

Soviet brass is worried over SDI

by Rachel Douglas

For all the fastidious juggling of missile and warhead balances in Europe and Asia, practiced by Soviet arms negotiators in order to entice the United States into accepting the so-called Double-Zero Option for reduction of intermediate-range systems, one great obstacle remains: Moscow's demand that the United States' Strategic Defense Initiative be scrapped for good.

On Aug. 19, the Soviet weekly *Literaturnaya Gazeta* devoted nearly a whole page to the SDI. The format was an interview conducted by Igor Belyayev, a *Lit Gaz* journalist who is also a top adviser to the Soviet leadership on Mideast and Africa policy, with General Colonel V.N. Lobov. First Deputy Chief of the General Staff Lobov is the rapidly rising military officer profiled by *EIR* in our Aug. 14 issue.

Attacking the SDI, Lobov delved into the broader question of "qualitatively new weapons." This is a matter of great interest to Lobov, whose colleagues at the General Staff and its Academy are working overtime on what they call "weapons based on new physical principles." Indeed, one of the reasons Moscow is so breezy about removing its own nuclear-armed missiles from the U.S.S.R.'s Western regions (aside from the fact that the current generation of Soviet missiles, all mobile, can be hidden just about anywhere, so that any claimed elimination is intrinsically unverifiable), is that the General Staff teams anticipate being able to compensate by means of fundamentally new systems, like radio frequency weapons, in combination with *spetsnaz* terrorist deployments and other techniques of irregular warfare.

In view of this known concentration of Lobov and his cohorts, we may usefully read his article in a mirror, and glean from what he says about the U.S. SDI program, more evidence of the military technologies Moscow most seeks to acquire. Belyayev already manages to suggest the "mirror" reading, in his title: "Behind the glasnost about the SDI is a lie!" Glasnost, of course, is the much-ballyhooed Soviet policy of "openness."

Who's 'sneaky'?

Lobov also, at the outset, characterizes the SDI as "a deeply conspiratorial, sneaky to the point of perfidy, policy of American imperialism . . . having the goal of misleading gullible simpletons." For "sneaky," Lobov uses the Russian word *khitry*—the very same notion of "cunning," to which

he, Lobov, has told Soviet strategists to pay more attention.

"In any competitive struggle, organically characteristic of capitalism," he intones, "there has always been and there is today a curtain of secrecy and an intentional deception of one's adversaries, as a condition of attaining future victory over them." (Lobov, in a March 1987 article, declared that this was a classical principle for all successful commanders, and called on Soviet military theorists to work up the concept of *khitrost*, or cunning: "The history of wars testifies, that military commanders throughout all time, have attributed great significance to military cunning. They strove to encumber the enemy with false impressions . . . and thus to create more favorable conditions for victory.")

Turning to the question of what the U.S. is doing in secret today, Lobov alluded to the Soviets' great fear—that the SDI might actually be carried out at the pace of a Manhattan or Apollo project, in which case the West would run circles of scientific excellence around the Russian empire. He warns, "The classical example of secrecy in the creation of weapons that are new in principle, was the execution of the so-called Manhattan Project in the United States."

As the military applications of science were developed in the postwar period, Lobov reports, it reached the point where one specialist in strategy could say, "The new theory of military power is based to a larger degree on scientific and technical, than on military or economic potentials. The ability to develop military innovations (new types of weapons, new tactics, new forms of organization; or a combination of these) . . . is probably the decisive factor in military power today." But for Lobov, the economy remains paramount: "Historical experience shows, that secrecy respecting the strategic directions of economic policy and the achievements of science and technology pursues the goal of achieving the effect of surprise, both in the competitive struggle, and in the antagonism of the two systems." Socialism and capitalism, that is, or—more accurately—East and West.

A more precise description of Moscow's economic *perestroika* (restructuring), and the pretty wrappings in which it has been presented to the West, could not be found, than the one Lobov provides there.

In conclusion, Lobov sums up the impact of a crash program for development of new military technologies: "In the design of the SDI ideologues, the whole complex of long-range scientific research programs, conducted under its cover, will lead to achievements not only, and not so much, in 'space' technologies, as to a qualitative technological breakout. And this, in turn, should bring about the development of new types of weaponry on a different technological basis, on different technological principles, i.e., ensure 'technological breakout.' Not only in space weapons, but in weapons systems on Earth. This is the essence of the SDI. . . . I want to repeat and especially underscore: The main thing in 'operation SDI' is to cover up the development of qualitatively new weaponry."