

Editorial

Pentagon ignoring Soviet scientific lead?

According to the Soviet newspaper *Izvestia* of July 18, the most recent Soviet Politburo meeting made a commitment to strengthen the material-technological basis for research in high-energy physics. The Politburo decided to step up the work in all of their scientific centers and experimental installations, and the expansion and construction of pilot experimental programs in high-energy and particle physics programs.

Several months ago one of our nation's senior experts in Soviet assault radio-frequency weapon capabilities told us: "To understand the way in which the Russians intend to use Radio-frequency (RF) assault weapons, you can't think simply in terms of microwaves and radio frequencies; that's not the way the Soviet war machine works, and they are in a full-scale war buildup. They're organized the way we used to do things here. They are backing science across the board. Then when they need a weapons application, they can pull it off the shelf. It's under the high-energy physics and directed-energy programs that they develop the hardware—oversized gyrotrons, special phased array radars in which the antennae are designed either to receive or broadcast powerful signals, and so forth—for military deployment of RF strategic assault weapons. These are advanced electromagnetic weapons which are based upon 'new physical principles.' Any signal from the Russians that they are pouring resources into high- and directed-energy physics programs at this time, would have to be understood as a full-scale commitment to radio-frequency weapon deployment."

Such a full-scale commitment is precisely what the Soviet Politburo made a decision to do.

Nonetheless, dangerous illusions permeate the top echelons of U.S. military officials responsible for evaluating Soviet weapons capabilities. They have foolishly locked into the fantasy that electromagnetic weapons will not be developed in this century. The Pentagon old boys suffer from the delusion that World War III will "look like" World War II, only with more modern gadgets. While acknowledging that electromagnetic weapons are "theoretically possible," they mystically be-

lieve in dozen-year to quarter-century cycles between scientific ideas and weapons applications. In other words, they ignore the fact that the Russians are in the midst of a crash war drive.

In the United States, we used to uphold the development of scientific discovery as the bedrock of our national security. Then the desperate banking institutions undercut science and forced the nation into the disastrous path of a "post-industrial society."

Only an individual imitating the posture of an ostrich could fail to see the Russian commitment to scientific-military programs. The Russians are going full throttle in high-energy physics and directed-energy programs. The Russians are going full throttle in fusion energy and plasma physics programs. They are moving full throttle in their rocketry physics and space program, while we can't lift a missile four feet off the launch pad. During 1986, 91 of the 103 successful rocket launches worldwide were Russian. They are averaging nearly two launches per week in snow, sleet, rain, or hail, and 75% of their payloads are military. The Russian space station MIR is serving as a successful platform for laser, physics, and military tests.

The Soviets are fully backing research into the biological effects of electromagnetic systems, as well as the basic principles of optical biophysics. America's senior scientists in all of these basic areas of research are having their funding slashed and fighting to keep their projects alive.

Recently the head of Moscow's Vernadsky Institute toured the United States. He told his American counterparts at a scientific conference here: "For our part in Russia, we have no problems with money and budgets."

That is the summary of the military-strategic equation. Every U.S. program of strategic military-scientific importance has massive problems with money and budgets. Every area of development necessary for countering the Russian radio-frequency, biophysics, and electromagnetic breakout is being chopped to ribbons on our side.