

President faces defense budget rout as KGB congressmen smell blood

by Susan Kokinda and Vin Berg

President Ronald Reagan is currently staring in the face of a defense-budget rout. Because he had neither the perception of reality nor the courage in an election year to appeal directly to the American people for support of a crash beam-weapons defense program, his administration is now backed so deeply into a corner by the congressional friends of Henry Kissinger that he is about to take the teeth out of not only the Strategic Defense Initiative, but virtually the entirety of the strategic modernization program in the course of the current wrangling over the defense budget.

The administration presently confronts in Congress a well-organized coalition of Democrats and Republicans who are demanding “substantive arms control concessions” in exchange for continued support of the MX missile program—and a significantly scaled-back program at that.

The coalition is the same as that which confronted the President in late 1982, when he also found himself unable to obtain the necessary support for the MX; so, he appointed the “bipartisan” Scowcroft Commission to resolve the impasse, narrowly winning the MX votes in April and May of 1983 in exchange for adopting Henry Kissinger’s (Scowcroft’s) recommended posture on arms-control. The Kissinger proposals involved elimination of MIRV’ed missiles in favor of single-warhead “midgetman” systems, and MX and ABM programs sufficient only to be credible cards in Geneva negotiations (and then bargained away). They would have disallowed a U.S. defense revitalization adequate to re-establish parity with superior Soviet forces. They would have done so, that is, had the Soviets been disposed to accept these or any proposals for negotiation from the administration.

Back to MAD

The “substantive concessions” involved this time would amount to a retraction of the President’s March 23, 1983 commitment to a doctrine of “Mutually Assured Survival” based on defensive-systems development, misnamed “Star Wars” by a hostile press. They would require the President to return to a hard commitment to the past decades’ “Mutually Assured Destruction” doctrine and associated weapons-deployment policies, the means by which Kissinger has contrived to maintain the “assured vulnerability” of the United States.

On April 18, Democrats led by Dale Bumpers (Ark.) launched a bipartisan initiative in the Senate to have the administration reassert its standing policy of adhering to the numerical limits of the unratified SALT II treaty—although it has never been clearer than at present that for the Soviet Union, this and other arms-control pacts have served only to prevent the United States from answering in kind the largest military buildup in the history of the world. This is well known to a minority of relevant Pentagon officials, who want the President to break from the “arms-control” framework altogether, placing U.S. national security on the firm basis of U.S. strength as such, in conjunction with a crash development of relativistic-beam technologies of defense. According to congressional sources, the Bumpers resolution, which has the support of Republicans John Heinz (Pa.) and John Chafee (R.I.), is targeted at this Pentagon faction, a message to the President that approval of MX monies depends on sweeping their recommendations aside.

Bumpers’ initiative the Republican-dominated Senate, of the third in a package of sweeping amendments introduced in the House by Democrats Les Aspin (Wisc.), Norman Dicks (Wash.), and Albert Gore (Tenn.). These call for:

- No U.S. deployment of anti-satellite weapons (which the Soviets have already deployed);
- Limiting the funding and character of the Strategic Defense Initiative (beam-weapons development) to a “research effort only”;
- Maintenance of the numerical limits on offensive systems established by the unratified SALT II treaty;
- Assuring the invulnerability of the U.S. submarine-launched ballistic missile (SLBM) capability;
- Downgrading of the U.S. forward-based nuclear deterrent (e.g., Euromissiles), in favor of upgrading NATO’s conventional forces.

Traitors and fools

Representative Aspin has denounced the President’s March 23 defensive-systems commitment as a “break with the policy that reasoned that the world was a safer place [when] we avoided an arms race in defensive systems”; he

calls U.S. SLBM capability “the epitome of a stabilizing system. . . . It must have been dreamed up by an arms controller.”

The congressman is at best uninformed. U.S. SLBMs are a minimal deterrent, by themselves no deterrent at all. They cannot reach most targets in the Soviet Union, and then only with relatively small warheads. The give-away in Aspin’s remarks is the “stabilizing” reference. His proposals are not off-the-shelf recommendations, but issue directly from Henry Kissinger’s “back-channel” agreements with the Soviet government dating from the 1950s and ’60s Pugwash conference agreements. What Aspin basically demands is maintenance of Mutually Assured Destruction, the imaginary “nuclear standoff” between the superpowers. This requires “assured vulnerability” of the United States. Anything else, like strategic superiority or effective defensive systems, is “destabilizing”—as Brent Scowcroft stated in April 1983 when unveiling his commission’s initial report.

“What if [the U.S. and U.S.S.R.] gave up the capability to destroy each other seven times over and cut our stockpiles back to the point where neither can destroy more than one-fourth of the other’s population and industry?” Aspen asks. “Would we be better off, or would leaders in a crisis be willing to resort to nuclear arms because now they would know that civilization could not be wiped off the map? Some facile solutions can make the nuclear world a less stable one in which to live.” He applies the same reasoning to a defense system that would protect the country from nuclear destruction: “destabilizing.”

What the President faces is a coalition of both traitors and fools, loyal to the Pugwash agreements, not to the United States, who are determined to use the blackmail tool of the MX missile to keep the MAD world of Pugwash in place. Aspin’s supporters include Rep. George Brown of California, founder of the Coalition for the Peaceful Uses of Space. That institution was founded after KGB official Fyodor Burlatskii told a May 1983 Minneapolis conference to direct all efforts of the peace movement toward killing Reagan’s Strategic Defense Initiative. Senator Dale Bumpers was among that congressional delegation which was the last to see Yuri Andropov alive in Moscow in August 1983, and returned to report the Soviets’ “eagerness” to engage in meaningful arms control negotiations. Then, the Russians shot KAL-07 the sky, sent a half-dozen nuclear submarines into Swedish territorial waters, staged a Baltic break-out into the North Sea, deployed a GRU-trained North Korean commando unit into Burma to carry out the bombing-murders of 16 members of the South Korean cabinet, and walked out of all arms-control negotiations.

Budget cutters

The President faces these friends of Henry Kissinger in an environment extremely unfavorable to defense spending of any sort. Just before the Easter recess, the Republican-dominated Senate Budget Committee came very, very close

to reporting out an FY85 budget which would have frozen spending on all programs, including a zero increase in defense spending after inflation. Its sponsors were Nancy Kassebaum (R-Kan.), Charles Grassley (R-Iowa), and Joe Biden (D-Dela.). After their last initials, it was appropriately dubbed “the KGB budget.” The KGB budget came within a few votes of passage.

At the same time, the usually pro-defense House Armed Services Committee disemboweled the FY85 defense authorization during early April markup. The committee cut \$19.7

cut in the committee’s history,” said an official press release. A particular target was the MX, which suffered a \$.5 million reduction, scaling FY85 procurement back from 40 to 30 missiles. The already-inadequate request for the Strategic Defense Initiative was cut by a stunning 23%, from \$1.8 billion to \$1.4 billion. Senate sources express only a limited hope that those cutbacks can even be held to House Armed Services Committee levels.

Reagan’s collapse

The problem is that the President of the United States still does not have the courage to present strategic reality to the American population in a direct appeal, and ride rough-shod over the congressional traitors and fools. President Reagan’s thinking is now conditioned by the “Kissinger submarines” who surround him, Michael Deaver and James Baker III, Senate Majority Leader Howard Baker, Defense Undersecretary Fred Iklé, and others, who merely echo a master-effort of the KGB and Eastern Establishment press to make development of defensive systems appear the height of militaristic war-mongering.

Personally, Reagan has already collapsed on the beam-weapons issue. At an April 9 press conference on release of the Scowcroft Commission’s final report, he assured General Scowcroft and the assembled press corps that the program would be kept at the research-and-development phase (no deployment) so as not to violate the 1972

which beam weapons would not violate even when deployed!

Only from Defense Secretary Weinberger, and the mass organizing around dark-horse Democratic presidential candidate Lyndon LaRouche’s campaign—carefully overlooked by the news media—is a rear-guard battle being waged to save the program, and the nation from early strategic humiliation. Weinberger has firmly declared his dislike for the ABM treaty and the MAD doctrine which it upholds, most recently on an April 7

broadcast. LaRouche is also taking to the airwaves, purchasing television and radio time to denounce Kissinger as a Soviet agent-of-influence and to rally the population in support of a crash-program version of the Strategic Defense Initiative.

Otherwise, with a President under control of Kissinger and his supporters among the White House palace guard, a defense-budget debacle is in the making.