

## Attacks on the Pentagon aimed at beam weapons

by Susan Kokinda in Washington, D.C.

A broad front of political forces—including Andropov Democrats, Kissinger Republicans in the U.S. Senate, the appeasement-minded U.S. press, and the U.S. State Department itself—is poised to exploit two controversies early in 1984, in order to prevent the Reagan administration from mobilizing the nation in response to the Soviets' confrontation drive. The two issues, the U.S. military presence in Lebanon and the size of the U.S. defense budget, are being used to undercut Defense Secretary Caspar Weinberger and the Pentagon during a period of strategic tension leading very probably to a showdown with the Soviet Union.

Weinberger, of course, has been the administration's out-front spokesman for the new strategic doctrine enunciated by President Reagan last March 23, calling for a strategic defense against incoming nuclear missiles using the "new physical principles" of directed-energy beam weapons.

Behind the assaults stands the unholy alliance of the Soviet KGB, which has activated all its assets in the West, and the International Monetary Fund and U.S. Federal Reserve Board, who intend to maintain their control over the world economy at the expense of American economic sovereignty and national security. The threat by IMF director Jacques de Larosière, issued in Washington on Dec. 6, that the United States must impose massive budget cuts or accept responsibility for a world financial collapse, is music to the ears of the Soviet military command.

The opening salvo against the Pentagon began over the weekend of Dec. 10 with articles in the *New York Times* and the *Washington Post* on the theme that the Pentagon was the source of American problems in Lebanon. The *Times* of Dec. 11 laid the blame for the bombing of U.S. Marine barracks in Beirut at the doorstep of the military. The *Post* argued the same day that the use of U.S. planes in Lebanon rather than

the guns on the battleship *New Jersey*, a tactic which resulted in U.S. losses, was a failure of the civilian command authority—i.e., the Secretary of Defense—in exercising proper control over the military.

The next day, the *Washington Post* carried a front-page article by Brian Urquhart, a Briton who purportedly devised the idea of a "peacekeeping force," charging that once the U.S. forces in Lebanon "retaliated" (i.e., defended themselves), they were no longer a peacekeeping force and would fail. The spectre of a Vietnam-style unrestrained military was raised in the *Post* Dec. 13 by George Ball, perennial Democratic State Department appointee. Observers at Weinberger's Dec. 13 speech to the Washington Press Club compared the correspondents to a school of sharks sniffing for an opportunity to "get" Weinberger.

From the Democratic congressional leadership, whose position is that Andropov is a man of peace while Reagan is a warmonger, the cry has gone up to re-open debate on the War Powers Act and to present the White House with the demand for a humiliating retreat of U.S. forces in Lebanon. When Democratic presidential hopeful Sen. Gary Hart of Colorado demanded that a special session of Congress be convened to reopen the War Powers Act debate, he was quickly seconded by front-runner Walter Mondale. While the proposal to reconvene Congress will go nowhere, the ground is being readied for a January Democratic assault on the U.S. presence in Lebanon.

One Senate source said, "You're going to see a coalition ranging from Barry Goldwater to Ted Kennedy demanding a U.S. withdrawal." Adding credibility to this report, syndicated columnists Evans and Novak reported Dec. 12 that Reagan loyalists in the House Republican leadership, such as GOP Whip Trent Lott of Mississippi and senior Foreign

Affairs Committee Republican Henry Hyde of Illinois, had privately communicated to the White House their diminishing support for the U.S. mission.

### State Department sabotage

The erosion of support among pro-defense congressmen is attributable to the State Department's grip over U.S. Middle East policy. As the administration has been maneuvered by Henry Kissinger's allies at State into an ever-closer alliance with the Ariel Sharon faction in the leadership of Israel, U.S. influence with moderate Arab forces in the region is collapsing (see article, page 57), while the fanatic assets of the KGB and Nazi International are unleashed in a regionwide destabilization effort. It is indicative that Undersecretary of State Lawrence Eagleburger, a career Kissinger flunkey, delivered the closed briefing on the situation in Lebanon to members of Congress in mid-December. An often-heard *private* comment on Capitol Hill is that the Marines are being used as an appendage of State Department "appeasement" diplomacy.

As long as no legislator talks out loud about it, such disaffection only serves to feed the overall assault on the Pentagon. Nowhere is this clearer than in the investigation of the bombing of the U.S. Marine barracks in Beirut. It is widely known that the State Department dictated the rules which ensured that Marine guards did not even have their weapons loaded when the kamikaze attack came. Yet it is expected that the Long Commission, set up by Defense Secretary Weinberger under the chairmanship of Adm. Robert Long (ret.), will blame the military. One source put it, "We know that the rules of engagement were established by the State Department and we have been trying to officially confirm that. But we can't. The Pentagon has been ordered to be good soldiers and cover up for the State Department and take the rap."

The aroma of coverup exuded from the Dec. 14 State Department daily briefing. *EIR* correspondent Stanley Ezrol asked State Department spokesman Alan Romberg, "In light of completion of the Long Commission report, can you comment on the suspicions that it was actually the State Department which recommended the lack of security at the Marine compound outside of Beirut?" Rather than the standard refusal to comment on internal administration decisions, Romberg said, "That was a military decision, made entirely within the Pentagon." Ezrol followed up: "Are you denying that the State Department made any recommendations whatsoever regarding the security of our Marines in Lebanon?" A discomfited Romberg gave an uncharacteristically abrupt "Yes."

### Too poor to defend ourselves

The other line of attack on the Pentagon which will dominate the next dangerous months is the effort to cut the defense budget in order to "reduce the deficit." After a year of semi-hibernation, the deficit bogeyman has been awakened to turn politicians into quivering sheep, and stampede them into cuts

which will serve only the strategic designs of the Soviet high command. Just at the point that the administration be making major decisions about the size and timetable of the desperately needed beam-weapon-centered ballistic missile defense system, and next year's overall defense budget, the IMF and Fed chairman Paul Volcker insist that if there is an international financial crisis, it will mainly be the result of the U.S. budget deficit. De Larosière blamed high U.S. interest rates caused, he claimed, by the deficit, for part of the Third World debt crisis. Although these financiers have avoided verbalizing their conclusion, no one on Capitol Hill has missed the intended point: The United States cannot afford to defend itself and must cut the proposed 1985 defense budget drastically.

Caught in the wringer is Defense Secretary Weinberger, who has already recommended, first, a 22 percent increase, and then a 17 percent increase in the defense budget. "It doesn't matter if the strategic situation demands such an increase or not," one Washington source commented, "you just can't say something like that publicly—Weinberger has completely isolated himself. He is fair game in 1984." "You start talking 17 percent and you have just lost the Howard Bakers [Senate Majority Leader] and Pete Dominici [Senate Budget Committee chairman] from the administration's side," said another.

The danger is that not just the Nuclear Freeze-dominated Democrats, but that a large chunk of the Republicans, including forces Reagan counts on in the "fiscal conservative" camp, like the KGB-contaminated Heritage Foundation, are calling for a slowdown in defense spending. The National Taxpayers Union and nominally conservative Sen. Charles Grassley of Iowa have demanded an across-the-board budget freeze.

Indeed, it is the budget-cutting Kissinger Republicans in the Senate leadership, blocking with the Andropov anti-defense Democrats, who are likely to give Weinberger and the administration the most trouble. The FY 1984 defense budget was shaved to under 5 percent by this coalition this year, and conventional wisdom has it that the under-5-percent figure will hold next year as well. Senate Finance Committee chairman Bob Dole (R-Kan.) held a series of hearings during the congressional recess on the danger of the deficit. Dole provided a forum for the AFL-CIO, the American Enterprise Institute, and the Heritage Foundation. Dole's staff is working on a \$150 billion deficit reduction package (composed of one-half tax increases and one-half budget cuts) to be finished shortly after the President's State of the Union address.

Dole has liaised with freshman Democratic members of the House, led by Jim Moody (Wis.), a Keynesian economics professor who succeeded the now-retired Henry Reuss as the Bank for International Settlements's leading asset. When the Dole proposal is released, the entire House Democratic caucus will meet for a weekend workshop, instigated by the freshmen, to come up with an alternative to the President's budget.