

Citing SDI: A Call for U.S.-Russian Cooperation

March 30—Graham Allison, a former Assistant Secretary of Defense, who was involved in developing U.S. policy toward Russia in the Clinton Administration, and is now director of the Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs at the Harvard Kennedy School, penned an op-ed in the March 28 *Los Angeles Times*, wondering what President Reagan would do, were he here today, in the midst of the U.S.-Russia ballistic missile defense impasse.

“My bet is that he would offer the Russians not only transparency about U.S. missile defense systems, but actual shared control of those systems in a reconfigured deployment that would incorporate

Russian as well as U.S. radar systems, and invite Russia to join the U.S. in deploying defenses against emerging nuclear threats.”

Allison likens Reagan’s proposal to “President Kennedy’s pledge to send a man to the Moon.” Reagan’s vision, he says “was meant to stretch minds to new realities that most found inconceivable.”

Allison reviews both the Soviet distrust of Reagan’s motives, and the “fiery criticism at home and abroad.” Today, ballistic missile defense is a “stumbling block in the U.S.-Russian relations,” and requires a Reaganesque “thinking well outside the box” of proposals now on the table.

Allison’s writing stands in stark contrast to the SDI 30th anniversary event held on March 19 by the Heritage Foundation, which, 30 years ago, worked tirelessly to sabotage both President Reagan’s push to develop new directed-energy technologies for missile defense, and his offer of collaboration with the Soviet Union.