

EIR Feature

Weinberger charges Soviet break-out from ABM treaty

by Nicholas F. Benton

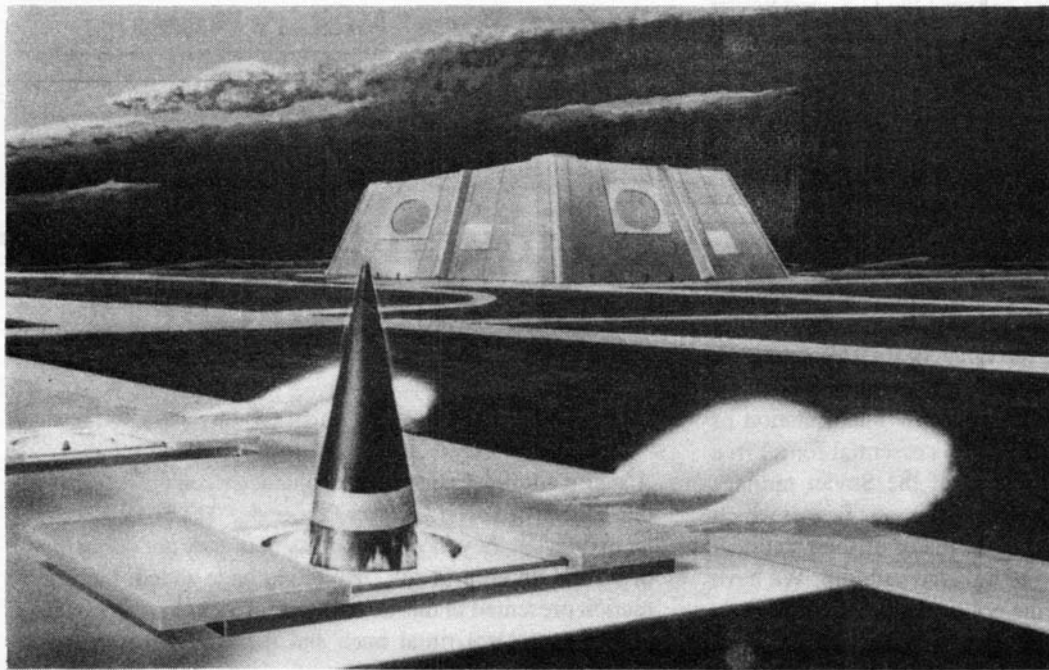
"I think they have broken out of the ABM [Anti-Ballistic Missile] treaty," Secretary of Defense Caspar Weinberger asserted in unqualified terms at a Pentagon press conference March 24, referring to the Soviet development of ballistic missile defense components reported in the 1987 edition of the Pentagon's *Soviet Military Power* report.

Weinberger's statement, in response to a question from this weekly, is the most explicit on record from the administration concerning a Soviet break-out from the treaty. He was not talking about merely violating the ABM treaty, nor did he use the ambiguous formulation in other administration statements that the Soviets "may be preparing to break out."

EIR followed up by fine-tuning the question to Weinberger: "There is a difference between a violation of the treaty, and a total break-out." "That's right," he said. "When you look at the dollars that have been spent—\$200 billion on this defensive program over the past few years—you realize that they are trying to accomplish exactly what that figure indicates, which is they're trying to establish for themselves a fairly effective, reliable, strategic defensive initiative. . . . My worry is, because they've worked on it a long time, because they do have a high degree of technological skills, and because they've stolen a lot of technology, that they would be able to get that capability first. That, I think, would be a very much more dangerous world."

Notably sharper in drawing the implications of the ongoing Soviet military buildup than past editions, the 1987 *Soviet Military Power* documents an all-out Soviet economic mobilization for war, exposing Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachov's *glasnost* ("openness") policy as a dual-tracked effort to delude Western media into reporting it as a liberalizing social policy, on the one hand, while using it to upgrade the productivity of the Soviet war machine, on the other.

The House Appropriations Committee, led by Rep. Norm Dicks (D-Wash.) and Rep. Patricia Schroeder (D-Colo.) reacted the day after the release of the Pentagon report, by approving two amendments aimed at banning U.S. nuclear testing, and forcing compliance with the never-ratified SALT II accord. Weinber-



Department of Defense

The modernization of Moscow's ABM defenses: This Gazelle silo-based missile, believed to be armed with a nuclear warhead, is designed to engage reentry vehicles within the atmosphere.

ger had stated at his press conference that "the SALT II accord is not in effect."

The Pentagon report discredits not only Gorbachov's *glasnost* hoax, but also the "crumbling empire" thesis of those who argue that the Soviets are in an internal economic crisis and therefore "sincerely" yearn for an arms-control treaty to ease the pressure. As the review below shows, a relentless Soviet build-up is documented in every area of strategic, conventional, defensive, and special warfare capabilities. As Weinberger said, "The Soviets' goal appears to be the achievement of a mix of nuclear and conventional forces that will enable them to fight and prevail at any level of conflict."

He added, "Since the very beginning of the nuclear age, the Soviets have rejected the notion of shared vulnerability and placed great importance on limiting the amount of damage the Soviet Union itself would sustain in a global war," making it clear that the Soviets are committed to developing a global, nuclear first-strike, war-winning capability.

The explicit assertion of this perspective in the 1987 report contrasts to the more diplomatic and vague conclusions drawn in earlier reports, and directly reflects the analysis presented two years ago in *EIR's* July 1985 *Special Report*, "Global Showdown: The Russian Imperial War Plan for 1988." Every new development reported in the Pentagon's *Soviet Military Power 1987* converges on *EIR's* 1985 analysis, unique at that time.

For example, in the critical area of the Soviet ABM break-out, the declassification of U.S. intelligence gathered last October, that the Soviets had completed construction of three new phased-array battle management radars, confirms that

the Russians have in place a network of nine such high-powered radars capable of covering the entire Soviet land mass. Krasnoyarsk, the only one of the radar sites in technical violation of the ABM treaty, is only one of those radars.

This new development—which Defense Secretary Melvin Laird acknowledged in 1972 (when the ABM treaty was signed) to be the component of a nationwide ABM system requiring the longest lead-time to complete—combined with other major advances, allows but one conclusion: that the Soviets are preparing to deploy a nationwide defense soon. Other advances include: 1) their space effort, where 90% is military-related, and an anti-satellite system is already deployed (Weinberger reminded the press that Congress does not even allow the United States to test such a system), 2) their work on lasers and other directed-energy systems, which has involved some 10,000 scientists for over a decade, and has produced a battlefield laser which has been observed blinding pilots and destroying equipment in Afganistan, 3) new Soviet surface-to-air missiles, including the SA-12A ("Gladiator") and SA-12B ("Giant"), the latter is capable of knocking down intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBMs). A senior Pentagon official told journalists March 23 that the Soviets are gearing up to produce 2,000 of these missiles by 1996.

Weinberger said that Soviet break-out of the ABM treaty does not mean that the United States should formally abrogate the treaty, because it would "get us involved with all kinds of political issues." Instead, he said, "the important thing is that we proceed at the best possible pace . . . to accomplish our objective, which is to deploy a thoroughly reliable, effective, defensive system as soon as possible."

So much for Soviet arms-control offers

by Leo Scanlon

A senior administration official characterized the message of this edition of *Soviet Military Power* as, "The Soviets continue to do what they have been doing, but they are doing more of it, and doing it better." He might have added, the information presented in this issue is sufficient to bury the byzantine arms-control ritual once and for all. The Soviets are fielding a variety and quality of weapons systems which render the ABM treaty, the SALT treaties, and the "zero option" obsolete. Further, this document does as good a job as can be done to demonstrate Soviet intentions as they are revealed by the hard evidence of Soviet military systems, without using the powerful and decisive cultural evidence that *EIR* has developed.

The first page of the report shows no concessions to the propaganda of *glasnost*, or to the illusions of arms-control fanatics, stating forthrightly the purpose of Soviet arms: "to achieve a force posture for the Soviet Union that provides for absolute security as it continues to seek world domination." A central feature of that effort is the deployment of "survivable land-based and mobile theater and strategic nuclear forces [which] markedly increased the U.S.S.R.'s confidence that the West now faces tremendous destruction regardless of which side initiates nuclear strikes. . . . The Soviets view these developments as hastening the day when nuclear weapons might only be useful in deterring other nuclear weapons, rather than as a credible deterrent to conventional attack." In short, the era of Mutually Assured Destruction (MAD) and the arms-control theories it spawned, is over.

The consequences of this are particularly acute in the European theater, where an array of new weaponry has been deployed which indicates that Soviet planners are confident that they can overcome the deterrent threat of nuclear weaponry, and will soon be able to prevail in war in that theater *whether nuclear weapons are used or not*. The academic debate over whether Marshal V.D. Sokolovskii has been "overthrown," in favor of a conventional war doctrine, is swamped by the evidence that the Soviets do not consider nuclear deterrence an immutable law of nature, and their ground forces, air defense systems, and ABM capabilities have reached a stage of development which fully supports

He stressed the differences between the U.S. and Soviet systems, which allow the Soviets to build up their military without any public debates on their commitment to comply with treaties. "You don't need to read a speech to the Senate for four days to prove that . . . the Krasnoyarsk radar is a clear violation of the ABM treaty under any kind of interpretation," Weinberger noted. Sen. Sam Nunn (D-Ga.), had given a four-day speech to the Senate the week before, arguing for a "narrow interpretation" of the ABM treaty as a tactic to effectively kill the U.S. Strategic Defense Initiative's equivalent to the Soviets' ABM preparations.

Weinberger added, "We have not heard any debate or any discussion in the Soviet Union about whether or not their research program is confined to a narrow interpretation or anything of the sort. . . . I believe it is essential for all free peoples to realize not just the size of the Soviet military establishment, but to understand the systematic factors which facilitate their ability to commit so much of their national output to supporting this kind of military build-up. We have to consider the difference in the political systems of the two countries—a system the Soviets say will ultimately prevail over ours and over everyone else's in the world. That kind of system fosters the growth of military power and is sustained by Soviet military power."

Under this system, he noted that over the last 10 years, the Soviets outproduced the U.S. in ICBMs "about four-to-one." He added, "In surface-to-air missiles, they outproduced us almost nine-to-one. In fighter aircraft, they outproduced us more than two-to-one. And in tanks, they outproduced us more than three-to-one."

The senior Pentagon official noted the day before that the most ominous feature of the Soviet offensive build-up is their commitment to "mobility and hardening" of ICBM targets, making a U.S. deterrent against Soviet ICBMs virtually impossible. To achieve this, the Soviets are moving into their fifth generation of ICBMs, with new models including at least 100 new road-mobile SS-25s, the deployment this year of the rail-mobile SS-X-24, and highly accurate follow-ons to the SS-18, and the long-range intermediate missile, the SS-20. The SS-20 has a 5,000-kilometer range now, but without one of its three warheads, it attains the range of an ICBM.

Both Weinberger and the senior Pentagon official threw cold water on the administration's offer for a "zero-option" treaty to remove intermediate range (INF) missiles from Europe. Weinberger did this by noting the ICBM-range potential of the SS-20 (the principal Soviet INF missile in Europe), and also by noting the costliness of the treaty at a time when budget considerations are foremost on the mind of the administration and Congress. Weinberger said, on the proposal to remove nuclear missiles from Europe, "We have to recognize that that's not a means of lowering the defense budget. To maintain deterrence, we will have to do some addition. The sad fact is that conventional strength is much more expensive than nuclear strength."