

National News

Weinberger points to Soviet lead in SDI

Former Defense Secretary Caspar Weinberger criticized the current direction of the U.S. space policy and the cutbacks in the Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI), warning that the Soviets are significantly ahead of the United States in both crucial areas.

Keynoting an event sponsored by the Willard F. Rockwell Space Foundation on March 23, Weinberger said that the U.S. lag in the space race has put America "in serious danger." "We must compete in space for economic and many other reasons, but the consequences of neglecting space for national security purposes can have truly disastrous consequences."

The Soviets devote 90% of their ambitious space program to military uses, and have spent \$150 billion already on developing their own SDI, whereas the U.S. Congress had terminated the anti-satellite (ASAT) program, and cut the SDI so severely that the initial deployment schedule has had to be put back two years.

Weinberger reiterated that he doesn't think President Reagan would negotiate away SDI, but he pointed out that any future President could.

He maintained that the United States can afford to undertake both the SDI and an ambitious space program, which, he said, will "lead to a stronger economy," pointing as evidence to America's "ability to turn out millions of pieces of hardware that helped lead us to victory in World War II."

New NSC documents show targeting of Contra foes

Lt. Col. Oliver North and FBI Executive Assistant Director Oliver Revell launched a series of counterintelligence investigations in the spring of 1986, aimed at proving that several major efforts to block military aid to the Contras were directed or inspired by the

Sandinista government, according to an article appearing in the *Boston Globe* on March 24.

Among the alleged targets of the probes were the Christic Institute, which had launched a legal action against a number of key players in the private Contra aid network, and Jack Terrell, a former Contra mercenary who defected to join American anti-Contra activists.

The key North-FBI counterintelligence unit meeting that launched the probes occurred on May 9, 1986, just four days after Contragate's Gen. Richard Secord had dispatched a memorandum to Colonel North, pointing to information "against LaRouche" (see *EIR*, March 18, 1988, "Judge orders Bush, White House files searched in trial against LaRouche").

The same day that Secord sent his cable to North about LaRouche, a meeting took place at the Old Executive Office Building among North, Secord, and Glenn Robinette, described by congressional probes as the "security chief of Project Democracy." According to the *Globe*, the FBI counterintelligence operations were coordinated with Robinette's parallel "private" investigations.

Among the targets of the North probe were at least three members of the Congress: Sen. John Kerry (D-Mass.), Sen. David Durenberger (R-Minn.), and Rep. Lee Hamilton (D-Ind.). When FBI officials determined in June 1986 that the probe should not be upgraded into a full FBI investigation, North was reportedly so outraged that he told the FBI agents that he would now likely be "a target for elimination by organized crime," due to information he possessed about Sandinista drug connections.

NASA space station in jeopardy from cuts

The United States will have to abandon plans to build an orbiting space platform unless almost a billion dollars is allocated to it next year, said NASA Administrator James C. Fletcher on March 22. Unless such an in-

vestment is made, the current cuts in the space station budget, added to delays caused by cuts in earlier years, will make it useless for NASA to continue efforts to build the station, Fletcher warned.

NASA's first civil space science mission since the Challenger disaster was carried out on March 25. A 522-pound satellite was put into orbit, carrying instruments from Italy, West Germany, and the United States. The mission is designed to study the Earth's lower atmosphere. The launch took place from Italy's San Marco platform, a large steel barge anchored in the Indian Ocean three miles off the coast of Kenya.

The space administration is also working on a plan to send an American spaceship to Mars in the year 2010, the *Los Angeles Times* reported on March 20. "Called Project Pathfinder, the program has the blessing of the Reagan administration to the tune of \$100 million for fiscal 1989," according to the report. John Mankins, who manages the project at NASA's Washington headquarters, is quoted saying, "Pathfinder looks toward exploration of the solar system and the technology that is needed for that."

DEA nabs top heroin suspect

An Asian businessman identified as the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration's No. 1 heroin target has been arrested and charged with importing 453 kilograms of heroin from Southeast Asia over a three-year period, according to a March 16 article in the *Bangkok Post*, which cited sources in New York City.

Robert Stutman, head of the DEA's New York office, said that heroin trafficking is now primarily controlled by Chinese ethnic groups that are bringing in vast amounts to the United States, far more "than any of us who have been professionals in the field ever thought possible."

A Justice Department source said that federal authorities lured the businessman, whose name is Kon, to New York, where he was arrested in front of the New York Hilton Hotel. Kon was charged under indictments

handed down in December.

The heroin was smuggled into the country from 1984 to 1987. Couriers carried millions of dollars in proceeds back to Hong Kong to be laundered, authorities said. About \$20 million was used by Kon to buy commercial real estate in New York and San Francisco.

Pentagon kooks meditate while Moscow cheers

A nest of weirdos known as the Pentagon Meditation Club, has drawn commentary from both the Soviet and British press.

The Soviet magazine *New Times* (No. 11, March 1988) publishes an article by Dmitri Pogorzelsky, who recently toured the United States, reporting on a Soviet proposal for a "Soldier Meets Soldier" project, in which "50 young men in army uniform from each side could meet and look at one another not through gun sights, even imaginary ones, but face to face."

This idea is looked on with favor by the U.S.S.R. Ministry of Defense in Moscow, he writes, but also by Edward Winchester, "who heads the Meditation Club at the U.S. war department," and who spoke to Pogorzelsky about using meditation/psychological techniques to combat the "enemy image." These discussions occurred at a conference in Washington, DC, held by the Center for Soviet-American Dialogue.

The *Daily Mail* of London on March 23 reported further on Winchester and the Pentagon Meditation Club, under the headline, "Weapon of Peace":

"When American troops were parachuting into Honduras the other day, Ed Winchester was outside near the Pentagon flagpole measuring the strength of the peace-bearing energy radiation from the Department of Defense. The readings were pretty impressive, he says. SDI was working.

"This is the other SDI—the Spiritual Defense Initiative—that members of the Pentagon deploy collectively at their weekly meetings and individually in their homes in the hope that their mental messages of love

and goodwill will project a 'peace shield' around the earth. . . .

" 'It may be the secret weapon we need to replace the nuclear threat,' says Ed Winchester, a former Air Force captain who now works as an accountant in the office of the Secretary of Defense. He is President of the Pentagon Meditation Club and the chief inspiration behind its attempts to beam benevolent psychic energy around the world, right out of the soul of the American military machine, to nourish global peace."

Weld's 'war on drugs': Hit the little shots!

Assistant U.S. Attorney General William Weld, head of the Justice Department's Criminal Division, told federal attorneys recently that in the war on drugs, "they could look for guidance from Washington to emphasize user prosecutions as one tool in the united assault on both the supply and demand sides," according to a statement Weld made to reporters recently.

Weld criticized prosecutors who "are less taken with the idea" of prosecuting drug-users, since possession charges have not been prosecuted at the federal level.

Weld's "get the little shots" campaign was supported by Attorney General Edwin Meese, according to Justice Department spokesman Dean St. Dennis, who said that Meese believed "it clearly will have an impact on use and send a message to people that these cases will indeed be subject to criminal prosecution."

Weld's publicity-grabbing campaign comes in sharp contrast to his treatment of the "big shots"—the banks which launder billions of dollars in drug money. In 1985, during his tenure as U.S. Attorney in Boston, prior to his current appointment, Weld allowed the Bank of Boston to plea bargain its way out of serious prosecution for failure to file reports on \$1.2 billion in international cash transactions, which Treasury Department officials believed to be drug money. The bank was fined a measly \$500,000—less than 1/20th of one percent of the amount laundered.

Briefly

● **GEORGE BUSH** is being hurt by the Iran-Contra scandal, according to a poll conducted by the *Washington Post* and ABC News. More than half of those polled believed that Bush was lying about his role, while only one-third believed him. About 75% of Democrats think Bush is lying, and one out of three Republicans concurred. Bush's greatest weakness was among independent voters and Democrats who voted for Reagan.

● **ROBERT MCNAMARA**, the former secretary of defense, was received on March 15 by Soviet Central Committee Secretary A.F. Dobrynin, *Pravda* reported. The meeting was at McNamara's request, and covered "prospects for further constructive progress along the road of nuclear and conventional arms reduction," and the issue of adherence to the ABM Treaty.

● **THE UNITED STATES** will give Peru \$18.6 million in anti-drug aid this year, the U.S. embassy in Lima announced. The money will be used for eradication of coca cultivation, assistance to police teams, provision of equipment, and support for rural problems. Ambassador Watson said that Peru has become "a regional leader in the effort to fight narcotics."

● **A RECORD 79** hospitals closed in the United States during 1987, as a result of the unstable economy and inadequate Medicare payments, the American Hospital Association announced March 21. Another 17 special facilities closed. Arkansas, Louisiana, Oklahoma, and Texas accounted for 25% of the closings.

● **THE CORNERSTONE** of the first magnetic train system in the United States was laid on Jan. 28 in Las Vegas. The 2 km.-long track should connect the inner city with the baseball stadium and exposition grounds by 1990.