

Russia launches the Sputnik of the '80s

by Konstantin George

On May 15, the Soviet Union launched the *Energia* super-booster rocket from the Baikonur Space Center in Kazakhstan, U.S.S.R. The 2,000 ton booster stands 60 meters high, and is five times more powerful than the U. S. Space Shuttle. The launching of *Energia* thus represents a breakthrough in the Soviet military space program, with devastating implications concerning the race between the United States and the Soviet Union to develop, test, and deploy space-based anti-ballistic missile weapons.

The *Energia* was launched immediately after Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachov's three-day visit to Baikonur May 12-14, with a select delegation of Politburo members representing the military, military-industrial, and KGB leadership. Included were Defense Minister Sergei Sokolov, KGB boss Viktor Chebrikov, and Lev Zaikov, the Politburo member in charge of the Soviet military industry.

There are other relevant background events which preceded the Soviet breakthrough launch. The three days April 16-18 witnessed an expanded meeting of the Warsaw Pact Military Council, curiously held in Minsk, capital of Byelorussia. Minsk is the headquarters for Marshal Nikolai Ogarkov's high command for wartime operations against the United States and its NATO allies. It was shortly before this Warsaw Pact gathering that Marshal Ogarkov was promoted to the post of Deputy Commander in Chief of the Soviet Armed Forces, on the all-powerful National Defense Council, the supreme combined civilian-military body of the U.S.S.R.

According to very well-informed West German intelligence sources, the Minsk meeting was notable in that, besides Warsaw Pact military brass, "groups of experts from various important areas" were brought in. This meant, groups from the Soviet Union's leading high-technology warfare

laboratories involved in the entire array of Russia's R&D establishment.

The *Energia* launch was also preceded by a barrage of articles in the main Soviet newspapers, beginning May 9, written mostly by marshals and generals, including Marshal Viktor Kulikov, Warsaw Pact commander in chief; Marshal Sergei Sokolov, Soviet defense minister; and Army General Pyotr Lushev, first deputy defense minister. Along with these statements by the military leadership, appeared a lengthy article by a Professor Markov in *Pravda* on May 12. It announced a vast increase in Soviet SDI and SDI-related research programs. Excerpts of the articles, which form crucial documentation of the sweeping changes now under way in the U. S. S. R. to implement the war plan of Marshal Ogarkov, are appended below.

The cornerstone of the Ogarkov war plan is the ongoing retooling of the Soviet war economy to impose much higher rates of sustained technological progress, especially in the production of military goods, on the Russian economy. To use Ogarkov's own terminology, the Soviet war economy will emphasize "maximum rates of technological attrition," that is, shifting emphasis in production toward defensive and offensive weapons based on "new physical principles," and an array of high-technology radio frequency and miniaturized nuclear and chemical weapons for effecting a successful invasion and occupation of Western Europe, with the least possible damage to industry and territory.

A top British defense source and expert on the Soviet military stressed these points in a recent discussion with *EIR*:

"The Soviets are doing a lot on this, miniaturizing weapons, nuclear, chemical, and above all radio frequency weapons, microwave transmissions, you know. Ideal for hi-tech

spetsnaz [special forces] operations. They are focusing, not on missiles, but on building up other kinds of weapons, to revolutionize warfare, of which their 'SDI' is obviously crucial, and they consider it so, but only one component of a wide range of hi-tech warfare capabilities they are developing. These are the important things. Unfortunately, the West is largely ignoring these types of developments, too much fixated on missiles. We're not prepared to respond to a Soviet military doctrine that will heavily employ these new types of weapons when they go to war. We're mired in a missile-age version of Maginot Line concepts. . . .

"The Soviets are *not yet* at the point where they can fight a war with these revolutionary new weapons, *but*, they are feverishly working to have such a capability in depth. They *don't yet* have this hi-tech *spetsnaz* capability to the point where it's ready for war use, but they've been working on this for quite a long time, and, now, all this work is coming together. I can give you one example. Take sensor technology. If you read Soviet technical publications, you'll see that they have been pouring enormous sums into sensor technology. They've been behind on this, but they're catching up quite fast. . . .

"The Soviets are also devoting a great deal of effort to developing techniques to ensure that their crucial command and control centers and military communications are protected."

Energia and 'space battle stations'

The fact that the *Energia* is not the G-1, a mammoth cluster rocket, which has exploded several times recently, but a Russian version of the no-longer-used Saturn V which launched the U.S. Moon missions, cannot be allowed to foster complacency in the West. A space-based SDI system requires a super-booster rocket that can be used to lift components for space battle stations. The successful Soviet launch underscores a glaring deficiency in the American military space program. It is not sufficient merely to develop SDI technology. The United States must also be in a position to place in orbit the necessary space battle stations where laser weapons can be tested and eventually deployed.

In the May 15 test flight of the *Energia*, the crucial first and second stages performed successfully. The capability for follow-up launches is thus established. The rocket's enormous lift capacity can be used to place crucial heavy payloads for Soviet military space battle stations into orbit.

Energia's alarm bell effect on the West should be comparable to the 1957 "Sputnik shock." The *Energia* gives Russia the capacity to launch and position the orbital platforms required for a space-based ABM system, as well as offensive disruption capabilities, in outer space. The *Energia* can lift a 100-ton military space station into orbit (the U.S. space shuttle by comparison weighs just under 30 tons); can orbit the Moon in an ABM deployment; can carry very large space shuttles; and can even be used to take a cosmonaut

crew to the planet Mars, around Mars, and back to Earth. The *Energia* is expected to launch a space shuttle as early as Oct. 1, the 30th anniversary of the Sputnik launch, and begin regular launches as early as mid-1988.

The concept of securing world domination through space-based warfare capabilities—i.e., military superiority in outer space using weapons based on "new physical principles"—is Soviet military doctrine dating back at the latest to the doctrinal writings of the late Marshal V.D. Sokolovskii. The first edition of his famous work, *Military Strategy*, contained an entire subsection entitled; "The Problems of Using Outer Space For Military Purposes," as part of a larger sub-section titled, "Methods of Conducting Modern War." Sokolovskii stressed the need to acquire space-based ABM capabilities, anti-satellite weapons, and "interference apparatus," to cite a few examples.

There is no doubt of *Energia's* military purpose. Back on May 5, 1985, less than two months after Gorbachov came to power, Defense Minister Marshal Sokolov stated to TASS that the Soviet Union was "conducting scientific research in space, including for military application." The military role of *Energia* was underscored by Gorbachov's trip to Baikonur. On May 13, he addressed Space Center personnel, including, as TASS noted, "military specialists . . . involved in the development and testing" of *Energia*. He stressed the importance of the work at Baikonur "for the defense of the Motherland," and identified *perestroika* (restructuring)—misrepresented in the West as liberalization—as the implementation of a pre-war plan:

"All of us should work as we work here in Baikonur, as patriots. . . . In that sense, *perestroika* is like a powerful rocket breaking out of the atmosphere into the universe."

Perestroika under Gorbachov is nothing less than the restructuring of the Soviet policy-making establishment, the *Nomenklatura*, with the aim of, in the shortest possible time, reshaping the very structure of the Soviet economy to bring the Russian Empire into a position of overwhelming military superiority. With this accomplished, the Russian Empire can drop its postwar mask, pretending to accept a "bi-polar" world, "crisis-managed" with the United States, and attain the mystical, cherished goal of world domination by Muscovy.

The launching of the *Energia* super-booster, and the specter of a Soviet SDI break out, may well have a healthy, "Pearl Harbor" effect on patriotic elites in the United States and Western Europe. We in the West must now use the Baikonur launch to launch our own restructuring of the West's liberal, culturally degenerate policymaking elites, and reverse the process of erosion of Western industrial and military capabilities.

Only when the West, led by the United States, begins to implement its own crash SDI program, and demonstrates successive SDI breakthroughs, will Moscow begin to "think twice" on the Ogarkov war plan.