

## Eye on Washington by Nicholas F. Benton

### Carlucci spells out agenda for NATO

Defense Secretary Frank Carlucci discussed the Soviet threat at a conference of leaders from NATO countries, called "The Atlantic Alliance and Western Security as NATO Turns Forty," held in Washington Nov. 28-29.

He spelled out a six-part agenda for NATO, making it clear that NATO should respond to Soviet actions, not words. This was in contrast to the remarks by Gen. Brent Scowcroft, George Bush's choice to become national security adviser, who claimed that the Soviets are in "a benign mode."

1) **Threat assessment.** "A firm sense of realism about our major potential adversary will be especially important now that we face a more sophisticated Soviet leadership under General Secretary Gorbachov," he said.

"Kremlin leaders will continue to try and persuade us of their benign intentions, and to exploit the trusting idealism of democratic peoples.

"Consider, for example, Moscow's recent claim that it has adopted a 'defensive doctrine.' The fact is, we have not yet seen any change in the arms or the positioning of Warsaw Pact forces now capable of massive offensive operations deep into Western Europe. In my discussions with the Soviet defense minister, I repeatedly asked for evidence of this new doctrine. But all General Yazov could cite

was the inclusion of defensive operations in military exercises.

"That is hardly convincing evidence when, for example, Warsaw Pact bridging equipment remains positioned well forward, and every month Soviet factories turn out enough tanks to equip an entire armored division."

He cautioned, "In NATO let us continue to base our defense preparedness on actual Soviet military capabilities. It would be ironic and dangerous if so-called Soviet reforms ended up affecting NATO forces more than the Warsaw Pact's. Kremlin intentions could change overnight, but it would take years for NATO to recover from defense neglect. The prudent course is to base our security on facts. Moscow still devotes 15-17% of its gross national product to the military. Under Gorbachov, defense spending has continued to increase at 3% a year.

"All indications are that Moscow still seeks to increase its foreign influence, at least until confronted with formidable resistance. Nor has the Kremlin abandoned its central security aim: to foster the disintegration of NATO and induce Western nations to relax their defense efforts.

"The key to interpreting changes in the Soviet Union is to recognize the motivation behind them. Gorbachev has correctly analyzed that the Marxist economic system is a failure.

"Let us make sure we are not inadvertently helping Moscow build a more productive military industrial base, which would hardly be in our interest."

2) **Modernization.** NATO must "maintain modernized military forces sufficient to deter Soviet military power, whatever its future character or disposition," Carlucci said. "We must not neglect our forces in anticipation of a diminished threat."

"Each of our nations face major

budgetary obstacles. Moreover, there is no denying the serious political and public sensitivity about needed nuclear modernization. Today I bring no secret formula to breach these obstacles. The key remains for us to stress the sound basis for our security prescription: that Soviet military power remains a formidable threat, which we can only deter with modern nuclear and conventional forces."

3) **Arms control.** We must ensure that any agreement in arms control "enhances regional stability and preserves NATO's ability to execute its strategy of flexible response," Carlucci said. "In the arena of public opinion, we must justify our proposals convincingly, especially if the Soviets are pushing appealing, but ultimately dangerous alternatives."

4) **Burden sharing.** "For our part, we in America should approach the burden sharing issue with an appreciation that our own security, not philanthropy, justifies our forward deployments in Europe, Japan, Korea and elsewhere," he said. "The goal here should be for all members to fulfill collective security roles commensurate with their evolving military and economic potential."

5) **Armaments cooperation.** "The aim here is to buy more defense for our money," he said, adding, "For NATO nations, armaments cooperation is becoming less an option, and more an imperative."

6) **Public support for NATO.** This, he said, "is really the foundation for all the others."

"As free governments, we can move forward only with the public behind us. Ultimately our assessment of the military threats we face and our prescription for countering them must be accepted by our citizens. Above all, we must continue to avoid exploiting NATO for internal political purposes."