

Weinberger defends beam weapon program

Henry Kissinger has not yet totally taken over the Reagan administration; a speech given by Secretary of Defense Caspar Weinberger at Kansas State University on Sept. 27 indicates that there are forces in the administration committed to fighting for the beam-weapons defense program ("Strategic Defense Initiative") Kissinger and the Liberal Establishment want to negotiate away in arms-control talks with the Soviets. Weinberger's speech was made one day before President Ronald Reagan met with Soviet Foreign Minister Andrei Gromyko on Sept. 28.

The British *Daily Telegraph* of Oct. 5 reported that Weinberger is expected to propose a beam-weapons defense initiative based in Western Europe when the Defense Ministers of NATO's Nuclear Planning Group meet in Stresa, Italy the second week in October. The *Telegraph* reported that the American delegation believes such a proposal will counter the propaganda for "decoupling" Europe from the United States now growing on both sides of the Atlantic.

Weinberger's Kansas speech underlined that "arms control" can only be meaningful in the context of Mutually Assured Survival guaranteed by the new anti-ballistic missile (ABM) defensive systems. "Unfortunately, in the past we have not asked enough of our arms-control agreements. Consider what many hold up as a model for successful negotiations—the strategic Arms Limitation Talks (SALT) of the late 1960s and 1970s. Some of our finest statesmen participated in those negotiations. It took us two-and-a-half years to reach an interim agreement with the Soviets—SALT I. Then it took seven more years until the SALT II agreement."

SALT treaties ineffective

"All in all, the SALT negotiations lasted 10 years and spanned the terms of three Presidents. And the SALT II agreement was badly flawed and was withdrawn by President Carter from Senate consideration after the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. Amazingly, President Reagan is criticized for not reaching an agreement during his first term. And what did we get from those 10 years of patient negotiation?

"First, if the SALT treaties were an effective means of reducing or constraining nuclear arsenals, then it would not be necessary for President Reagan to conclude any agreement. But those treaties permitted a massive expansion and modernization of the Soviet nuclear arsenal. When SALT I was signed in 1972, the Soviets had roughly 2,300 strategic weapons. When SALT II was signed in 1979, the Soviet

arsenal had more than doubled to roughly 5,500 strategic weapons. Today, the Soviets have over 8,800 strategic warheads, and they could continue increasing to 8,600 ICBM warheads and well over 5,000 submarine-launched ballistic missile warheads all fully permitted by SALT II.

"As President Reagan said last year at the United Nations: 'Peace cannot be served by pseudo-arms control.'"

Weinberger emphasized, "We have learned much about negotiating with the Soviets. . . . We learned the value of patiently continuing a dialogue. . . . We learned that the Soviets respect strength. . . . We also learned the importance of writing treaties with precise language, treaties that cannot be easily broken and treaties without loopholes."

"We look to the day when we can supplement our sole dependence on offensive forces for deterrence with a more stable deterrent based on effective strategic defenses as well. We look to the day when we can deter war by securing the ability to destroy weapons, not people.

"In objecting to SDI, many critics claim that a strategic

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defense system must be guaranteed to be 100% effective before it should even be considered a worthwhile national goal. But to prove the potential of a defensive deterrent . . . we need only show first that we can make the success of any attack by an adversary too uncertain for him to hazard aggression. . . . It [SDI] can also enhance the opportunity for arms reductions. . . . By devaluing nuclear ballistic missiles, we can create powerful incentives for sharp reductions in their numbers—reductions that would enhance the security of the United States, its allies and the Soviet Union."

Weinberger pointed out that the Strategic Defense Initiative does not violate the ABM treaty, and that the Soviets "are in the process of constructing a major early warning radar facility of a type in a location that is forbidden by the ABM treaty." He added that "strategic defenses could serve as a policeman for the most ambitious arms reduction proposals.

"These major arms reduction and strategic defense proposals are indeed a challenge to so-called 'conventional wisdom.'

dent Reagan before, nor will it prevent him from taking dramatic initiatives in the future. In fact, that is the key to his present success. . . . We will not be shackled to the conventional wisdom, which frequently is not all that wise."