

National News

Nunn, Aspin seek U.S. pullout from Europe

Officials at the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) representatives of U.S. Senator Sam Nunn (D-Ga.)

are initiating collaboration on a project to see how NATO can be "restructured" and the American commitment to Europe "reshaped," in a way that would make American troop withdrawals from Europe psychologically acceptable, a SIPRI source reports.

The idea behind the project is that some form of U.S. withdrawal from Europe is "on the political agenda now" and must be taken as virtually inevitable, under conditions of growing financial-economic chaos. So, the question has become, in this source's words, "not *whether* there will be a withdrawal, but under *what circumstances* it will occur. We can more easily cope with a withdrawal for financial reasons, than a withdrawal out of anger and pique at the Europeans. . . . There's a lot of psychology involved. . . . We are trying to find a conceptual package, that involves redeployment, restructuring, a kind of 'New Deal' of American commitment to Europe."

This "package" is being put forward as a "pro-NATO" alternative to a more precipitous American withdrawal from Europe.

Army helicopters zapped by radio waves

The U.S. Army's most advanced troop-transporting helicopter could be knocked out of the sky by routine radio waves from microwave towers, radio antennas and radars, the *Philadelphia Inquirer* reported on Nov. 8, citing Pentagon officials and documents.

Radio waves are believed to have been the reason for the nosedives of five Army UH-60 Black Hawk helicopters since 1982, resulting in the deaths of 22 servicemen.

"We've got a very sophisticated electronic aircraft, and if the radiation we're putting up in peacetime—microwaves, antennas, TVs—is causing the aircraft to flutter and wobble, then—and I don't like to talk about this, because it is kind of a breach of security—we're going to have problems in wartime," said former Army Major Jerry A. McVey. McVey led the investigation into a still-unexplained Black Hawk crash last year.

According to the *Inquirer*, radio waves can now penetrate the helicopter's wiring and electrical components and generate false commands leading to failure of the aircraft. "Pilots should be made aware that flights near microwave antennas or shipboard radar may cause uncommanded attitude changes," the Army told its pilots in August, following extensive tests earlier this year.

The Navy has prohibited its Black Hawks from coming within "a significant number of miles" of radio towers, for fear of accidents.

NASA chief warns against more cuts

NASA administrator Dr. James Fletcher, speaking to the Los Angeles World Affairs Council on Nov. 6, warned that further cuts in the budget for space exploration could dangerously jeopardize the program, and make it impossible for the United States to catch up to the Soviet Union.

"The Space Station, the key to our future in space, has been mired in congressional budget debates this year," he said. "Although we hope and expect it will be fully funded for the next fiscal year when the crucial development phase begins, its funding could be cut in future years, imperiling our prospects of having a permanent presence in space by the mid-1990s. Even then, that will put us at least a decade behind the Soviets, whose Space Stations have given them the opportunity to occupy space permanently since 1971, when the first Salyut was launched. . . ."

"It is no longer a question of whether we should have long-term goals in space. The

question is, can we afford not to lead? And if we are to lead, we must focus now on what those goals should be."

In remarks in Salt Lake City quoted by UPI on Nov. 11, Fletcher stressed that those future goals should include establishment of a base on the Moon, flights to Mars, and exploration beyond. "Why Mars?" he asked. "We should go there for the same reason we went to the Moon—it's a ~~new frontier~~ and it will expand human horizons, give us new knowledge, and benefit this country and all mankind," Mars, he added, "is almost inhabitable now. It wouldn't take much change for us to live there."

Idaho takes public health approach to AIDS

Since Idaho reported its first AIDS case two years ago, that state has treated the disease like every other communicable disease, according to Dr. Fritz R. Dixon, the state's chief public health officer. Dixon was quoted in the *Washington Post* on Nov. 10.

With virtually no opposition, Dixon barred anonymous testing and required doctors, hospitals, and laboratories to report the name and address of anyone who tested positive for the virus. "I don't get complicated about it," said Dixon. "Everytime we don't find somebody with AIDS, that person may infect others and they will die. It's as simple as that. If every state did the same thing as Idaho, there wouldn't be such a problem."

State epidemiologist Charles D. Brockopp estimates that 7% of Idaho's one million people have been tested, with about 100—mostly gay men—testing positive. There are presently 18 full-blown cases of AIDS and 9 cases of AIDS-Related Complex (ARC)

Physicists disown their anti-SDI tract

Virtually all of the authors of a report on laser and particle beam weapons, issued in