

# ПРАВДА

ан Центрального Комитета КПСС

Воскресенье, 27 марта 1983 года

Цена 4 коп.



Эту работу, выполненную командой... (Text describing a project or work done by a team)

### С полей весенних

В короткие сроки

В бригадах бригадиров... (Text about agricultural work and brigades)

### Двумя сменами

Вести работы на безурожайном поле... (Text about agricultural work on a barren field)

## Ответы Ю. В. Андропова на вопросы корреспондента «Правды»

### the Soviet propaganda campaign against the US Strategic Defense Initiative

Вопрос. 23 марта президент Рейган выступил с историческим заявлением о создании системы противоракетной обороны... (Text of the question and the beginning of the answer)

### U.S. ARMS CONTROL AND DISARMAMENT AGENCY

Вопрос. Каким образом... (Text of the question and the beginning of the answer regarding the US Arms Control and Disarmament Agency)

### ЗА РУБЕЖОМ

## Посвящено Карлу Марксу

Жизнь Карла Маркса... (Text about Karl Marx and his work)

**ЧЕРЕПОВЕЦ.** Опыт коллективной работы... (Text about collective work in Cherepovets)

**РОЗНИЦ.** Индустриальный район... (Text about an industrial district)

**БОРНА.** Местная область... (Text about the Borina region)

**Вопрос.** Каким образом... (Text of a question and the beginning of an answer)

**Вопрос.** Каким образом... (Text of a question and the beginning of an answer)

**Вопрос.** Каким образом... (Text of a question and the beginning of an answer)

### К приезду в Советский Союз Хавьер Перес де Куэли

Генеральный секретарь Организации Объединенных Наций... (Text about the arrival of Javier Peres de Cuéllar)

# **UNITED STATES ARMS CONTROL AND DISARMAMENT AGENCY**

## **Acknowledgements**

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Comments and questions regarding this publication are welcome. They may be directed to:

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**the**

**Soviet propaganda  
campaign against  
the US Strategic  
Defense Initiative**

## Foreword

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In the spring of 1983, shortly after President Reagan proposed that the United States actively begin to explore the feasibility of advanced technologies to defend against offensive nuclear missiles, the Soviet Union embarked on an extensive propaganda campaign criticizing the President's proposal.

Over the past three years, the Soviet Union has devoted considerable energies to its campaign against the U.S. Strategic Defense Initiative. Statements from high officials, interviews with Soviet spokesmen on Western broadcast media, newspaper articles, press releases, pamphlets, petitions from front organizations and state-controlled Soviet scientific groups have flooded the West. Soviet officials have charged, among other things, that the program is part of a U.S. effort to acquire a "firststrike" capability against the USSR, that it could result in the production of new offensive weapons, that it will upset the military balance and make further arms control agreements impossible, that it will escalate the arms race, and even that it violates existing arms treaties. Soviet writers and spokesmen have also echoed charges, leveled originally by Western critics of the Strategic Defense Initiative, that the program is technologically infeasible and too costly.

Notably, these protests and arguments against the U.S. strategic defense program come from Soviet sources at a time when the USSR itself is vigorously engaged in its own strategic defense programs and while the Soviet Union continues to violate the agreement covering ballistic missile defenses - the 1972 ABM Treaty.

As suggested by the long-standing Soviet commitment to strategic defense systems as well as by the current level of Soviet criticisms of SDI, the Soviets have no doubts about the value of defensive systems. On the contrary, every indication is that the Soviet Union values highly its current ballistic missile defense system and is enthusiastically pursuing new technologies.

The aim of the Soviet anti-SDI campaign is strategic and political: its purpose is to stimulate opposition to SDI in the United States and other Allied countries, inhibiting Western research and development into defenses - even as the Soviet Union forges ahead with its own ABM programs, including research and development in advanced ballistic missile defense technologies. The evident Soviet goal is to forestall any comparable Western defense effort and, if possible, to ensure for the long term a unilateral Soviet advantage in strategic defense systems and technologies. Obviously, a contin-

ued Soviet advantage in defenses, combined with the ongoing Soviet offensive nuclear buildup, would severely undermine the East-West balance which has kept the peace.

Honest and informed debate is always valuable; differences of opinion on major policy issues are inevitable in democracies. But few would argue that democratic debate is enhanced or furthered by the injection of obfuscation and duplicity from the outside. Such, unfortunately, has been the character of the Soviet statements on the Strategic Defense Initiative.

Without exception, all the various Soviet charges concerning SDI are spurious. They are based either on a fundamental misrepresentation of the nature of strategic defense research now underway in the United States and Allied countries, or on a wholly inaccurate picture of the realities of the current strategic balance.

One of the most interesting findings of the study is that the vast majority of criticisms raised by the Soviets in the current campaign against the Strategic Defense Initiative are virtually identical to arguments invoked only a few years ago in the Soviet campaign against NAMs decision to deploy new intermediate-range missiles in response to the Soviet SS-20 despite the obvious differences between the programs at issue then and now.

Arms control negotiations provide the opportunity for dialogue on differences between the Soviet Union and the United States. Discussion at Geneva continues on the subject of strategic defenses. We wish to press forward in this dialogue. Indeed, if effective defenses against offensive nuclear missiles prove feasible, we seek a jointly managed transition to greater reliance on such systems. We favor defenses that would heighten the security and reduce the threat on both sides. But an indispensable first step to a serious exploration of these future prospects will be a candid acknowledgement by the Soviet Union that it has long been engaged in strategic defense research of the kind being carried on in the U.S. SDI program.

Regrettably, the Soviets have to date chosen to deny their own program.

In the meantime, it is crucial that the citizens of the democracies keep clear eyes in assessing their security needs. It is essential, above all, that we recognize the distinction between honest argument and mere propaganda. It is hoped that this publication will contribute to clarification of the issues and better-informed debate.

Kenneth L. Adelman

## Introduction: The Idea of a Defense

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On March 23, 1983, in an address to the American people, President Reagan proposed that the United States embark on a new program to examine whether it would be possible to devise systems that could effectively “intercept and destroy strategic ballistic missiles before they reached our own soil or that of our allies.” Within a year the President’s proposal had resulted in the creation of the Strategic Defense Initiative program.

The rationale for new research into defensive systems was threefold.

First, the President expressed the strong view that it was important to raise now the long-term question of whether the deterrence of nuclear war must remain forever dependent on the threat of devastating offensive retaliation. Clearly, there is no ready alternative to the present deterrent regime. The President noted that the idea of mounting an effective defense against nuclear missiles represents “a formidable technical task, one that may not be accomplished before the end of this century.” Yet he added that “current technology has attained a level of sophistication where it is reasonable for us to begin this effort.” Indeed, the technologies relevant to ballistic missile defense have progressed at such a remarkable pace since the signing of the ABM Treaty in 1972 that new, defensive options are highly promising. Such research into new technologies was anticipated in the negotiations and the text of the ABM Treaty. The U.S. SDI program complies fully with the ABM Treaty.

Second, the United States has been and continues to be concerned by the threat posed to stability by the massive growth of the Soviet Union’s offensive nuclear arsenal. When the United States and the Soviet Union signed the ABM Treaty in 1972, Americans expected that the stringent limits on defenses against ballistic missiles would make it possible to negotiate significant reductions in strategic offensive nuclear arms. Our expectations have not been met.

Of particular concern to the United States is the growth during the past decade in the accuracy and power of the Soviet land-based “heavy” missile force, which has posed an increasing threat to our land-based retaliatory force and, in this manner, to the stability of deterrence itself. To forego the opportunities embodied in new defensive research would be to leave unattended the growing problem of U.S. vulnerability.

Finally, the Soviet Union has long been engaged in both upgrading and expanding its existing ABM system around Moscow, and in high-technology strategic defense research of the kind embodied in SDI. In other ABM activities, the Soviet Union has violated and is in potential violation of key provisions of the ABM Treaty. The aggregate of those activities suggests that the USSR may be preparing an ABM defense of its national territory, which the Treaty prohibits.

In several areas of defensive technology research, Soviet efforts have been ahead of the United States. In particular, when measured in terms of manpower, capital, and facilities, Soviet research into the more advanced and exotic ballistic missile defense technologies, such as high energy lasers, exceeds anything undertaken in the U.S. To fail to respond to these Soviet efforts would be to put the security of the United States and its Allies in jeopardy. While effective defenses on both sides may greatly enhance the stability of deterrence, deployment of defensive systems by the Soviet Union alone would pose an unprecedented threat to our safety. SDI is a necessary response to the combination of Soviet efforts in offense and defense.

### **The U.S. View of Strategic Defense**

The Strategic Defense Initiative is a cooperative venture involving the mutual interests and common hopes and values of free and sovereign nations. The United States is proceeding with the Strategic Defense Initiative in the firm belief that it will strengthen the bonds between ourselves and our Allies and friends. The President emphasized this commitment in his March 23, 1983 address:

As we pursue our goal of defensive technologies, we recognize that our Allies rely upon our strategic offensive power to deter attacks against them. Their vital interests and ours are inextricably linked - their safety and ours are one. And no change in technology can or will alter that reality. We must and we shall continue to honor our commitments.

The United States remains unambiguously committed to deterrence. To cite President Reagan again: “As we proceed, we must remain constant in preserving the nuclear deterrent and maintaining a solid capability for flexible response.” We should be clear about an essential point: SDI is a research program designed to deter-

mine scientifically and strategically whether a defensive alternative is possible, not a blind commitment to pursue defensive systems regardless of their merits or feasibility.

If effective defensive systems prove feasible, the United States is committed to using the arms control process to facilitate a jointly managed transition to greater reliance on strategic defense by both the Soviet Union and the United States. Indeed, we have begun to discuss this subject now in the talks on defense and space

systems now underway in Geneva. The United States' position is clear: it is not for the purpose of aggression, but rather for the purpose of strengthening deterrence by denying the potential rewards of aggression that we are pursuing defensive research. At every opportunity, we have emphasized this point to the Soviet Union. "We seek" as President Reagan affirmed, "neither military superiority nor political advantage. Our only purpose - one all people share - is to search for ways to reduce the danger of nuclear war."

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## The Western Debate and the Soviet Union

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Like virtually every major new undertaking in the realm of public policy, the Strategic Defense Initiative has evoked a vigorous and spirited debate within the democracies of America, Europe, and Asia. This, as always, is a healthy sign. To disagree on major initiatives of public policy is the birthright of all citizens; controversy, honestly pursued, is one of the forces that keeps democracies vital and strong.

But as is always the case with debates conducted in open societies, there is free participation from the outside as well. One major participant in the Western debate on strategic defenses has been the Soviet Union.

Two distinctions are important in this regard: first, the distinction between honest negotiations among governments and diversionary tactics or obfuscation; second, the distinction between honest argument in domestic policy debate and propaganda. In both cases, even as they welcome the former, open societies must be particularly on guard against the latter.

The United States has consistently emphasized to

the Soviet Union its wish for an honest dialogue on our possible differences over the defensive programs we are both pursuing, in order to see how cooperation between the two sides might be enhanced. Thus far, however, the Soviet Union has prevented such a dialogue by refusing even to acknowledge that it is engaged in researching advanced strategic defense technologies. The Soviet position cannot be taken seriously. Indeed, it must be understood for what it is - a cynical tactic to avoid accountability and to gain a unilateral advantage over the United States.

Similarly while debate on strategic defenses is healthy in democracies - and indeed vital to promoting public understanding of the issues at stake - the Soviet public contribution to the current Western debate has been wholly propagandistic in character. This should not be surprising, as the Soviet Union sees its interests to be in fundamental conflict with the citizens of democracies.

It is to a detailed analysis of the Soviet campaign against SDI that this study now turns.

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## Basic Themes of the Soviet Campaign

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The basic themes of the Soviet public campaign against SDI were established within weeks of President Reagan's March 23 address. The first major Soviet statements on the subject came in a published interview with the General Secretary of the Communist Party, Yuri

Andropov, in Pravda on March 27, 1983, a few days after President Reagan's speech. The first part of a later Pravda article revisited familiar charges against NATO's response to Soviet deployment of SS-20 missiles in Europe and Asia; the second part focused upon the newer

subject of SDI. In a brief statement, Andropov laid down what became the Communist Party line on SDI - first, that SDI was not defensive but rather part of a U.S. effort to acquire a nuclear first-strike capability, and second, that SDI would damage prospects for arms control and “open the floodgates of a runaway arms race.”

To these observations were later added two other major claims, which were incorporated into the Soviet propaganda campaign only after they had been stressed in some commentaries in the U.S. These were, first, that SDI would prove technically infeasible or impractical and would be subject to easy countermeasures; and second, that the costs of a defensive system would be prohibitive.

### Old Themes

It is worth noting that the basic themes of the Soviet attack on SDI are neither new nor unique to SDI. On the contrary, nearly all the major themes or arguments marshalled by the Soviets against SDI were also used in the Soviet campaign against NATO’s decision to deploy Pershing II and ground-launched cruise missiles in response to Soviet SS-20 deployments, if negotiated agreements failed to obviate U.S. deployments. In fact, in recent years virtually every new U.S. weapons system in the nuclear field has been attacked by the Soviets on the grounds that the United States was seeking a “first-strike capability” and that the U.S. program would “spur another round in the arms race.” In Soviet propaganda new American weapons systems are portrayed routinely as part of a “U.S. effort to achieve military superiority over the Soviet Union.”

Chart 1 compares the arguments now cited by Soviet sources against the Strategic Defense Initiative with those that were used in the propaganda campaign against NATO’s INF deployments.

**Chart 1 - Continuity in Soviet Propaganda Themes**

Theme	Used against	Used against
	SDI (3/83-Present)	NATO’s INF Decision (79-83)
The program is part of a U.S. effort to acquire a “first strike” capability against the USSR.	X	X
SDI technology would be used for offensive weapons.	X	

Theme	Used against	Used against
	SDI (3/83-Present)	NATO’s INF Decision (79-83)
The program is part of a U.S. effort to achieve military superiority against USSR.	X	X
A military balance currently exists, which the U.S. program will upset.	X	X
The U.S. program will prompt “a new round in the arms race”/ force the Soviets to take countermeasures.	X	X
The U.S. program will increase the likelihood of confrontation or conflict.	X	X
The U.S. program will complicate or make impossible arms control negotiations on such systems.	X	X
The U.S. program violates an arms control agreement(s).	X	X
The U.S. intends the program to be a means for “timiting” nuclear war to Europe, leaving U.S. territory a sanctuary	X	X
The U.S. program would “militarize space”.	X	
The U.S. program is technically infeasible.	X	
The U.S. program is too costly.	X	

There are some differences in emphasis between the anti-SDI and anti-INF campaigns. Notably, the general charge that a U.S. program violates an arms control agreement has been given much more play in the campaign against SDI, which the Soviets falsely claim violates the 1972 ABM Treaty.

An exception to this pattern of thematic continuity are arguments Soviet propagandists have absorbed from Western discussion of SDI- namely, that it is not technically feasible because countermeasures are available and

that it would be too costly. Two other charges new to the anti-SDI campaign obviously would have made no sense in the context of the INF controversy - the claim that SDI technologies will yield offensive rather than defensive weaponry and the argument the U.S. "seeks to militarize space." The notion that SDI technology would be used for offensive weapons is really a variation on the old theme that the U.S. is seeking a "first-strike" capability; the idea, meanwhile, that the U.S. is seeking to "militarize space" has actually been a standard Soviet theme since the late 1950s, when the Soviet Union first sought to divert attention from its own extensive military space programs.

For all its repetitiveness, however, the Soviet propaganda campaign against SDI is conducted with some sophisticated approaches.

For example, the Soviets have begun to make frequent use of an arms-control term, "stability," which is widely employed in the West but which, in the past, has played no important role in Soviet statements or thinking about the strategic nuclear balance. To portray themselves as resisting U.S. efforts to upset stability through the SDI requires a high degree of Soviet disingenuousness, given ongoing Soviet strategic offensive and defensive programs.

### **"Hero and Villain" Approach**

The Soviets would have the world believe that they are playing a heroic role, seeking to achieve disarmament and to "end the nuclear arms race," while the United States is the principal, dangerous obstacle to arms control and to reducing international tension.

In their statements about the potentially dire consequences of U.S. research, the Soviets sometimes use quite ominous rhetoric. On April 19, 1983, Andropov warned that SDI "is capable of bringing the world closer to the nuclear precipice." Similarly, the introductory page of the Soviet propaganda pamphlet, *Star Wars: Delusions and Dangers*, issued in July 1985, is laced with portentous terms: "danger," "threat," "annihilated," "dangerous" and ; such "destructiveness." The apparent hope is that language will play upon Western fears of war and of increased tensions. As in the early days of NATO, the Soviets characteristically seek to persuade Western publics that their own governments' actions in response to Soviet power and conduct are provocative, and that the Soviets are the aggrieved party.

### **Tactics**

As in their propaganda campaign against NATO's INF

decision, the Soviets have sent numerous spokesmen to lobby for their views at various forums in NATO countries. By carefully staging a few rare opportunities for "news" from Moscow (where access by the Western media is sharply limited and controlled) they have gotten front-page coverage in the Western press highlighting their propaganda themes. Also the Soviets have recently paid for prominently displayed advertisements in Western newspapers. Such advertisements are often used to republish Pravda editorials that the Soviets wish to direct to larger audiences in the West.

The Soviets have also employed one of their oldest front organizations in the campaign: the World Peace Council (WPC)\* which actually has a contingent of KGB officers assigned to it. On January 24-28, 1985, the WPCs "International Liaison Forum of Peace Forces" sponsored a meeting in Vienna, Austria. The meeting, which attracted more than 400 delegates, adopted resolutions urging a halt to the development of "space weapons" and the "militarization of space." At a WPC Presidium session in Moscow, similar denunciations were voiced. In early 1985, the WPC issued a pamphlet with the provocative title, "The U.S. Space Offensive: Road to Nuclear Annihilation," repeating the party line about SDI. In March 1985, the WPC "Presidential Committee," meeting in Moscow, issued a "No To 'Star Wars' (Appeal Against Washington's Space Madness)" which followed closely the language of the Andropov "interview" in Pravda two years earlier.

Awareness of the diminished credibility of the older and more transparent front organizations like the WPC has prompted the Soviets to create new fronts and new satellite groups of old fronts, which are now employed in their campaign against SDI. One such organization is the Generals for Peace and Disarmament (GPD), a group of eight retired NATO senior officers. This front, established in 1980 as part of the Soviet efforts against NATO's planned INF deployment, has recently added SDI to the list of NATO and U.S. programs it regularly denounces. Its members have traveled widely to convey their message. The GPD has been professionally choreographed in an attempt to disguise its origins and ties to Soviet front efforts.\* \*

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\*The WPC was founded in 1949 as the World Committee for Partisans for Peace and adopted its present title in 1950. The WPC was based in Paris until 1951 when the French Government expelled it for "fifth column activities." The WPC moved to Prague and then to Vienna in 1954, where it remained until banned in 1957 for "activities directed against the Austrian state." However, it continued to operate in Vienna as the "International Institute for Peace" until it moved to its present location in Helsinki in 1968.

\*\*See "Soviet Active Measures: the World Peace Council", Foreign Affairs Note, Department of State, April 1985, pp. 6-7.

A newer development is the use of prominent Soviet scientists to argue against SDI. Ironically, many of these scientists have been and continue to be heavily involved in Soviet ballistic missile defense research, even as they denounce parallel U.S. efforts. On April 9, 1983, the Soviet news agency TASS related in English the full text of the Soviet scientists' "Appeal to All Scientists of the World;" which declared the practical infeasibility of SDI. This appeal, published in The New York Times, denounced the SDI program. In fact, a number of the signatories of this letter have played key roles in Soviet programs researching both traditional and advanced

ballistic missile defense technologies. Among these are Mr. Y. P. Velikhov, the Deputy Director of the Kurchatov Atomic Energy Institute, and a central figure in Soviet laser and particle-beam weapon efforts; Mr. N.G. Basov and Mr. A.M. Prokhorov, both of whom are scientific advisers to laser weapon programs; and Mr. Avduyevskiy, who is responsible for a number of research projects on the military uses of space, including a space-based laser weapon. Other signatories have devoted their careers to developing strategic offensive weapons and other military systems.

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## Themes of the Soviet Propaganda Campaign

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The major themes used by the Soviets in their propaganda against the Strategic Defense Initiative are analyzed in the pages that follow. For the reader's convenience, brief criticisms and responses to each Soviet theme are numbered and printed in boldface type. Detailed explanations of the criticisms follow. The format is designed for quickness and ease of reference - also to render the technical issues of the debate easier to understand. Because the Soviet themes themselves are intertwined, the reader may find in some cases that the detailed information supplied in response to two different Soviet themes overlaps.

### **SOVIET PROPAGANDA THEME:**

#### **SDI is part of an effort to acquire a "first-strike" capability.**

The US President recently announced the start of the development of a large-scale, highly effective ABM (anti-ballistic missile) defense. But these measures will in reality be not defensive but offensive, aimed at securing for the United States a first nuclear strike potential.

-Defense Minister Dmitriy Ustinov, speech in East Germany, Krasnaya Zvezda, Apr. 7, 1983

What can these weapons do? Of course, they can be an element of a first strike; and as such, this type of weapon can present a very real threat which bolsters the capability to carry out a first strike.

-Academician Yevgeniy Velikhov, Vice President of the USSR Academy of Sciences, Moscow Television Service, 25 May 1985.

Several points need to be made about this theme:

**1. Strategic defense systems would work to enhance stability and deterrence by making a "first strike" more difficult to achieve.** SDI is not designed to replace deterrence but rather to improve and strengthen it. Deterrence requires that a potential adversary be convinced that the problems, risks, and costs of aggression outweigh the gains he might hope to achieve. A popular view of deterrence is that it must take the form of a threat of devastating nuclear retaliation. But deterrence can also take the form of directly denying the military objectives of an attacker. An effective strategic defensive system need not be perfect to complicate greatly an aggressor's first strike planning and counteract the temptation to launch an attack.

**2. U.S. strategic forces are not configured for or capable of a "first strike," and the United States has consistently rejected such a strategy.** Consistent with its longstanding policy, the United States has structured a retaliatory force unsuited for a first-strike strategy. Notably, the U.S. has large numbers of bombers and SLBMS which are either not fast enough or not accurate enough to destroy Soviet missiles in their silos. Such a force would make no sense as part of an aggressive firststrike strategy. The Soviet Union, however, has more than twice as many prompt counterforce warheads as there are strategic military targets in the U.S.

This huge asymmetry in counterforce capability is the overriding cause of a dangerous instability in the cur-

rent strategic situation, which the President has sought to mitigate through the strategic modernization program and the current Nuclear and Space Talks in Geneva, and over the long term through investigation of defensive technologies for a better basis for deterrence. Deployment of the hard-target-capable MX and Trident 11 SLBM will reduce the Soviet lead in prompt counterforce capability, but will not match the Soviets in this area. Indeed, the U.S. does not seek to match the enormous prompt counterforce potential of the USSR, but seeks rather to offset the Soviet advantage, and blunt its impact by improving the survivability and reliability of our forces (including command, control, and communication).

**3. It is Soviet - and not U.S. - doctrine and deployments which have evolved with the aim of developing a “first-strike” strategy.** The execution of a “first-strike” attack presupposes possession of nuclear weapons sufficiently numerous, powerful, accurate, and swift to destroy a large portion of the opponent’s force in a first strike and still retain a large reserve force. These are exactly the traits of the weapons that the Soviet Union has chosen to emphasize in its strategic nuclear force.\*

Heavy, accurate Inter-Continental Ballistic Missiles (ICBMs) are ideally suited for prompt counterforce missions. The Soviets have 308 SS-18 “heavy” ICBMs and the US none. These are the most powerful, rapid and threatening nuclear weapons and the best suited for carrying out a first strike.

The Soviet SS-18 force alone is capable of destroying almost the entire land-based portion of the U.S. retaliatory force, leaving approximately 2,000 SS-19 warheads to attack remaining land-based military targets. In addition, Soviet Submarine Launched Ballistic Missiles (SLBMs) would contribute to a large residual strategic force after the initial attack. The 308 SS-18 ICBMs deployed by the USSR, each credited with 10 warheads, have more destructive potential than the entire combined force of all U.S. ICBMs and SLBMs.

Moreover, Soviet military doctrine, profoundly influenced by the initial success of the Nazi blitzkrieg inflicted against the USSR in World War II, places a pre-

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\*See “Soviet Strategic Force Developments,” Testimony Before a Joint Session of the Subcommittee on Strategic and Theater Nuclear Forces of the Senate Armed Services Committee and the Defense Subcommittee of the Senate Committee on Appropriations, June 26, 1985, by Robert M. Gates and Lawrence K. Gershwin, CIA.

mium on achieving surprise, seizing the initiative, and concentrating its use of offensive firepower (“shock”).

**4. The Soviet Union asserts that only one side - the U.S. - would develop strategic defenses.** That assumption is belied by the longstanding Soviet strategic defense programs (detailed in a State/Defense publication of Oct. 1985). President Reagan, in his October 24, 1985 speech before the UN General Assembly, made clear that the U.S. envisions defense against ballistic missiles for both sides:

We do not ask that the Soviet leaders, whose country has suffered so much from war, leave their people defenseless against foreign attack. Why then do they insist that we remain undefended? Who is threatened if Western research, and Soviet research that is itself well advanced, should develop a non-nuclear system which would threaten not human beings but only ballistic missiles? Surely the world will sleep more secure ... when the sword of Damocles that has hung over our planet for too many decades is lifted by western and Russian scientists working to shield their cities and citizens.... [emphasis added]

The US has stressed publicly, as well as to the Soviets in Geneva, that should new defensive technologies prove feasible, we seek a jointly managed transition to greater reliance on defensive systems. In the meantime, we are pursuing a dialogue on the offense-defense relationship as a possible basis for such a transition.

**5. A host of U.S. systems - even the Space Shuttle - have been attacked over the years by Soviet propagandists as contributing to an alleged “first strike” capability.** The fact is that Soviet commentators can be counted on to call almost any new U.S. nuclear weapon program a “first-strike” system. The term has been applied indiscriminately to the U.S. longer-range INF missiles for NATO (both the Pershing II ballistic missile and ground-launched cruise missile), the MX missile, the “stealth” bomber, and the B-1 bomber, as well as to the Space Shuttle.

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**SOVIET PROPAGANDA THEME:**

**SDI research would lead to development of “space strike arms” designed to hit earth targets from space.**

They [ “space strike arms”] may be used not only to knock out ballistic missiles after the latter are launched, but also to deliver a strike from outer space

at earth, air, and sea targets. Such targets may be missiles at launch sites, command, control and communication centers, various enterprises, power stations, aircraft in airfields, and many other stationary as well as moving targets.

- Soviet pamphlet, *Star Wars: Delusions and Dangers*, (Military Publishing House, Moscow, 1985), p.27.

The above is a variation on the theme that SDI is aimed at achieving a “first-strike” capability.

There are two points to be made here:

**1. The defensive nature of the SDI program is demonstrated most clearly by the fact that most of the technologies under investigation are not capable of penetrating the earth’s atmosphere and cannot be used to strike terrestrial targets.** And while some technologies could in theory penetrate the atmosphere, they would not be militarily effective in such a role.

The approaches being examined in SDI hold much promise that the technical requirements necessary for an effective defense against ballistic missiles is possible. The same is not true of the technical requirements necessary for the effective offensive uses of those same approaches. It would be far easier to counter such weapons than it would be to use them to attack quickly and effectively a large number of hardened and protected military assets on the ground.

**2. To demonstrate the defensive nature of the technologies being explored in SDI, the United States has proposed an “open laboratories” initiative.** Under this initiative inspection teams from the U.S. and the U.S.S.R. would visit facilities in both countries where strategic defense research is being undertaken to determine first-hand the defensive nature of the research.

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#### SOVIET PROPAGANDA THEME:

**SDI represents a U.S. attempt to achieve strategic superiority and upset the existing military balance.**

In fact, Washington’s new strategy is another attempt to disrupt the strategic military parity between the USSR and the United States ...

- Colonel M. Ponomarev, article in *Krasnaya Zvezda*, 10 April 1983.

The Pentagon is now rushing into space. What for? Once again to attempt to achieve military superiority over the USSR, through space this time.

-Defense Minister S. L. Sokolov, Interview in *Krasnaya Zvezda*, 8 May 1985.

**1. According to Soviet propaganda, U.S. military programs always “upset” the balance, while Soviet military programs always “maintain” the balance.**

For example, in recent years, the Soviets have claimed that both the MX and NATO’s INF missile deployments would upset the balance as part of a U.S. effort to acquire military superiority over the USSR. This charge was leveled despite the existence at the time of Soviet monopolies in both types of weaponry. By the end of the 1970s, the Soviet Union possessed over 600 ICBMs of comparable or greater power than the, MX. The pattern with regard to INF missiles was equally clear. In 1982, for example, when the Soviet advantage in such missiles’ warheads had grown to 1,200 to zero, Defense Minister Ustinov declared that there was “approximate parity.”

Soviet propaganda seeks to have it both ways. The Soviets claim that the strategic balance is resilient to massive Soviet build-ups (such as the over 800 Soviet fourth-generation ICBMs deployed after SALT I), yet extremely sensitive to any new U.S. programs (such as plans to deploy 100 MX ICBMs or to pursue an SDI research program).

**2. The actual trend in the strategic balance over the past 14 years has been in the opposite direction -toward Soviet superiority.**

The deterioration of the strategic balance since the signing of SALT I in 1972 was one of the major factors behind President Reagan’s decision to pursue the Strategic Defense Initiative. SALT I and the ABM Treaty did not, as was hoped in the West, slow the momentum of Soviet strategic offensive programs. The number of Soviet strategic warheads and bombs has quadrupled since SALT I was signed. Moreover, the Soviet capability to destroy hard targets has increased more than tenfold.

In 1981 the U.S. embarked on a strategic modernization program to reverse a long period of relative decline. This modernization program was designed to preserve deterrence and, at the same time, to provide the incentives necessary for the Soviet Union to join the U.S. in negotiating significant reductions in the nuclear arsenals of both sides.

**3. The Soviet Union is actively pursuing its own strategic defense research. SDI in part merely responds to a pre-existing Soviet effort.**

Soviet propagandists would have the world believe the U.S. program would

leave the Soviet Union defenseless. The Soviets' persistent denial that they are engaged in advanced defense technologies research is calculated to advance the myth that the U.S. seeks superiority and is undermining the "balance" through SDI.

**4. Because of Soviet efforts to consolidate "prompt counterforce" capability, the recent trend in the strategic balance has been toward greater instability.** SDI is necessary to offset this trend. The question arises: what would be the effect on the strategic balance (especially five or ten years from now) if the U.S. did not pursue the SDI research program and the Soviet Union continued its long-established pursuit of both conventional ballistic missile defense and advanced technologies for strategic defense? Given the current Soviet strategic defense effort, which goes well beyond research in some cases, SDI is necessary, at a minimum, as a hedge. But beyond that, SDI holds out the promise of a more stable, defense-reliant strategic balance.

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#### **SOVIET PROPAGANDA THEME:**

##### **SDI will generate a new round in the arms race.**

[The deployment of a U.S. strategic defense] would actually open the floodgates of a runaway arms race of all types of strategic arms, both offensive and defensive.

-General Secretary Yuri Andropov, answer to correspondent's questions in Pravda, 27 March 1983

The development and introduction of defense against nuclear missile weapons ... whips up the arms race even more ....

- Georgiy A. Arbatov, Director of USA and Canada Institute of the USSR Academy of Sciences, 12 December 1984

... the truth is that the space-based antimissile system which is being created by the United States programs an arms race in all salients and leads to the undermining of international security.

-Soviet Defense Minister S. L. Sokolov 5 May 1985

These claims are based not only on a wholly misleading picture of Soviet conduct over the past two decades but on a fundamental misunderstanding of the criteria which the United States is committed to apply in evaluating the results of SDI research.

**1. Efforts to reverse the Soviet buildup have proved unsuccessful. While we have shown restraint, the Soviets raced ahead.** At the signing of the ABM Treaty

in 1972, many in the West hoped that the treaty would break what was thought to be an "action-reaction" arms race cycle and prevent a new cycle of reactive responses resulting from defensive deployments. The U.S. eliminated its ballistic missile defense capability and drastically reduced air defenses after signing the ABM Treaty, while the pace of Soviet ABM research and development increased.

As U.S. spending on strategic offensive forces declined in the years immediately following SALT I in 1972, the Soviets deployed at a high rate a whole series of new strategic offensive systems. In 1979, Secretary of Defense Harold Brown summarized the phenomenon this way: "When we build, they build; when we stop building, they nevertheless continue to build."

**2. Over the past decade and a half, the major initiator of new weapons programs has been the Soviet Union.** Soviet spokesmen seek to give the impression that major strategic weapons developments are exclusively of U.S. origin and that the Soviet Union merely reacts to U.S. actions. This notion does not square with recent history, as the evolution of the strategic balance after SALT I shows. The data plainly show that the Soviet Union has run a one-sided race.

For example, the U.S. initiated development of the MX missile after SALT I. Initial deployment is scheduled to begin in late 1986. The Soviets characterize the MX as a spur to the "arms race". In fact, since the U.S. deployed its most modern type of ICBM, the Minuteman III, the Soviet Union has deployed at least four new types of ICBMs (the SS-17, SS-18, SS-19, and SS-25), including 360 SS-19s roughly comparable in size to the MX, each with six warheads, and 308 of the much larger SS-18, each credited with ten warheads. Moreover, the Soviets have already begun deployment of one new type of ICBM, the SS-25, and will soon begin deployment of another new type, the SS-X-24. (Only one "new type" is permitted under SALT, and therefore the SS-25 violates the SALT II Treaty of 1979.) This means five new Soviet ICBMs compared to one - the MX - for the U.S. And yet the Soviets repeatedly assert that the MX (the development of which was stretched out in the 1970s and the deployment force goal for which has been reduced from 200 to 100 missiles) will "prompt another round in the arms race."

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\*An instructive example of the Soviets' use of standardized propaganda charges regardless of the actual circumstances was the Soviet accusation in mid-1977 that President Carter's cancellation of the planned production of 241 B-1 bombers was an escalation of the arms race and would complicate arms control negotiations because,

**3. Because of the cost-effectiveness criterion, strategic defenses once deployed, would tend to inhibit further expansions of offensive weapons.** Within the SDI research program, the US. will judge defenses to be desirable only if they are militarily effective, survivable, and cost-effective at the margin. The cost-effectiveness criterion will ensure that any deployed defensive system would create powerful disincentives against responding with additional offensive arms. A key issue in evaluating options generated by SDI research concerns the degree to which certain types of defensive systems, by their nature, encourage an adversary to try simply to overwhelm them with additional offensive capability while other systems can discourage such a counter effort. The U.S. seeks defensive options which would provide clear disincentives to attempts to counter them with additional offensive arms. This criterion is couched in terms of cost effectiveness; however, it is much more than an economic concept.

**SOVIET PROPAGANDA THEME:  
SDI is part of US efforts to “militarize space:”**

... the idea of developing ABM systems conceals an intention to shift the arms race to outer space and threaten mankind from there.

-A. Tolkunov, “Space Fraud” *Pravda*, May 10, 1983  
The program for creating a large-scale, echeloned ABM system using space-based elements, ... is also aimed at transferring the arms race into space .... the plans that the United States is implementing for the militarization of space via the creation of various kinds of antisatellite weapons.

-A. Sitnikov, “For A Clear Sky,” *Pravda*, July 5, 1984

**1. The Soviet Union took the initiative in “militarizing” space in the 1950s by deploying the first ICBMs which would travel through space when launched.** In the 1960s, the Soviet Union conducted unannounced orbital tests of, and subsequently developed, a fractional orbital bombardment system designed to launch weap-

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the Soviets argued, the US was pursuing air-launched cruise missiles. (Those missiles were for penetrating air defenses the Soviets refused to include in arms control agreements.) Thus even a major unilateral cutback by the US was portrayed by the Soviets as a spur to the arms race and an obstacle to reaching an arms control agreement. (See TASS commentary in English, July 1, 1977 and Pravda weekly review, “International Week,” July 3, 1977.)

ons from space.

In the late 1960s, the Soviets developed and tested an anti-satellite weapon. Since then, the Soviets have tested this ASAT in space a considerable number of times. Faced with a demonstrated Soviet capability to threaten the survivability of some vital U.S. satellites, the U.S. in 1977 began a research and development program aimed at acquiring an ASAT capability. To date, however, the Soviet Union is the only nation with an operational ASAT weapon deployed.

At about the same time the Soviets began to suggest that the U.S. was “militarizing space” a 1982 study by the Congressional Research Service noted:

In defense of its developing ASAT system the Soviets took the offensive, accusing the United States of militarizing space, an old propaganda canard dating back early in the Space Age and in an air of offended innocence portraying the Soviet Union as the victim not the perpetrator... Thus, the United States was portrayed as the violator of peace in outer space, the Soviets as the enforcer of peace.

Meanwhile, the Space Shuttle became the principal focus of the Soviet propaganda charge that the U.S. was seeking to militarize space. In April 1982 the Soviet news agency TASS charged that military missions of the shuttle posed “a special danger to mankind” and suggested that the Shuttle would be used “as a space bomber with nuclear weapons on board.’ In July 1981, the Soviets claimed “the shuttle provides a basis for a new ASAT system.”

**2. In contrast to the heavily civilian-oriented U.S. program, the Soviet space program has long been predominantly military in nature.** In 1984 the Soviet Union conducted about 100 space launches, some 80 of which were purely military in nature. In the same year, by comparison, the U.S. conducted a total of just eleven space missions. All Soviet space launches are conducted by their Strategic Rocket Forces- the same military branch charged with maintaining and commanding the Soviet land-based nuclear arsenal. There is no Soviet equivalent to NASA, America’s civilian space agency. The majority of Soviet military satellites have been launched from Plesetsk Missile and Space Test Center, the same site at which nuclear missiles are tested. (The Soviets did not even acknowledge the existence of Plesetsk as a launch site until 1983, by which time they had - since 1966 launched over 800 spacecraft from that site.)

## SOVIET PROPAGANDA THEME:

### SDI violates or undermines the ABM Treaty of 1972.

...in concluding the treaty on the limitation of X-M systems in 1972 the USSR and the United States reached accord on banning the development of systems for the antimissile defense of the territory of each of the two countries and also the creation of the bases for such defense ... It is precisely this fundamental provision of the ABM treaty that US Administration figures are currently undermining.

-Editorial, *Pravda*, 23 March 1984

The United States' so-called 'research' in the field of the development of ABM defense with space-based elements is leading to the creation of a situation in which the entire system of international law ... might be jeopardized.... -Editorial, *Izvestiya*, 25 January, 1985

The United States has been malevolently undermining the Treaty on the Limitation of ABM Systems for a long time now.

-Marshall S. Akhromeyev, Chief of the USSR Armed Forces General Staff and First Deputy Defense Minister, article in *Pravda*, 4 June 1985

It has been a common technique of Soviet propaganda over the years to accuse adversary powers falsely of precisely the misdeeds and violations in which the Soviet Union happens itself to be engaged. Such is the case with the groundless allegations that SDI violates the ABM Treaty.

#### 1. SDI is strictly within the limits of the ABM Treaty,

Indeed, the U.S. program is proceeding under guidelines more restrictive than the treaty provisions themselves. The ABM Treaty contains constraints governing the development, testing, and deployment of ABM systems and components. Research is not constrained in any way. 'I understand why this is, it is useful to review briefly the history of the treaty's negotiation.

The lack of constraints on research in the ABM 'Treaty resulted from two factors. First, both the United States and the Soviet Union recognized that it would be impossible to devise effective or verifiable limits or bans on research. (In fact, the Soviet side insisted during negotiations that research could not be limited.)

Additionally, it was clear in negotiations that neither side considered it desirable to limit research. The treaty was also designed by both sides to permit adaptation to future circumstances. This was particularly important

given that the treaty was to be of unlimited duration. Specific provisions were incorporated into the treaty to allow for its modification.

The language of the ABM Treaty clearly indicates that the possibility of new technologies was foreseen. That future types of permitted ABM systems and components were contemplated is obvious from the language of Article II, which defines ABM systems as "currently consisting of" ABM interceptor missiles, launchers, and radars. Furthermore, the language of "Agreed Statement D" in the treaty acknowledges the possibility that new ABM systems based "on other physical principles" might be created in the future and provides for consultations with a view to possible amendment of the treaty constraints on such systems prior to their deployment.

The SDI program is being conducted in a manner fully consistent with all U.S. treaty obligations. The President has directed that the program be formulated in a fully compliant manner. A U.S. review last year led to the judgment by the President that a reading of the ABM Treaty that would allow the development and testing of systems based on other physical principles, regardless of basing mode, is fully justified.

The SDI program was originally structured in a manner that was designed to permit it to achieve critical research objectives while remaining consistent with the more narrow interpretation of the ABM Treaty which the U.S. was observing. This being the case, in October 1985, while reserving the right to conduct the SDI program under the legitimate broader interpretation at some future time, the President deemed it unnecessary to restructure the SDI program towards the limits of the ABM Treaty which the U.S. could observe. Consistent with that determination, the Administration applies the more restrictive treaty interpretation as a matter of policy, although we are not legally required to do so, in evaluating the experiments in the SDI program.

The Soviets are of course fully aware of this fact, and interestingly enough, before SDI came on the scene, they openly acknowledged it. In a major statement before the Soviet Presidium in 1972, shortly after the treaty was signed, then Soviet Defense Minister Grechko stated that the ABM Treaty "places no limitations whatsoever on the conducting of research and experimental work directed toward solving the problem of defending the country from nuclear missile strike:'

#### 2. Ironically, it is the Soviet Union, and not the United States, which is clearly acting in violation of the ABM Treaty, as well as other major arms- agreements. A

number of Soviet ABM-related activities since 1972 have been inconsistent with or in outright violation of the ABM Treaty. Most notably, the construction of a large phased array ballistic missile tracking radar near Krasnoyarsk in central Siberia violates the ABM Treaty provisions concerning siting, orientation and capability of such radars. The Krasnoyarsk radar violation goes to the heart of the ABM Treaty. During the ABM Treaty negotiations large phased-array radars like that under construction at Krasnoyarsk were recognized as the critical, long lead-time element of a nation-wide ABM defense, which the Treaty was designed to prohibit. (For a more detailed discussion of these and other Soviet violations of existing arms agreements, see the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency's pamphlet Soviet Non-compliance, March, 1986)

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#### SOVIET PROPAGANDA THEME:

##### **SDI undermines the basis for arms control efforts, including reductions in strategic offensive systems.**

I think it will absolutely derail the whole process of arms control. It will become simply impossible.

-Dr. Georgi Arbatov, Member of Supreme Soviet, and Director of the Institute of the United States and Canada, interview on Radio Moscow, April 13, 1983. Announcing its programs of the space weapons build-up, Washington is actually undermining the whole process of the limitation and reduction of armaments....

-Vladimir Bogachev, TASS political commentator, April 28, 1984.

The United States ... continues to push its 'Star Wars' program... If the United States continues in the same dangerous direction there is no hope for real progress in arms control.

-Radio Moscow, world service in English, commentary by Aleksandr Druzhinin, January 6, 1986.

**1. As is the case with a number of other Soviet propaganda themes, the reverse is the truth.** The historical record demonstrates that the Soviets have agreed to real arms control only when it was clear the West had the political will to preserve the military balance, usually by initiating new programs. For example, in the case of SALT I, only after the Johnson administration in early 1968 requested Congressional approval of funding for production and deployment for the ABM system did the

Soviets agree to U.S. proposals to begin arms control negotiations on strategic nuclear forces. (The first session of SALT I began in Helsinki in November 1969, having been postponed after the Soviets invaded Czechoslovakia in August, 1968.)

In other words, contrary to the point usually made by Soviet propagandists, the prospects for arms control were actually enhanced by the U.S. having in 1969-1972 a vigorous ABM program. The Soviet decision to return in early 1985 to arms control negotiations with the U.S. - unilaterally suspended by the Soviets in late 1983 - apparently was largely in response to announcement of the U.S. Strategic Defense Initiative and our determination to implement programs to restore a balance in strategic and intermediate range forces.

##### **2. The threat that arms talks would prove impossible if the U.S. were to continue with programs under contemplation has proved empty in the past.**

In the case of INF negotiations, prior to NATO's December 1979 INF decision, the Soviet Union was unwilling to consider arms limits relating specifically to their SS -20 missiles and said they would not negotiate on longer range INF missiles. It was only after that decision, and after the Soviets became convinced that NATO was fully committed to implementing it, that the Soviets finally agreed in mid-1980 to negotiations without the unacceptable precondition that NATO first abandon its planned deployment. Yet before NATO made its decision, the Soviets argued that the NATO decision would make talks impossible - and later, after that threat failed to be borne out, that actual deployment would make talks impossible. These threats came in such statements as those by then Foreign Minister Gromyko, and President Brezhnev.

Question: Do you consider that talks will be possible in the event that a decision on supplementing arms is adopted at the forthcoming NATO session? Answer: The present position of the NATO countries, including the FRG, as it now appears, destroys the basis for talks. We have also told the government of the FRG about this.

-Foreign Minister Gromyko, press conference, Bonn, November 23, 1979.

The present position of NATO countries makes talks on this problem impossible. We formally told the U.S. government about all this a number of days ago.

-President Brezhnev, interview in Pravda, January 13, 1980.

As NATO neared initial longer-range INF missile deployment in late 1983, the Soviets used arguments such as this as a pretext for walking out of INF talks in Geneva in November 1983, insisting as they did throughout 1984 - that the new U.S. missiles must be withdrawn as a precondition for renewing arms control talks. This precondition - as part of the general propaganda theme that US programs destroy the basis for arms control talks-was dropped in January 1985, when the Soviets agreed in Geneva to renew arms control negotiations that include INF systems.

**3. Real reductions in offensive nuclear weapons should be easier to achieve in the presence of strategic defense systems than they are at present.** The Soviets claim that U.S. abandonment of SDI will open the door to deep reductions. But the U.S. has been seeking such reductions in the offensive arsenals of both sides since 1972, and particularly during the last four years, with no effect. Far from standing in the way of offensive reductions, SDI is very likely to provide a positive incentive for both sides to reduce their strategic nuclear arsenals, for three reasons.

First, if SDI technologies can produce a defense that is cost-effective at the margin, which is more than a purely economic consideration, it would provide an incentive not to “react” to defensive deployments with more offensive deployments. The SDI research program is in part designed to determine if such cost effectiveness can be achieved. The United States will not develop or deploy defenses against ballistic missiles unless they meet this criterion.

Second, by having the capability to disrupt the execution of a nuclear attack, defenses against ballistic missiles would confront the potential attacker with great uncertainty as to the potential success of the attack. Continued investment in nuclear ballistic missiles would become considerably less attractive from a military perspective because an attacker would not be able to count on achieving specific military objectives by using offensive nuclear ballistic missiles.

Finally, SDI could mitigate the inherent risks of reducing nuclear arsenals to low levels. Under present conditions, very deep reductions, while attractive, would entail the risk that one side or the other might deploy a clandestine nuclear force that would give it tremendous advantages if used or even simply revealed during a crisis. This risk is much greater for the United States than for the Soviet Union, because of the closed nature of Soviet society and the fact that the Soviets have a record of violating many of the arms control agreements which

they have signed. Effective defenses provide a hedge against a clandestinely deployed force and thus more confidence in the wisdom of drastically reducing or even eventually eliminating nuclear forces.

In short, SDI provides both a prudent hedge against existing and future unilateral Soviet force improvements and presents an opportunity to the Soviets to move jointly to a more stable world with progressively lower levels of nuclear weapons.

**4. Even as Soviet spokesmen claim that U.S. SDI research undermines arms control efforts, the Soviet Union continues to press forward, clandestinely, with the same kind of research.** Given that Soviet violation of their obligations under many existing arms control treaties undermines the entire arms control process, the claim is as hypocritical as it is false.

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#### SOVIET PROPAGANDA THEME:

**SDI undermines stability and increases the likelihood of nuclear conflict.**

I concretely refer to Washington’s announced plans of developing a large-scale and highly effective anti-ballistic missile defense ... the new American military concept ... is only capable of bringing the world closer to the nuclear precipice.

-General Secretary Yuri Andropov, interview on April 19, 1983 with West German magazine *Der Spiegel*  
But realization of SDI would overturn all existing ideas on the balance of forces and even on the possibilities of reducing nuclear arms. The strategic balance would truly become strategic chaos. ... Realization of the ‘star wars’ program engenders and would engender in the future destabilization at every stage of its implementation.

-L. Semeyko, “A Course Aimed at Destabilization:” *Izvestia*, January 30, 1986

**1. By the Soviet definition of “stability,” virtually every U.S. program is “destabilizing,” whatever its characteristics.** It is important to recognize that the Soviet interpretation of “stability” differs markedly from that which prevails in American discussions of these problems. The United States views stability as a mutual condition; that is, stability exists when neither nation can gain an advantage by initiating a large-scale nuclear conflict. The Soviets most commonly define stability as a condition of unilateral advantage for Soviet forces. The concept of mutuality which pervades American

thinking about the strategic balance is largely absent from the Soviet outlook. Within the Soviet understanding, U.S. programs are “destabilizing” regardless of their specific characteristics - essentially by definition. Similarly, in the world depicted by Soviet propaganda, U.S. programs, essentially by definition, always make nuclear war more likely.

**2. Measured against the proper technical criteria of stability, defensive systems would actually have a strong stabilizing effect, by making a successful first strike more difficult.** The logical flaw with the Soviet argument is that it assumes a world with both vulnerable defenses and highly vulnerable offenses, despite the fact that survivability is one of our key criteria for deciding the feasibility of strategic defensive systems, and that the mere presence of defenses of some level of effectiveness would substantially reduce retaliatory force vulnerability.

The purpose of the SDI program is to find a means to destroy attacking ballistic missiles before they could reach any of their potential targets. The SDI therefore places its emphasis on options which provide the basis for eliminating the general threat posed to the United States and our allies by ballistic missiles. If a future President elects to move toward a general defense against ballistic missiles, such a system would certainly also increase the survivability of our retaliatory forces. The goal of our research, is not, and cannot be, simply to protect our retaliatory forces from attack.

Perhaps because their own strategic doctrine has so long emphasized the advantages of defenses, the Soviets have a difficult time making a logical case that defenses are harmful. In the end their arguments tend to collapse before a simple observation: an effective defense would discourage attack. The uncertainties and obstacles facing a potential attacker increase in the presence of an opposing defense. Without effective defenses, it is much easier for an attacker to plan a first strike.

**3. Concern about stability has played an integral role in U.S. thinking about SDI from the outset.** From the beginning, the U.S. has recognized the importance of maintaining stability during a transition to a more defense-reliant balance, and has emphasized that defensive systems will not be deployed unless they are survivable. Requiring that defenses meet the criterion of survivability would greatly reduce the incentive for an adversary to strike first. Moreover, should defensive technologies prove feasible, the U.S. has stated that it would hope to bring about a “jointly managed approach

designed to maintain, at all times, control over the mix of offensive and defensive systems of both sides and thereby increase the confidence of all nations in the effectiveness and stability of the evolving strategic balance.”

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#### SOVIET PROPAGANDA THEME:

##### **SDI would increase the chances of “instantaneous” war.**

Space strike weapons based on new physical principles (laser and particle beam weapons) will be ready for use at short notice and will be almost instantly activated. In fact, they are designed for automatic triggering without human involvement. That is what makes them especially dangerous. While at present, with the existing weapon systems, there may still be some time available to evaluate the situation and avert the irreparable, a war with the use of space strike weapons may erupt instantaneously.

-Soviet pamphlet, *Star Wars: Delusions and Dangers* (Military Publishing House, Moscow, July, 1985), p. 9.

**1. In fact, strategic defenses would tend to have the opposite effect - increasing the available decision time in the event of an accidental launch of offensive weapons.** In this way SDI could actually alleviate the “first strike” risk caused by the existence of Soviet heavy missiles. It is ironic that the Soviets cry foul over a system designed precisely to avoid a catastrophe and to do so by countering the greatest potential sources of instability - fast-flying, “heavy” Soviet MIRVed ICBMs. As Secretary Shultz has stated.\*\*

Weapons like large, fixed, land-based ICBMs with multiple warheads, capable of destroying missile silos ... are the most powerful strategic weapons, the most rapid, the most provocative, the most capable of carrying out a preemptive strike, the most likely to tempt a hair-trigger response in a crisis.

The fact is that the Soviets have sought and obtained an overwhelming advantage in precisely those weapons. The U.S. has long held, and its arms control positions have long reflected, that such Soviet ICBMs pose a profound threat to crisis stability. SDI is in part an attempt to search for a counter to that threat.

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\*“The Strategic Defense Initiative,” (Department of State, June 1985), Special Report No. 129.

\*\*Address to the North Atlantic Assembly, meeting in San Francisco, California, October 14, 1985.

**2. Numerous precautions are available to ensure that defensive and offensive systems alike remain under human control.** Moreover, there are techniques that could be employed to ensure against the dangers of faulty human decision.

**3. In contrast to the consequences of an accident under the present offense-offense balance, any accidental triggering of defensive systems would be a harmless event.** SDI-type systems would be designed for the interception of weapons, not for mass destruction. Were a defensive action prompted by warning of a mass attack that proved to be spurious, little would occur beyond the wasting of photon energy in space and perhaps the harmless hurling through space of projectiles that would burn up upon entering the atmosphere. Little or no damage would result from an unnecessary defensive action.

**4. Throughout the nuclear period, the United States has unquestionably been the chief innovator and initiator of new technological and political measures designed to ensure full human control over arsenals and to prevent accidents.** Most of the important precautionary measures against accidental war now in place on both sides began as U.S. initiatives. One suspects that it is precisely because the problem of accidents has always loomed so large in American thinking about the nuclear problem that Soviet propagandists invoke this theme, however illogically or implausibly, in their attacks on SDI. The U.S. has long been intent on reducing to the minimum level possible the chances of a nuclear accident. In April 1983, the Defense Department sent to Congress a report, with President Reagan's strong endorsement, recommending additional steps to strengthen stability and reduce the risk of accident or miscalculation. The proposals included the addition to the U.S.-USSR hotline of a high-speed facsimile transmission capability (on which agreement was reached in July 1984), the establishment of a Joint Military Communications Link to supplement the hotline and existing diplomatic channels, and the establishment by the U.S. and Soviet governments of improved communications with their embassies in each other's capitals.

The United States, in short, has always placed great importance upon ensuring political control over the use of weapon systems. Nothing in the SDI program changes that fundamental emphasis. More than anything, SDI might lead to defenses that would reduce the possibility of an accidental nuclear catastrophe spurred by the presence of offensive nuclear weapons.

## **SOVIET PROPAGANDA THEME:**

**The Soviet Union will take countermeasures to SDI defenses which could defeat them with relative ease and low cost.**

As a matter of principle, there does not and cannot exist any absolute weapon. The 'absolutely reliable antimissile defense' is just a mirage. The makers of the American 'wonder weapon' are wrong when they assume that the 'Russians cannot match the United States in the standard of technical development' . . . The efforts of one side to form an 'absolute shield' force the other side to reinforce devices for overcoming it, all the more so as the antimissile defense will naturally have its weak, vulnerable spots - in the control, command and targeting system, in the work of the computers and so forth.

- Col. General Nikolay Chervov, "Defense on Attack," interview in *Bratislava Pravda*, April 29, 1983.

If the United States were to begin militarizing outer space, upsetting the existing military strategic equilibrium, the Soviet Union would have no choice but to take countermeasures and restore the strategic parity. These measures might concern both defensive and offensive arms.

- Soviet pamphlet, *Star Wars: Delusions and Dangers*, (Military Publishing House, Moscow, July 1985), p. 54.

The Pentagon's calculations to achieve U.S. military superiority by deploying strike weapons in outer space are built on sand. The Soviet Union will find effective means to counteract the weapon systems, and the reply move will be rapid enough and less costly than the U.S. 'Star Wars' programme.

- Vladimir Bogachev, Military News Analyst, TASS in English, January 6, 1986.

**1. The countermeasures discussed by Soviet propagandists are being taken into account in SDI.** Obviously one of the major questions at issue in any assessment of prospective strategic defense technologies will be the availability of realistic countermeasures. From its inception, SDI has been based on the assumption that a determined attacker would do whatever is realistically possible to overcome defenses. The 1983 "Fletcher Study," which produced the technology study plan for SDI, was carried out by six study teams - one of which focused solely on an attacker's prospective countermeasures and tactics. The Fletcher study's attention to likely countermeasures carried over to the

actual SDI technology program, which posits a “responsive” Soviet threat.

That is, the Strategic Defense Initiative program is examining defenses which would be effective if the USSR responded to strategic defenses with a combination of various attack schemes, encompassing passive and active, lethal and non-lethal defense suppression techniques many of which currently exist or would be natural outgrowths of Soviet trends.

However, it should be recognized that there is a considerable difference between being able to imagine plausible -sounding countermeasures and being able actually to produce them. Many of the ideas suggested by Soviet propagandists, however ingenious they may sound, are from a serious technical viewpoint rather far-fetched. Red S. Hoffman, chairman of the SDI “Future Security Strategy Study,” pointed out in his March 1985 testimony before the Senate Armed Services Committee:

Critics can produce countermeasures on paper far more easily than the Soviets could produce them in the field. In fact the critics seldom specify such “Soviet” countermeasures in ways that seriously consider their costs to the Soviet Union in resources, in the sacrifice of other military potential, or the time that it would take for the Soviets to develop them and incorporate them into their forces. The countermeasures suggested frequently are mutually incompatible.

An example of this principle at work is the report of the so-called “Working Group of the Committee of Soviet Scientists” published in April 1984. The countermeasures listed in the “Working Group” paper are copied from Western sources. None of them takes into account the complexity of defeating a multi-layer, multi-technology defense in depth. Since any given offensive countermeasure would affect chiefly one layer, attacks that could defeat one layer of defense would be ineffective against another layer. Moreover, a number of the suggested countermeasures would be mutually incompatible. It is difficult to imagine that the Soviet “Working Group” report has been accorded any serious attention whatever within the Soviet Union, except as a propaganda tool.

**2. The intensity of the present Soviet strategic defense research program belies the professed Soviet faith in the efficacy of offensive countermeasures to defeat a layered, high-technology defensive system.** Except in one notable implicit acknowledgement, So-

viet spokesmen have been careful to deny that they are pursuing directed energy technologies for strategic defense purposes. The exception was a remark in 1984 by the Nobel laureate laser physicist, N. G. Basov. Basov declared that Moscow would have “no technological difficulty” in duplicating the U.S. SDI program. Indeed, Soviet research in high-technology defensive systems was far advanced years before SDI was announced.

Nor have Soviet propagandists been able to reconcile their argument that SDI-type defenses are infeasible/ineffective with their stress on the dire consequences of SDI - i.e., it is destabilizing, alters the strategic balance, is part of a “first-strike” capability, etc. A political cartoon in the U.S. neatly captured the Soviet contradiction. A woman watching a TV news report critical of “Star Wars” turns to her husband and asks if it won’t work, why are the Russians so worried about it?

3. The real issue is whether defensive systems will be able to maintain their capability more easily than countermeasures can be created to defeat them. If the offense-defense balance can be shifted in this fashion, SDI holds out the promise of a more stable and less dangerous deterrent regime, based primarily on mutual defensive systems rather than on mutual offensive threats.

Definitive judgments of the ultimate technological feasibility of strategic defenses which meet our criteria are, at any rate, premature. It was precisely to raise and answer this question that the President launched SDI.

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#### SOVIET PROPAGANDA THEME:

##### **SDI will undermine the security of U.S. Allies.**

In actual fact, Washington is not very much concerned with the fate of Europeans. The advantages of deploying American space weapons are frankly argued in the United States since this would make it possible to conduct a nuclear conflict over Europe and not over the United States. -Editorial, *Izvestiya*, 25 January 1985

[US] goals will remain the same, namely, to harness them [US allies] to the adventurist enterprise [SDI] and place the partners’ scientific, intellectual, and, of course, financial resources at ‘big brother’s’ service ... In other words, it is a question of ... the transformation of the allies and partners into appendages of the US military industrial complex ...

- V Gan, “At Other Peoples’ Expense” *Pravda*, 1 May 1985

SDI could make a number of significant contributions to our Allies' security, both direct - by illuminating technologies that hold out the potential of enhanced Allied defenses - and indirect - by strengthening our sense of common security. It is partly for this reason that Soviet propaganda has been directed so heavily at Western European and Japanese audiences.

**1. SDI includes exploration of defenses against shorter-range ballistic missiles, research which could aid directly in defending our Allies against nuclear, chemical, or conventional attack.** In many cases, the same technologies can be applied to short and intermediate range ballistic missiles, as well as strategic missiles which pose a direct threat to our Allies and the U.S.

Effective ballistic missile defenses would have value against both the Soviet SS-20 and conventional or nuclear-armed shorter-range ballistic missiles. Effective defensive systems would thus enhance deterrence not only at the nuclear, but also at the conventional level. In addition, technologies being examined under the SDI hold promise for application to other conventional force improvements.

**2. Reduced vulnerability for the United States would not weaken but strengthen in Soviet eyes the U.S. commitment to defend our Allies.** A key to the security of U.S. Allies is the Soviet belief that U.S. and Allied security remain inseparable. The more capable the U.S. is of defending against a Soviet nuclear attack, the less basis there could be for a misguided Soviet calculation that the U.S. would hesitate to come to the defense of its Allies. The presence of U.S. defenses would make even clearer to the Soviets that U.S. and Allied security is indivisible.

**3. U.S. and Allied governments have a common understanding of the need to preserve and strengthen NATO and our other Alliances.** U.S. Allies have supported SDI because they understand the military context in which SDI was established. That common understanding was reflected in the statement issued following President Reagan's meeting with Prime Minister Thatcher in December 1984, to the effect that:

First, the U.S. and Western aim was not to achieve superiority but to maintain the balance, taking account of Soviet developments;

Second, that SDI-related deployment would, in view of treaty obligations, have to be a matter for negotiations;

Third, the overall aim is to enhance, and not to undermine, deterrence; and,

Fourth, East-West negotiations should aim to achieve security with reduced levels of offensive systems on both sides.

This common understanding is expressed as well in the principles suggested in January 1985 by Chancellor Kohl of the Federal Republic of Germany that:

-The existing NATO strategy of flexible response must remain fully valid for the Alliance as long as there is no more effective alternative for preventing war; and,

-The Alliance's political and strategic unity must be safeguarded. There must be no zones of different degrees of security in the alliance, and Europe's security must not be decoupled from that of North America.

Since the President's March 1983 speech the U.S. has held extensive discussions with its Allies on SDI. We have invited them to take part in SDI research, and some have already signed agreements to do so. Finally, the United States has pledged that in the event of a future decision to develop and deploy defensive systems - a decision in which consultation with our Allies would play an integral part -both Allied and U.S. security would be enhanced.

**4. Many of the Soviet arguments regarding SDI and our Allies amount to little more than transparent efforts at intimidation.** The Soviets invoked essentially the same (as it proved, entirely empty) threats and warnings in their campaign against NATO's INF deployment during the years 1979-83. The irony, of course, is that it is not SDI or NATO's INF missiles that threaten our Allies, but rather Soviet weapons aimed at them. But by the peculiar logic of Soviet propaganda, the West is always supposed to be threatened by nothing so much as its own efforts to secure its defense.

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## Propaganda Versus Substance in the East-West Dialogue

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None of this is to say that Soviet attempts to manipulate automatically translate into success. On the contrary, during the controversy over intermediate range nuclear forces in Europe, not only did the Soviets fail to block the scheduled NATO response to their SS-20 missiles, but their disingenuous tactics proved in the end, even from their own point of view, to be counterproductive. Likewise today, the self-serving aims of Soviet statements and arguments against SDI are widely recognized.

The arms-control bargaining table, and not the headlines of Western newspapers, remains the appropriate forum for discussing genuine East-West differences regarding the strategic balance. It must be actions, not words, by which the world will judge the seriousness of each side's concern about stability.

Nonetheless, the Soviet Union can be expected to continue disseminating propaganda against SDI. From time to time the West will witness, as it has in the past, transitory changes in the style of Soviet pronouncements. Yet thus far little in the underlying substance or goals of Soviet foreign policy seems to have changed. It is on substance that we must focus.

The basic objectives of Soviet foreign policy, formed in the wake of the Second World War, to weaken and divide the West, remain by all appearances essentially unaltered. If the past is any guide, the Soviet Union will modify its conduct only when it believes Western strength and unity to be unshakeable. Only then will the Soviets shift their attention from the propaganda forum outside the negotiating room to the real negotiations occurring within.

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## Related Publications

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Peace and National Security: Address by President to the Nation, reprinted as Current Policy No. 472, March 23, 1983.

The President's Strategic Defense Initiative, Government Printing Office, January 1985.

Strategic Defense Initiative: Address by Robert C. McFarlane, Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs, before the Overseas Writers Association, reprinted as Current Policy No. 670, March 7, 1985.

SDI.- Setting the Record Straight: Address by Kenneth L. Adelman, Director of the U.S. Arms Control and Disarmament Agency, before the Baltimore Council on Foreign Affairs, August 7, 1985.

Soviet Strategic Defense Programs, Department of Defense and Department of State, October 1985, Second Printing.

Soviet Noncompliance, ACDA Publication 120, March 1986, Second Printing.

Negotiations on Nuclear and Space Arms: Address by Ambassador Paul H. Nitze, Special Adviser to the President and the Secretary of State on Arms Control Matters, before the Foreign Service Institute Symposium, reprinted as Current Policy No. 807, March 13, 1986.

The Impact of SDI on U.S.-Soviet Relations: Address by Ambassador Paul H. Nitze, Special Adviser to the President and the Secretary of State on Arms Control Matters, before the American Enterprise Institute National Defense University Symposium, reprinted as Current Policy No. 830, April 29, 1986.

SDI: Progress and Promise: Remarks by President Reagan at a briefing on the Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI), August 6, 1986.

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