

The Soviets have unquestionably demonstrated two different techniques for knocking out satellites in orbit in their test programs. Overall ASAT testing has continued on an aggressive basis and was only halted for a four-year period during the era of détente between 1972 and 1976.

The most crude were ASATs that simply exploded in the vicinity of another vehicle, hitting it with shrapnel. These systems were good for only one-time use. More recently, the Soviets have tested ASATs that can "throw" material at a satellite, without exploding themselves.

Since at least 1975, Western military experts have suspected that the Soviets were developing lasers for ASAT deployment. At the end of that year there were reports that the Soviets had "blinded" two U.S. spy satellites over Asia by using intense radiation from the ground. The Pentagon denied the satellites had been "blinded" and stated that they had been "dazzled" by large fire along a natural gas pipeline.

In 1976, Dr. Malcolm Currie, Defense Department director of Defense Research and Engineering, stated that the United States is "investigating the vulnerability of our satellites to radiation from lasers and . . . examining techniques for reducing the effects of such radiation." This is called, "hardening" the satellite.

What would the Soviets lose if they signed an ASAT treaty? Probably less than nothing, even if they did not cheat on it. First, they do not need to test more conventional ASATs since, of their more than 16 tests, 10 have already been successful. Second, their ground-based laser ASAT system would probably not fall under the treaty.

Third, there is no reason that the Soviets could not deploy ASATs into orbit without any other nation knowing about them. Only when the ASATs were quickly maneuvered into another orbital plane near another satellite would the United States know that this one of a thousand Cosmos satellites was an ASAT. David Ritchie has pointed out that the Soviets could also maneuver an ASAT to attack a target in less than one orbit, demonstrating a "pop-up" ASAT capability which would only be used when an attack was in progress.

The argument has been made that, since the Soviet ASATs have only been tested to an orbital altitude of less than 600 miles, they do not threaten the military communications and reconnaissance satellites that the United States has 23,000 miles up in geosynchronous orbit. However, space experts including James Oberg have pointed out that the operational Soviet heavy-lift Proton booster is capable of taking an ASAT to geosynchronous orbit, though this has not yet been tested.

Under the proper circumstances, the Soviets could deploy nuclear-tipped missiles into a fractional orbit to hit the United States in a surprise attack. At the same instant, they could blind and destroy the satellites that would warn the United States that such an attack was underway.

The United States is now trying to catch up to at least the Soviet ASAT capability, while undertaking an aggressive anti-ICBM beam weapon program. Only then will the military capabilities in space be "balanced."

U.N. conference on Palestine plots Middle East radicalization

by Thierry and Mary Lalevée in Geneva

The International Conference on the Question of Palestine, held from Aug. 29 to Sept. 7 in Geneva, Switzerland under United Nations auspices, was an anti-American orgy led by senior Soviet officers and collaborators of the Swiss-based Nazi International.

Not one delegation to the conference, cozily protected from outside reality in the U.N. palace, felt moved to comment on the barbaric act of the Soviet Union in shooting down the Korean commercial airliner Sept. 1. As if nothing had happened, the conference ended with a rhetorical call for a joint conference of the United States and the Soviet Union with the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) and Israel to solve the Arab-Israeli conflict. A complementary resolution, also ignoring the present international crisis and the massacres in Lebanon, rhetorically repeated a call for the rights of all states to exist in the region. Although Israel was not mentioned, it was implied that its right to exist would be acknowledged provided a Palestinian state could be created beside it.

For participants, who were members of official delegations and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) gathered in defense of the Palestinian people against such atrocities as the 1982 massacre of Palestinians living in the Sabra and Chatila refugee camps in Lebanon, the failure to condemn the Soviet massacre was more than severe moral weakness. Journalists at the conference picked up the argument, "What's 300 people killed, when so many others are killed every day in Lebanon or elsewhere?"—indicating the cynical view that the criminality of a massacre depends on who perpetrates it.

Behind the scene controllers

Three delegations dominated the conference from behind the scenes: the Soviets, the Libyans, and the Iranians. Smelling the danger, the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO)

had reportedly tried until the last minute to convince U.N. General-Secretary Pérez de Cuellar to either postpone or cancel the event, because PLO leaders knew it would devolve into a closed session of the radical delegations and the supporters of “driving Israel into the sea,” a conception of Palestinian interests not shared by such PLO leaders as Dr. Issam Sartawi, who was killed in Lisbon April 11 by the Syrian-controlled terrorist Abu Nidal. Most of the terrorist-support networks that had contributed to Sartawi’s murder had representatives in the room. To placate them, the PLO adopted an outright radical tone.

The PLO’s capitulation was obvious the first day, when Abd Rabbo of the PLO executive read a welcoming statement from Arafat denouncing the Reagan Mideast peace plan and blaming all the evils of the Middle East on the United States. This statement even omitted any references to the Israeli peace movement represented in the room by Uri Avneri and Matiyahu Peled, who later that day issued a press release to say how shocked they were.

PLO Foreign Minister Farouk Kaddoumi made up for the lapse in his speech the next day, and Arafat followed suit when he finally arrived at the conference on Sept. 2. Sources report that Arafat should also be credited for the final resolution, which was far milder than the anti-American hysterics aired in the plenary sessions.

Despite a final show of Arab unity, hostility was obvious in the back rooms and the corridors. Arafat’s arrival five days after the beginning of the conference was telling; reportedly, he wanted to avoid crossing paths with Syrian Foreign Minister Abdul Halim Khaddam, who left Sept. 31. The Syrian delegation made a point of never applauding any PLO declaration. Backing Syria was the Iranian delegation of some 15 members, led by Foreign Minister Ali Akbar Velayati, who unleashed a scorching attack on the PLO and Arafat personally.

While the Libyans made no public statements, they acted. On Sept. 1, not waiting for Geneva to end, they convened a summit in Tripoli of Palestinians opposed to Arafat to create a “Committee to Monitor Arafat’s Activities,” led by Syrian-backed rebel Abu Saleh.

The Soviet sent more than 20 representatives—the biggest delegation at the conference—led by Middle East troubleshooter and crisis expert Vladimir Vinogradov, a top foreign ministry Mideast operative. Vinogradov was ambassador in Cairo in 1967, and ambassador to Lebanon in 1975. His last diplomatic post, from 1979 on, was Teheran. In his entourage was no less than Yevgenii Primakov, the Soviet KGB expert on Middle Eastern affairs, in his capacity as director of the Oriental Institute of Moscow. The conference reeked of the influence of Geidar Aliyev, Soviet deputy prime minister and crafter of Moscow’s “Islam-Marixst” card.

Unusual meetings

But speeches denouncing the evils perpetrated by American imperialism were only the window-dressing. For the

numerous Non-Governmental Organizations which had obtained the coveted NGO status by submitting applications claiming to “share the aims of the conference” (the World Jewish Congress was rejected), it was clear that the U.N. palace became a safehouse for gatherings that under any other auspices, would have put the police forces of any European country on alert. Groups denounced by governments present in the room as “dangerous” and “terrorists” enjoyed the protection of the largest security deployment ever seen in tranquil Geneva, including the Swiss regular army’s tanks, helicopters, and trained dogs, Swiss police, and the U.N. security apparatus from Geneva and New York. After a few days, it became obvious to many correspondents that the heavy security was also aimed at preventing almost all contact between journalists and the delegations.

The speech by former Indonesian foreign minister Abdel Gani betrayed the real political purpose of most of the NGOs. Gani lavished abundant praise on the “great Grand Mufti of Jerusalem Al Husseini, the first freedom fighter of Palestine.” The Grand Mufti was reported to have met personally with Adolf Hitler to set up fascist organizations in the Middle East. Such a statement could not have been made out of mere opportunism or stupidity. It indicated the ends of the coalition of forces at the conference: the Islamic fundamentalists, the Muslim Brotherhood, known terrorists, and old and new Nazis.

The fundamentalist-Nazi coalition was epitomized by the representatives of Islam and the West, the Club of Rome/Muslim Brotherhood front. Its secretary-general Marcel Boisard was in Geneva under the cover of the U.N. Unitar organization, and its vice-president Ma’arouf Dawalibi attended as chairman of the World Muslim Congress. The former prime minister of Syria and head of the Muslim Brotherhood, Dawalibi, is also known to have sponsored the translation of Hitler’s *Mein Kampf* into Arabic. Another associate of Islam and the West, Salem Azzam, attended the conference as chairman of the Islamic Council of Europe, the headquarter of the Muslim Brotherhood in Europe. Azzam, together with Ahmed Ben Bella and Said Ramadhan of the Geneva-based Islamic International Center, leads the European triumvirate of the Brotherhood, aided by his second in command, Muazzam Ali, who belongs to Pakistan’s Muslim Brotherhood, the Jamaati Islami. Azzam; under his pseudonym of “Abu Mohammed,” is also a leading member of the Egyptian national front of Gen. Saadeddim Shazli, which boasted responsibility for Sadat’s murder.

Outright Nazis attended the conference as part of a French delegation. Sabdeen Jabara from Detroit, a renowned supporter of the radical PLO splinter group, Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP), was there, joined by the “November 29th coalition” of the Puerto Rican FALN and the Black Liberation Army. All were heavily lobbied by Libya’s latest offshoot, the Tripoli-based “International organization against all forms of racial discrimination” of Dr. Anis al-Qasem.