

Weinberger presses SDI to salvage administration

by Webster G. Tarpley

As President Reagan left snowed-in Washington for Camp David and his weekend's work of completing his sixth State of the Union Address for delivery on Tuesday, Jan. 27, observers in the capital sensed that this speech would necessarily mark a turning point in the Reagan presidency—either toward new policy options or toward imminent collapse. On the one hand, the news from the Gulf war—pointing to the defeat of Iraq, and thus to a triumphant Shi'ite Mullah regime in Teheran extending its dominance over the Gulf and much of the Middle East—underscored once again that the entire Mossad-Trilateral policy of rapprochement with Iran is pure insanity, and must be rooted out once and for all.

There are clear indications that U.S.-Iranian haggling over arms-for-hostages deals continued well into December, and is still probably ongoing, under Israeli auspices. Vice President Bush, no doubt advised by opinion-monger Lee Atwater, his campaign manager, is worried that “a perception exists that this administration traded arms for hostages.” It is more than a perception, and only a clear presidential repudiation of this reason will help.

Then there is the question of the economy. Periodically the Reagan White House trots out Beryl Sprinkel of the Council of Economic Advisers for a “big lie” session on economics. Now the news is that inflation had taken “its worst beating in 25 years.” The White House announced that “with inflation reined in, unemployment down to 6.6%, and the stock market setting dizzying new heights each day, Americans have good reason to feel confident that 1987 will be another banner year in the Reagan economic expansion—now enjoying its 50th month of consecutive growth.” To offer this nonsense to a depression-stricken nation as a description of its current misery would be an act of final political folly.

Unless the President can transform his discredited policies on economics and Iran, it is not clear that any other innovations will save him. President Nixon was driven from

office primarily because he refused to oust such figures as Kissinger and Haig. President Reagan has seemingly learned nothing from all that, and clings to Don Regan and George Shultz, each of whom personifies precisely what must be excised in economic and foreign policy if the Reagan presidency is to survive. In the absence of such radical changes, as Lyndon LaRouche has pointed out, it will be “almost a miracle” if we do not find ourselves getting used to saying “President Bush” a few weeks down the line.

Weinberger: the last hope

Caspar Weinberger has continued his struggle to define the total Soviet threat to the Western world as the lever by which a total policy shift, ultimately including economics, might be accomplished. On Dec. 17, Weinberger and Admiral Crowe of the Joint Chiefs of Staff met with President Reagan to broach an early decision to deploy SDI. General Abrahamson of the Strategic Defense Initiative Organization has prepared a briefing document, which is still classified, detailing progress in technologies that would make up the SDI Mark I system. On Jan. 15, General Abrahamson presented that briefing document to Frank Carlucci, the National Security Council director. The next day, General Abrahamson repeated the briefing for the Joint Chiefs of Staff. On Jan. 20, President Reagan received Weinberger and Carlucci in the White House presidential residence, and then met with Weinberger in the Oval Office the next day.

Weinberger's push for SDI deployment has the support of Carlucci, White House Communications Director Pat Buchanan, and Attorney General Meese, who called for SDI deployment, “so it will be in place and not tampered with by future administrations.” The opposing lineup includes Don Regan, George Shultz, arms control and disarmament director Kenneth Adelman, and Paul Nitze.

Weinberger is bidding to make the Soviet threat and the

SDI response the central theme of administration policy and thus of the State of the Union message. Speaking at the Space Foundation in Colorado Springs, Weinberger recalled that this is the 30th anniversary of the Soviet Sputnik, and thus marks three decades of Soviet ICBMs, which are today designed "unmistakably as first-strike weapons." Noting Soviet anti-ballistic missile, anti-satellite, air defense and civil defense systems, Weinberger called attention to the Soviets' construction of "nine new large phased-array radars" in addition to their 11 early-warning radars already in use. Adding to this, the Soviet laser, particle beam and microwave weapons research programs, Weinberger concluded that "the Soviets are developing a capability for rapid and comprehensive ABM deployments," including a "nationwide ABM system."

"They have surprised us before—they could again," Weinberger went on. "I cannot envision any circumstance more threatening and dangerous for the free world than one in which our populations and military forces remain vulnerable to Soviet nuclear missiles while their population and military assets are immune to our retaliatory forces."

Weinberger then turned to the progress of SDI research, including the Delta-180 experiments, which showed "that we can find and track objects in space" with new sensors and detectors, and that a "moving target can be hit with a kinetic weapon from space." He also mentioned the high-powered MIRCL chemical laser at White Sands, which has proven the feasibility of high-powered laser systems. "We are rapidly validating a number of technologies and technical concepts which provide sufficient evidence of the feasibility of a strategic defense system," a first phase of which could "include both ground and space based components operating to detect, track, and destroy ballistic missiles in the boost and late mid-course phases of flight." "It would not be a point defense as some have urged to protect missile fields. It would be an integral first phase of our whole tiered defense. We have no intention of deploying any strategic defenses, unless we are confident that they will be elements of the entire defensive system. Thus, phase one must look forward to phase two, three, and beyond. Some would have us deploy so-called off-the-shelf technologies now. This we reject because, I am sorry to say, there are no technologies on-the-shelf that can do the job we want and need."

Weinberger described how such a first phase of SDI would "enhance deterrence," imposing intolerable uncertainties on Soviet first-strike planners and devaluing Soviet strategic missile forces. "Today, we may be nearing the day when decisions about deployment of the first phase can be made." Weinberger in this connection quoted the late General "Chappie" James, one of the celebrated Tuskegee airmen, whose mother told him, "When opportunity knocks, have your bags packed."

The pace of Soviet strategic defense research, Weinberger warned, will not slacken. The Secretary called for "congressional support for the President's defense program

and the SDI budget." "We must seize this opportunity," he stated.

Later in the day, Weinberger systematically refuted every proposal and claim coming out of the Nunn-Brzezinski "national strategy" Senate hearings, which have been causing consternation throughout the alliance. Weinberger dismissed such proposals as "deeply flawed" and "ill-conceived." There is no benefit, savings, or stimulus to be gained from pulling 100,000 men out of Europe, Weinberger explained: "U.S. forces are the visible sign of our political commitment to defend Europe and ourselves, including our resolve to use nuclear weapons if necessary. . . . Now is the time for reasserting our resolve to stand by our allies and protect our interests."

A key aspect of this struggle is irregular warfare, also the subject of a Weinberger speech. Here he contended, "The Soviet Union supports terrorism at the policy level by actively helping and encouraging client states," and providing them with equipment, expertise, and support. At a second or logistic level, "we find Soviet allies, clients, and surrogates like Bulgaria, East Germany, and Cuba, providing weapons, training, and material support." Terrorist actions are then carried out at the operational level by such outlaw states as Syria, Libya, and Iran. "Everyone knows the current government of Iran actively supports and engages in terrorism."

References to LaRouche

Speaking to a University of Colorado audience, Weinberger urged scientists and researchers to embrace the SDI, and made a number of references whose symbolic value will be clearest to those who have followed Lyndon LaRouche's speeches and writings. Illustrating the concept of freedom, he referred to Athens, where "the ideal of a society of self-governing citizens shone brightest, if often imperfectly." At the heart of the life of Athens, he said, was "reason as the key to decent self-government." To reconcile the imperative of defense against totalitarianism with the spirit of free inquiry, Weinberger cited Socrates as the best example of a man who embodied both. Socrates "said in *The Apology* that Athens was committing a grave injustice against him by condemning him to death. Defiantly, Socrates vowed never to cease from examining the grounds of the well-lived life. Yet, he always fought his city's battles and was known for his great courage in her defense. He claimed that both his questioning of Athens and his willingness to defend his city stemmed from his love of knowledge. Moreover, in *The Crito*, the sequel to *The Apology*, Socrates refused to leave Athens for another city, even to save his life. Where else could he go, he asked, where he would be as free to philosophize?"

Athens is like America, concluded Weinberger, not perfect, but free—"free to perfect its imperfections." "As such, she won the allegiance of the man who was free to know, and knew best how to be free."