

## Moscow's pre-summit offensive against the SDI

by Kathleen Klenetsky

If the White House Palace Guard has its way, President Reagan will be sent off to his November summit with Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachov in the worst political shape of his presidency.

Judging by the much-touted "strategy session" which White House Chief of Staff Donald Regan convened on Aug. 13—and from which the President himself was noticeably absent—Regan and his cronies are now setting a course for the President which will not only bring him into violent conflict with Congress and cause a sharp decline in his political popularity, but will so weaken him that he will be highly susceptible to Gorbachov's demands that the U. S. abandon or severely limit the Strategic Defense Initiative. "We want to set the agenda for Ronald Reagan," Don Regan announced at the close of the session.

### Palace Guard's agenda for disaster

The agenda which Regan and the other participants at the meeting set for the President is a prescription for total disaster.

According to Regan and White House spokesman Larry Speakes, one of the key decisions reached was to have the President launch a major offensive against domestic spending come fall, which will involve ripping up the budget compromise which the White House had reached with Congress earlier this month. Speakes and Regan declared that the President will use the appropriations process to seek deeper cuts in domestic spending than are contained in the congressional budget bill. The announcement precipitated instantaneous howls of outrage from the Hill, with House Speaker Tip O'Neill's office castigating the President for "picking a fight" with Congress.

Adding to the President's woes is the distinct possibility that the international financial community is planning to pull

the plug on the United States' economy this fall, which will cause the whole crumbling edifice to come tumbling down. This is scheduled to occur during the same time frame in which the International Monetary Fund Interim Committee holds its meeting in Seoul, where the United States budget deficit, and the alleged need for greater IMF policing of member nations' domestic economic policies, is expected to be the principal focus.

With the recovery fantasy up in smoke, Reagan will be under extreme pressure to agree to deeper cuts in defense—and to salvage his presidency by achieving a "breakthrough" in U.S.-Soviet relations.

Unfortunately, the only "breakthrough" the Soviets will allow, calls for U. S. abandonment of the SDI.

That's precisely what Regan, and Regan's pals in the Triateral Commission, want. It is a well-known secret in Washington that Regan, that "tough old Marine," opposes the SDI with the same vehemence with which he has undermined Defense Secretary Caspar Weinberger's attempts to maintain a minimum level of military spending.

In his remarks to reporters after the strategy meeting, Regan indicated that as far as plans for the summit were concerned, he wanted to ensure that nothing was done that would impede the U. S.-Soviet dialogue.

Just a few days earlier, National Security Affairs chief Robert McFarlane gave a background briefing on the summit arrangements, which indicates the kind of nonsense Reagan is being fed by his advisers. According to McFarlane, the President "wants to say [to Gorbachov] we have no hostile intentions to the Soviet Union, that you are a great power, that we don't seek to alter that, that you need not fear the U. S. trying to overthrow or fundamentally change your system," but that the United States has "some misgivings about whether you have the same benign intentions."

A further escalation by the Palace Guard came Aug. 15, when press spokesman Larry Speakes issued a statement which softened a position taken earlier by the President concerning Gorbachov's latest propaganda ploy, his invitation to the United States to join Russia's supposed nuclear test moratorium. When questioned on this in early August, Reagan had dismissed the Gorbachov "offer" as a joke, on the grounds that the Soviets had already completed tests of their new nuclear missiles, and didn't have any more to do. But in a statement issued Aug. 15, Speakes said that while the Soviets had finished testing and deployment of the SS-18s and 19s, they had only "accelerated their testing on the 24s and 25s" in advance of the moratorium announcement.

Any retreat on this issue is dangerous, given that a test ban has long been advocated by the SDI's enemies as a backdoor means of icing the program, since it would prohibit testing of SDI technology, and thus make development beyond a certain limited point impossible.

Syndicated columnist Joseph Kraft, a Trilateral Commission charter member, boosted the moratorium in precisely this way in a *Washington Post* column of Aug. 11. Kraft urged Reagan to announce, on the eve of his summit with Gorbachov, that the United States will join the Russians in a nuclear test moratorium.

"There is at least a chance Gorbachov would accept" the offer, wrote Kraft. "He would thus cut off 'Star Wars' and put a lid on the U.S. buildup." Noting that one reason some of the President's advisers oppose such a test ban is because it would prohibit testing of the x-ray laser, one of the most promising strategic defense technologies, Kraft concluded: "No doubt, some will oppose such an offer as too risky. The great majority would probably approve. But at least Reagan ought to have all the information he needs to decide whether it is a risk for peace he wants to take."

### **Soviet propaganda offensive: the U.S. . . .**

Kraft's column is just one small element in a massive, presummit Soviet propaganda offensive against the SDI. Over the past two weeks in particular, the Soviets directly, along with their numerous assets in the West, have been churning out reams of propaganda designed to create a climate in which Reagan will have no choice but to make significant concessions to Gorbachov. For their part, the Trilateralists and the rest of the "New Yalta" crowd, are appealing to Gorbachov to concede the U.S. "right" to pursue SDI *research*, in exchange for a guarantee to put the kibosh on testing and development.

The most brazen example yet of just how far the Soviets are prepared to go with their disinformation campaign, was the advertisement which the Soviet Embassy in Washington purchased in the *New York Times* on Aug. 13. The ad, entitled "What Holds Back Progress at the Geneva Talks," reprinted a July 31 *Pravda* editorial which places the blame for the stalemate at the Geneva arms talks squarely on the United States, and reiterates that without a Reagan backdown on the

SDI, superpower relations will continue to worsen.

The Soviets have also published a book on the SDI, to which the *Times* gave free publicity Aug. 12. Entitled "Star Wars, Delusions and Dangers," the 56-page volume—which the Soviets have mailed gratis to Washington policymakers and policy influencers and members of the press—is a typical heavyhanded Soviet diatribe against the U.S. strategic defense program.

"We live in a complicated world," the text begins. "This pamphlet shows the true aims of the U.S. 'Star Wars' plan and demonstrates the substance of the Soviet and U.S. approaches to the use of outer space; it contains an estimate of the calamitous consequences for all nations of the U.S. President's 'strategic defense initiative,' which is being carried forward in the setting of a further buildup of U.S. strategic offensive arms."

The book is full of graphics including renditions of the Midgetman missile and antisatellite rocket, and a two-page spread purporting to show a "version of 'nationwide' ABM system now being developed by U.S.A. as part of nuclear first-strike capability."

Soviet efforts in the United States are being abetted by such productions as an ABC-*Washington Post* poll, released in mid-August, which purported to prove that popular support for the SDI has declined precipitously over the last few months. The poll claimed that more than 50% of the American population opposes the SDI under any circumstances, and that a whopping 75% oppose it if it means abrogating the 1972 ABM Treaty.

### **. . . and Europe**

By all indications, these are just the beginnings of what promises to be the most intensive Soviet propaganda campaign in years, one which will go into high gear after Labor Day [see chronology below].

Soviet anti-SDI efforts in Europe are no less frenetic. Even the *Washington Post* was forced to acknowledge that in the weeks leading up to the summit, Gorbachov will try to "intensify misgivings" in Europe about the SDI, by focusing on the "potentially divisive distinction [between SDI research and testing]." According to *Post* reporter Jim Hoagland, just back from a visit to the Soviet Union, Gorbachov will do this by "holding out the possibility that the Soviet Union will agree to deep cuts in offensive weapons if Star Wars is confined to research short of systems testing." The Russians have constructed a timetable around the Nov. 19 [summit] meeting "that gives Gorbachov maximum exposure in Europe as a leader who has been proposing and implementing bans on nuclear weapons deployment and testing," reports Hoagland, including a visit to Paris beginning Oct. 2.

If Gorbachov fails to get Reagan to give away the SDI, he nevertheless has a "secondary agenda: To come away from Geneva having damaged Reagan's credibility and increased tensions both within the administration and between Washington and Europe on arms control issues."

# Soviets aim campaign of lies against SDI

*The weeks leading up to President Reagan's summit meeting in Geneva with Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachov will witness one of the most intense Soviet propaganda campaigns in history, aimed at destroying President Reagan's resistance to bargaining away the Strategic Defense Initiative. The chronology below documents some of the highlights of this KGB operation, both ones which have occurred and those planned for the future:*

**July 29:** Soviet party chief Mikhail Gorbachov announces that the Soviet Union will institute a moratorium on all nuclear testing on Aug. 6, and invites the United States to join.

**Aug. 5:** *New York Post* reporter Niles Lathem writes that Secretary of Defense Caspar Weinberger has come under such intense attack that he may resign his post.

**Aug. 5:** It is revealed that a new panel, charged with conducting a sweeping assessment of United States strategic policy and weapons development, has been mandated by Congress. A key member of the panel is Zbigniew Brzezinski, an ardent advocate of decoupling, and proponent of negotiating away the SDI.

**Aug. 10:** The Center for Defense Information, an ultraliberal Washington think tank headed by retired Admiral Gene LaRocque, issues a report claiming that the Soviets are not on the verge of a nuclear breakout, won't be able to threaten the U.S. submarine-based force until the year 2000, and "are not confident" of their ability to launch a first-strike against the United States.

**Aug. 10:** National Security Adviser Robert McFarlane tells reporters that a tentative agenda for the summit has been reached, with regional and bilateral issues, human rights and arms control being the four main areas of discussion.

**Aug. 11:** Trilateral Commission member Joseph Kraft writes a syndicated column calling on President Reagan to join the Soviet test ban, noting that this would put the SDI on ice.

**Aug. 12:** Moscow's Information Chief Leonid Zamyatin, at a Moscow event celebrating the signing of the German-Soviet Treaty 15 years ago, accuses the current Bonn government of revanchist tendencies. Zamyatin alleges that Bonn's

support for the SDI means it is joining in an "American policy of planned aggression against the U.S.S.R.," and thus violates the spirit of non-violence as expressed in the 1970 treaty.

**Aug. 12:** The Information Department of the U.S.S.R. Embassy in Washington publishes a large advertisement in the *New York Post* under the title, "What Holds Back Progress at the Geneva Talks?" A reprint of a *Pravda* editorial, the ad attacks the United States for impeding progress on arms by refusing to drop its strategic defense program.

**Aug. 13:** Mikhail Gorbachov renews his call for the United States to join the Soviet nuclear test moratorium.

**Aug. 13:** The *Philadelphia Inquirer* publishes a lead editorial advising that "if progress is to be made at this summit, the President must be disabused of notions that he can convince Moscow of the merits of this new centerpiece of his weapons strategy [SDI]. . . . Mr. Reagan must be aware that his European allies are nervous about Star Wars. They are listening eagerly to Soviet hints that Moscow might substantially reduce its nuclear arsenal if Mr. Reagan agreed to limit testing and development—while continuing research—on Star Wars. Such Soviet feelers should be explored at the summit. . . ."

**Aug. 14:** A conference on the "crumbling Soviet empire" sponsored by a Moonie front group, the Professors' Association for World Peace, opens in Geneva. In the keynote speech, R. V. Burke, professor emeritus at Wayne State University in Detroit, says that the chances for a complete breakdown of the Soviet economic system "within the next five years are probably better than ever."

**Aug. 14:** *Washington Post*-ABC poll is published, claiming that more than 50% of the American population now opposes the SDI.

## Post-Labor Day

**September:** The Union of Concerned Scientists launches a national "educational" campaign against the SDI, complete with a new video tape, "Weapons in Space."

**September:** West Germany's pro-Moscow Social Democratic Party holds a "workshop" in Bonn on the SDI. Brother parties will send delegations, and it is rumored that Paul Warnke, Jimmy Carter's arms-control negotiator and an outspoken foe of the SDI, will be there, along with UCS members.

**Oct. 2:** Gorbachov begins visit to Paris, where meetings with French President Mitterrand are expected to focus on opposition to the SDI.

**October:** The Socialist International convenes a huge disarmament conference in Vienna, where high officials of the Soviet Communist Party are expected to be present.

**Nov. 17:** A meeting of political representatives of most European governments will take place in Bonn. The SPD's Willy Brandt and Egon Bahr will reintroduce a proposal for the withdrawal of U.S. cruise missiles from Western Europe.

**Nov. 19:** The Reagan-Gorbachov summit opens in Geneva.