

National News

Abrahamson counters beam-weapon opponents

Lt. Gen. James Abrahamson, director of the Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI), said in Washington, D.C. on May 7 that the United States may "embark on early deployment of a strategic defense system" to counter Soviet violations of the ABM Treaty of 1972. According to UPI, Abrahamson referred to elements of a multi-layered system which could be deployed before engineering problems of a total system had been solved.

As Abrahamson spoke, West German Foreign Minister Hans-Dietrich Genscher was in Washington lobbying against the Strategic Defense Initiative.

Abrahamson implied that the United States was not ready to negotiate with the Soviets on beam-weapon systems because these are still in the R&D stage, though Washington would be willing to discuss the progress being made on either side. Rumors had been circulating in Washington that President Reagan had agreed to a "deal" with Henry Kissinger and other opponents of the SDI, which would allow the State Department to "offer up" the beam-weapon initiative as a bargaining chip in arms talks with the Soviets.

Abrahamson's statements were similar in many respects to testimony which Defense Secretary Caspar Weinberger gave to House Armed Services Committee hearings on the SDI the previous week. The Pentagon chief stressed that the United States' response must be determined by what the Soviets are *doing*—building a nationwide ABM capability—rather than by what they are saying.

In Geneva this week, at the Compliance Committee of the START talks, the Soviet Union formally asked for information about the status of the U.S. Strategic Defense Initiative. The United States replied that simi-

lar information about the Soviet program would be required.

Is someone waking up in Washington?

EIR has warned for months that the Soviet Union is engaged in a global strategic showdown, while President Reagan is ignoring the worsening crisis for fear of appearing bellicose in an election year. It appears that some in Washington are beginning to take heed.

A May 9 column by nationally syndicated columnists Robert Evans and Rowland Novak stated that there is a "strong consensus" in the Reagan administration that "the Kremlin has made a decision to 'turn up the fear factor to the max.' That implies an ominous shift in Soviet policy toward the United States and its sometimes reluctant European allies: instead of underplaying its military power . . . it is trying to terrorize by muscle flexing."

But despite this "shift from Slavic caution to Great Russian chauvinism," the columnists charged, Reagan is exhibiting a "benign indifference" which "may be less of a sign of a president's strength than of a candidate's folly."

Evans and Novak detailed some of the more obvious signs of the Soviet policy shift, citing the multiple firings of six unarmed Soviet missiles believed to be SS-20s "which stunned U.S. intelligence early last month." They also noted the significance of the Soviets' massive naval maneuvers this winter, writing of "the tremor that surged through the Pentagon when the Defense Intelligence Agency learned that Delta-class Soviet strategic submarines—armed with nuclear-tipped strategic missiles—had sailed with the fleet into the open Atlantic."

Yet Reagan is still insisting on ignoring reality. "Desiring to shed all bellicosity and

appear a man of peace in seeking reelection, Reagan may be making a mistake by ignoring the Kremlin's shift. Asked at this last press conference about the Soviet naval exercise, he made light of it as 'nothing more' than the usual springtime war games.

"More than most, President Reagan should know his remark was nonsense. Treating voters as too delicate to know the truth could be downright dangerous by inadvertently helping the Gromyko-Ustinov campaign to overawe the West."

House leader calls for ban on usury

House Democratic leader Jim Wright called May 8 for a national usury law to put a cap on interest rates, saying many of the country's economic problems are the result of high interest rates. Wright said that Congress should have more control over the Federal Reserve Board, UPI reports.

Wright said that the Fed, which is "elected by nobody, answerable to nobody and removable by nobody," is able to "set utterly at naught" the economic policies determined by Congress and the President.

"I believe that we ought to have a national usury law," Wright declared, "such as the laws in many states that prevent interest rates from rising above a certain level.

"Many of our economic problems are directly related to high interest rates. There are more farm and small-business foreclosures this year than any since the Great Depression, in what is vaunted as a period of recovery."

Wright has been a critic of the Federal Reserve in the past, but during recent months has been silent on the issue, as his campaign was squelched by others in the party leadership. His renewed offensive indicates that recent election victories for anti-Federal Reserve LaRouche Democrats have given ma-

neuvering room to forces in the party who would like to move against Federal Reserve Chairman Paul Volcker.

Bipartisan Appeal for budget freeze

The Bipartisan Budget Appeal issued a statement May 3 demanding sweeping budget cuts. The group of 600 includes McGeorge Bundy, National Security Adviser during the Kennedy administration; former treasury secretaries Douglas Dillon (1961-65), Henry Fowler (1965-68), John Connally (1971-72), William Simon (1974-76), and W. Michael Blumenthal (1977-79); and a heavy representation from the Morgan-controlled Wall Street banks.

The Appeal calls for "a freeze of at least one year, preferably two, on cost-of-living adjustments for payments [for] . . . Social Security, civil service, and military retirement. . . . After years of ducking," the statement continues, "Congress and the administration must . . . squarely face the need for restraint."

The second assault is on defense. "Continued accelerated defense spending growth would embroil Congress and the administration in an increasingly acrimonious . . . battle." Increased defense spending, the statement lies, would send "discordant signals to friends and foes alike."

Top space science awards announced

Prestigious awards in space science were won by members and staff of the Fusion Energy Foundation (FEF) this month.

The top award of the Aviation/Space Writers Association for 1983 went to the

book *Beam Defense: An Alternative to Nuclear Destruction*, authored by the scientific staff of the FEF, a New York-based educational group. The book describes the feasibility of new beam technologies that can knock out nuclear missiles in the first few minutes of their launch.

Beam Defense was awarded top honors in the category of books and technical training, as well as the Robert S. Ball Memorial Award for overall excellence in space writing. Both awards were presented May 9 at the annual meeting of the Aviation/Space Writers Association in Las Vegas.

In its annual meeting May 3 in Washington, D.C., the American Institute of Aeronautics and Astronautics conferred its Goddard Astronautics Award on Krafft A. Ehricke for his "more than 40 years of practical and visionary contributions to astronautics." Space scientist Ehricke has been a pioneer in rocket propulsion, including work on the V-2 rocket, the Atlas missile, and the liquid-hydrogen Centaur. He is a member of the FEF and on the editorial advisory board of its magazine *Fusion*.

In accepting the award for her father, who was ill and unable to attend the Washington meeting, Krista Ehricke-Deer said that his work "has proven that there are no limits to growth" and that if his ideas for space development were carried out, there would be "increased agriculture, increased industry, an increased quality of life and increased human creativity."

Ehricke's Centaur was the first liquid-hydrogen rocket, a precursor of the Saturn V rockets that launched the Apollo missions to the Moon. Today it is being modified for use with the Space Shuttle to launch deep-space planetary missions and future manned space missions.

Ehricke is president of the Space Global Company in La Jolla, California. He has published more than 10 books and 50 papers and articles, and in 1982 he completed a 10-year study on the industrial development and settlement of the Moon.

Briefly

● **MARTIN FELDSTEIN**, chairman of President Reagan's Council of Economic Advisers, announced his resignation May 9 after nearly two years in office. A Harvard submarine in the Reagan administration, Feldstein became an embarrassment to the administration through his incessant attacks on the government's flailing economic policy, and through his demands for higher taxes, higher interest rates, and defense budget cuts—measures which would make an already disastrous situation even worse.

● **BROOK JOHNSON**, the U.S. Olympics women's track coach, has suggested that the Soviet pullout from the Los Angeles Olympics signals that Moscow is preparing to launch a wave of terror at the games. "All the terrorist groups are going to want to use [the Olympics] as a forum, and the Russians support those kinds of movements," she said, according to a report in the *San Jose Mercury* May 9.

● **ROBERT McNAMARA**, John Kennedy's secretary of defense and former head of the World Bank, has taken time off from his moon-beam-bathing antics with such outfits as the Lucis Trust and the World Futures Society to strike up an affair with Joan Braden, wife of syndicated columnist Tom Braden. "It's a very peculiar thing, I know," McNamara said in an interview with the *Washington Post*. "Look, she has eight children and she loves her husband very much and she's not about to leave him for me or any other man and beyond that I wouldn't marry her anyway because I'm not a homewrecker." The last public embarrassment of Tom Braden was April 6, when his column attacking Lyndon LaRouche as "the newest in nuts" hit the newsstands. Braden was distressed at LaRouche's charge that Henry Kissinger is a Soviet agent-of-influence. The same issue of the *Washington Times* that carried Braden's diatribe ran a front-page article reporting details of Kissinger's concealment of Soviet violations of arms-control treaties.