

## Eye on Washington by Nicholas F. Benton

### The contrast between 'Cap' and Carlucci

Within an hour of each other, former Secretary of Defense Caspar Weinberger and his replacement, Frank Carlucci, spoke here Nov. 24.

Weinberger was making his first public address as a private citizen after seven years as the Pentagon chief. Carlucci was making his first public appearance in his new job, holding a press conference in the Pentagon press briefing room.

The contrast of the two men was a stark one, and does not bode well for the future security of the United States. Especially on the crucial issue of the Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI), but also in terms of overall leadership qualities, there really is no comparison between the two.

It is no secret that Weinberger wanted his next-in-command, Assistant Secretary of Defense Will Taft, to replace him. But as with most critical decisions President Reagan has made lately, he ignored Cap's recommendation, and went with a man that more fits the diplomatic mode than the head of the armed forces.

Weinberger has also not put up any great protest to the continued reports that he quit out of anger and frustration over the direction Reagan is headed in arms control with the Soviets, as well as the President's willingness to subject the defense budget to savage cuts for the sake of a cosmetic "deficit reduction" fix.

In his remarks to the Global Strategy Council Nov. 24, Weinberger lashed out at the Anti-Ballistic Missile (ABM) treaty of 1972, saying that it is "seriously flawed" because it was based on assumptions which no longer apply. This was a direct criticism of the administration's "deal" with Con-

gress not only to comply with the treaty, but to restrict SDI testing to a "narrow interpretation" of the treaty, which prohibits testing in space.

In answer to a question from this reporter on that "deal," Weinberger stated adamantly that "the only limitations on the development and deployment of the SDI are ones that we place on ourselves." He said SDI could begin phased deployment by 1994, but that the deep cut in the 1988 budget (from \$5.8 billion to \$3.9 billion) seriously jeopardizes that timetable.

Weinberger's strongest criticism came when he was asked to comment on the view that, with him now gone, the President is the only SDI supporter left in the entire administration. Weinberger said, "It's true, the President has never wavered. But there are many others who feel equally strong about it, such as the people in the SDI program."

Weinberger's silence on other Cabinet officials, was more eloquent than words.

### Carlucci: Leave SDI up to Congress

At his press conference, Carlucci went out of his way to insist that he was just as committed to the SDI as Weinberger ever was, but gave a contrary impression when he explained his idea of how to work with the new limitations placed on the program by the "deal" with Congress to restrict SDI to the "narrow interpretation" of the ABM treaty.

Rather than challenge the "narrow interpretation" as simply wrong—which is what Weinberger did, in addition to questioning the treaty itself—Carlucci said that working within the confines of a "narrow interpretation" will not restrict the SDI program's development.

"I have found that there is a good degree of support for the SDI in the Congress," Carlucci said. "The SDI received a fair hearing in the budget process" (even though its budget was slashed by 33% this year).

Carlucci told the press that "when the time comes for a test that will go beyond the 'narrow interpretation' of the ABM treaty, we can then demonstrate to the Congress that such a test is needed. We can show that it is conceptually sound and well managed. From that point of view, we can argue for it on national security grounds, rather than legalistic grounds of how the treaty should be interpreted." Using this approach, he said, "I think there is a reasonable chance of getting good support in Congress."

But what if there isn't? What has happened to the President's role as commander in chief? Without even challenging the bogus "narrow interpretation" of the ABM treaty, Carlucci's approach is to concede it and hope that Congress will vote for every test that might breach it.

Carlucci was miffed when this reporter asked him whether his "new style" of being willing to take the fiscal constraints of Congress into account in preparing a defense budget was compatible with assuring that the nation's security needs are met.

He said, "I will defend a budget just like Weinberger did. But once it is clear Congress is going to cut it, I will work quietly with them on priorities."

By saying that out front, he has assured not only a free-for-all on future defense cuts, but automatic demoralization throughout the ranks. Morale, one of the most important components of an effective military, was perhaps the most important contribution that Weinberger made. His determination in the heat of budget fights had a lot to do with that.