech which we excerpt here to the Philadelphia World Affairs Council on Oct. 3:

The goal of our innovative science and technology program is to establish scientific feasibility and engineering validation of revolutionary concepts, concepts with potential for full SDI technological development. This forward-looking office has a broad research charter which focuses on such advanced directed energy concepts as gamma-ray lasers, on novel sensing and data-preprocessing techniques, on advanced materials for space applications, including exotic molecularly engineering dielectrics, innovations in burst-mode space power and power conditioning, and on emerging space-science applications and ultra-high speed supercomputing. . . .

During the past year, the surveillance-acquisition-tracking and kill assessment program has seen broad technology progress. They have initiated requirements-definition efforts and addressed some key problems, such as discriminating reentry vehicles from decoys. For key sensor elements, they have identified a need for advanced focal plane materials, cryogenic coolers to maintain operating temperatures, and signal-processing capability.

In the directed energy program, we continue to make excellent progress. Of particular note are the very encouraging test results of the large chemical laser (MIRACL) White Sands Missile Range. The beam quality has been significantly improved amount and thereby eliminating problems with the uniformity of the flowing laser gas caused by strut wakes. This advance gives us greater confidence in our ability to focus the laser beam into a small spot at long range. . . .

Finally, we are planning to conduct a major program of space experiments to demonstrate target tracking with the precision necessary for a number of missions, including support of kinetic energy weapons and surveillance sensors, as well as directed energy weapons. This series of experiments is being conducted aboard the space shuttle. . . .

But there is yet another body of facts I believe are worth studying—in light of the propaganda campaign mounted by the Soviet Union to identify the President's Strategic Defense Initiative as the mortal enemy of world peace and arms control—as not hopeful, but threatening. And perhaps we should all note carefully that while the Soviets are eager to discuss *our* research on active strategic defenses, they are extremely reluctant to discuss their own expansive efforts in those same areas.

What of those Soviet programs? What are the facts? Experts have concluded that, since the ABM Treaty of 1972, the Soviet Union has spent about as much on strategic defenses as on their enormous build-up in offensive strategic nuclear missiles. Their air defenses are the densest and most

sophisticated in the world. They have made civil defense preparations for much of their population and all of their leadership. . . .

In addition, the Soviets have invested very heavily for more than two decades in other forms of anti-ballistic missile defense, including *precisely* those technologies encompassed by our own SDI research program. Given these facts, does it not seem hypocritical that the Soviets would excoriate the U.S. SDI program in tones of outrage and moral indignation? Is it not hypocritical that they are now constructing a radar in central Siberia which blatantly violates the very ABM Treaty they claim to want stringently enforced? And is it not also the height of hypocrisy that the very scientists in charge of developing Soviet nuclear strategic offenses, strategic defenses, and chemical-biological warfare programs

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would publish and sign a *Pravda* statement deploring our SDI as a threat to world peace? I would note, parenthetically, that the U.S. SDI program is being conducted in full compliance with the ABM Treaty. . . .

But even as the program is borne steadily forward by the tremendous efforts of American science and industry and by those in government responsible for research and management, I would be remiss to suggest that *all* the news is good. In each of our two budget years thus far, Congress has determined that major reductions were necessary in an SDI budget request based precisely on President Reagan's March 23, 1983 mandate for strategic defense research. We have attempted, through innovative management and just plain hard work, to overcome these shortfalls and we will keep working with the Congress to keep the program intact.

It is essential that the President's program receive adequate support, so that, ultimately, we will be able to provide the sound basis for an informed decision on the future development and deployment of active defenses when it is needed. . . .