'Danny Graham syndrome' delays progress of Strategic Defense Initiative

by Lyndon H. LaRouche, Jr.

The *Washington Post* of Jan. 16, carries a page-one report, headlined "SDI Plans Are Likely To Fail, Pentagon Panel Concludes." Typical of Katharine Graham's *Post,* the headline greatly exaggerates the content of *Post* writer Fred Hiatt's article. This headline, is an echo of Soviet party secretary Mikhail Gorbachov's recent deployment of Soviet fellow-travelers in the West, for escalated offensive against President Reagan's Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI). Gorbachov's fraudulent arms-reduction proposal, announced by President Reàgan on Jan. 15, has no purpose but as a signal to Soviet fellow-travelers in the Congress and Western Europe, to crank up new efforts to cut the funding of the SDI.

Contrary to the misleading *Post* headline, the content of Hiatt's article refers to a different, and interesting set of facts. Hiatt reports two charges, by a panel of Pentagon advisers, against current implementation of the SDI:

> [The government] has put too much emphasis on weapons and hardware and not enough on the computer software needed to make the system work. . .
>
> The panel of scientists from government, industry and universities drew a scathing picture of the military-industrial complex as "an industrial culture that resists change."

Hiatt's reference to the lack of emphasis on computer systems, is written in such a way as to mislead the average reader. The argument, that there is a "computer software crisis" in the SDI Office's effort, is a wildly false report, but one widely circulated by the Soviet sympathizers of the Union of Concerned Scientists. On the second point, the criticism is an accurate picture of the foot-dragging by Lt.-Gen (ret.) Daniel P. Graham's co-thinkers in the Defense Department.

Hiatt wrote, "The arms companies and the Defense Department today are too hide-bound and bureaucratic to adapt necessary new technologies to the SDI project, the panel warned."

That problem has been notoriously endemic within our military bureaucracy, since long before the President's first announcement of SDI, on March 23, 1983.

The principles of supersonic flight had been proven, in supersonic wind-tunnels, in Italy during the mid-1930s, and worked out by German scientists under the guidance of professors Ludwig Prandtl and Adolf Busemann, at Peenemünde. In the early postwar period, the U.S. and British governments crashed planes and killed test-pilots unnecessarily, out of stubborn clinging to the wrong and discredited arguments of Dr. Theodore von Karman.

For similar reasons, including stubborn clinging to von Karman's disproven dogmas, the successful rockets developed under Maj.-Gen. John Medaris, were mothballed during the mid-1950s, until after the Soviet launch of Sputnik. Since Danny Graham led the fight to kill U.S. development of lasers and particle beams as modes of strategic ballistic missile defense, back during the mid-1970s, Graham has made his "High Frontier" career, by insisting upon use of obsolete high-speed rocket-systems, to the exclusion of "new physical principles." Wherever one finds a co-thinker of Danny Graham, in the military or the Defense Department's civilian bureaucracy, the passion for clinging to technologically obsolete ideas prevails.

The only major misuse of money and effort, in the present SDIO program, is the massive ration of limited funds

NSIPS/Stuart Lewis

Lieutenant-General (ret.) Daniel P. Graham

and efforts being spent to prove, that Danny Graham's "High Frontier" is an obsolete, and essentially unworkable, approach to strategic ballistic missile defense, against present Soviet capabilities. Any rocket engineer, armed with a blackboard, chalk, erasers, and a Texas Instruments' pocket calculator, could prove the economic and strategic absurdity of Graham's proposals, in a single briefing. For purely political reasons, the Defense Department is pressured to waste a large portion of the present research, on efforts to find ways in which Graham's scheme might be made to work, and always discovering, after months and months of such efforts, that the scheme is so full of holes, that it is unworkable. What is proven, over and over again, is what the rocket engineer at the blackboard could have proven, conclusively, in less than an hour's briefing, before all this money and effort were wasted.

The most obvious problem with Graham's approach, is that for each Soviet missile to be destroyed, up to 50 U.S. anti-missile missiles must be deployed. These anti-missile missiles, and their supporting systems, must be deployed into space-orbit, and deployed from space-orbit. Even if the anti-missile missiles achieve velocities of up to 20 kilometers per second, against 3-5 kilometers per second for the missiles they attack, the slowness of the anti-missile missiles represents an enormous targeting problem. The number of such anti-missile platforms required, is in the hundreds, or even more, and every one of those platforms is a sitting duck for Soviet countermeasures. All this could have been proven by the rocket engineer, from the start; in fact, the essential argument was published, by Soviet Marshal V.D. Sokolovskii, back during the early 1960s, and was widely circulated in U.S. military circles long before "High Frontier"! My associates and I supplied a new proof of Sokolovskii's argument, on the basis of new technological developments, to leading circles in the U.S.A. and Western Europe, months

NSIPS/Stuart Lewis
Dr. Edward Teller

prior to President Reagan's announcement of March 23, 1968.

Graham, who had been attacking me, and Dr. Edward Teller, violently and absurdly, on his lecture-circuit, up to the summer of 1983, made a "peace agreement" with Teller's circles during the summer and autumn of 1983. As a result of this arrangement, that autumn, Dr. Teller accepted Graham's demand that he write a letter attacking me. As a result of this "détente arrangement" between Graham and Teller, Graham's "High Frontier" was tolerated as an option to be considered in SDI research; politics being as it is, "High Frontier" gained a stranglehold on a large ration of the funds and efforts available. The Heritage Foundation's clout within the Republican Party and the Reagan administration, forced the military to take actions appeasing such corrupting political pressures.

Although high-speed rockets, including those fired from rail-guns, have a real, but declining importance, for intercepting warheads in their final phase of descent, and also for certain tactical applications, these methods cost about 10 times as much, per target hit, as lasers or particle-beams; they are also far, far less reliable, and far more vulnerable to readily available Soviet countermeasures. With Graham's approach, the U.S. cost of strategic missile defense would rise to approximately three times or more than Soviet cost of producing and launching offensive missiles, and for every improvement in U.S. strategic defense, the Soviets would have an effective, and much cheaper countermeasure. With lasers, particle-beams, and related kinds of electromagnetic weaponry, the economic advantage lies with the strategic defense: for every Soviet countermeasure against defense, the United States has a counter-countermeasure cheaper than the Soviet countermeasure. Dr. Lowell Wood, and other leading experts, have made this kind of point repeatedly. Marshal Sokolovskii also made the essential point back during the early 1960s.

The failure to dump Graham's "High Frontier," is the report, by the *Post*'s Hiatt, that there is a major problem in the development of the architecture of SDI "battle management."

For reasons of modern physics, there is no way in which Graham's "High Frontier" could be made to work against Soviet capabilities. Every effort to make it to work, requires adding more and more anti-missile missiles to the system; this vastly increases the cost, and the system is still readily vulnerable to Soviet capabilities for countermeasures. For political reasons, instead of admitting that simple fact, the orders are given: Develop a "battle management" system which makes "High Frontier" overcome these Soviet countermeasures. It's like telling IBM to invent computer software, so that by installing a computer on the back of the horse, the horse could be caused to fly. If IBM fails to produce that software, then tell the *Washington Post*, solemnly, that the SDIO's flying-horse task-force has a "software-development crisis."