

# Bush leads U.S. strategic retreat

by Leo F. Scanlon

After nearly a year of the Bush stewardship over the national defenses the United States is far advanced in a global strategic retreat from its military obligations in Europe and the Far East. The administration is preparing the first request for an absolute drop in defense spending in 10 years, and under the meticulous direction of the President himself, the “enemy image” of the Soviet empire has been dismantled, while the Department of Justice accelerates a legal witchhunt against the defense establishment itself. The scope of this transformation dwarfs, indeed, the much-touted perestroika reforms of Gorbachov.

The Bush actions have followed Henry Kissinger’s blueprint for the United States to reduce its global presence by 75% in military terms. The administration has carefully cultivated the image that this retreat is justified by similar dramatic changes on the part of the Soviet Union. The raw facts are that since 1983, Soviet tank production has soared from 2,600 annually to 3,500, while U.S. production dropped from 1,200 to 775. The Soviets still produce more than 5,000 armored vehicles per year, compared with 1,000 by the United States; 700 fighters and fighter-bombers a year, to 550 by the U.S.; 10 submarines to 5 by the U.S.; 9 surface warships to 3 by the U.S.; and just since Gorbachov rose to power, the Soviet Union has produced 450 intercontinental ballistic missiles, compared to 56 by the United States. In the last year alone, the Soviets increased the number of sea- and land-based nuclear warheads from 9,754 to 11,334.

## SDI cuts stymie scientific research

The Bush administration set out with the intention of gutting the ability of the Strategic Defense Initiative to function as the driver of a doctrinal shift away from the Kissingerian concept of Mutually Assured Destruction. The budget cuts imposed on the program have secured that goal, and have had the collateral effect of slowing the application of the scientific breakthroughs created by SDI research (which have been remarkable, in spite of limited funding) to new generations of weapons systems. While administration apologists blame this crime on the Congress, this strategy has long been the open policy of Fred Iklé and his epigones among the Pentagon establishment.

In contrast, the Soviets have buttressed their robust arma-

ments production machine with a series of technological coups which have—according to open sources in the U.S. military press—trumped most state-of-the-art weapons systems in the Western armamentarium. These accomplishments include, but are not limited to:

- The fielding of T-80 main battle tanks equipped with multiple layers of reactive armor resistant to all existing NATO anti-tank weapons, and the development of a new variant of the T-80 bearing armor of an as-yet-unknown type.

- The deployment of an anti-radar missile effective against the full array of advanced air and surface radar-guided systems of the United States (the U.S. equivalent, the HARM missile, is only capable of targeting Soviet ground radars). These missiles also threaten the radar platforms that serve as the “eyes” of the latest generation of deep-attack weapons systems being deployed by NATO.

- The deployment and use of directed-energy weapons against NATO fighter aircraft at the Ramstein Air Base in West Germany and other locations; the blinding, by laser weapons (which defeated protective eye gear), of U.S. Air Force and Navy air crews in the Pacific, and the employment of such weapons in ground combat and air defense roles in Afghanistan.

- The demonstration of several techniques utilizing low-power lasers and space-based radar imaging (which have been ignored by Western research programs) which promise to “make the seas transparent” to Soviet anti-submarine warfare (ASW) efforts.

- Related instances of Akula-class submarines, now deploying in the Norwegian and Pacific waters, spoofing NATO and U.S. Navy ASW systems.

- The deployment of the first satellite-based laser weapon system—the long-awaited “Sputnik” of the SDI age.

The Bush administration has deliberately covered up all of this and more. The gag order was openly attacked at the 1989 convention of the Air Force Association, which passed a resolution calling for the release to the public of the truth about Soviet military capabilities.

In spite of the “big lie” policy of the White House, Gen. John L. Piotrowski, chief of the U.S. Space Command, told Congress last May, “We have yielded control of wartime space to the Soviets—a situation that does not serve our national security interests.” He has additionally warned that the existing space surveillance capabilities of the United States have “exploitable gaps in our surveillance coverage both in near Earth, and deep space.” This year’s tests of the Soviet space shuttle will greatly complicate this problem.

The Soviets, on the other hand, have been playing games with the “useful idiots” in the West—brazenly admitting that they had violated the ABM treaty by building the Krasnoyarsk phased array radar, and then announcing that they had made monkeys out of congressional “fact-finders” and arms control specialists who had been duped to believe that the facility was inoperable. Intelligence sources revealed in 1989

that the Soviets have powered up their integrated national ABM battle management radar system and are upgrading the Moscow network with a new generation of interceptor missiles.

## Global retrenchment

These developments are complemented by a series of policy announcements and actions which outline an agenda of withdrawal from U.S. bases in Europe and Asia. The spearhead of this process is the arms control talks in Geneva. Information leaked to the press over the course of this year has underlined the disastrous consequences of the Intermediate Nuclear Forces (INF) treaty, which removed an entire class of U.S. weapons, and 21,000 troops from European soil. In addition to the fact that the Soviets have already been caught cheating on the terms of that treaty, the U.S. Congress has been told that there is *no way* to establish the precise number of nuclear warheads or delivery vehicles in Soviet hands, *and* that the Warsaw Pact has conducted new tests of ICBMs at ranges similar to the banned SS-20. In short, the Soviets succeeded in removing nuclear weapons capable of threatening their mobilization capability, while they have proceeded to upgrade their INF weapons systems.

The same scam is set to be repeated with the Strategic Arms Limitation (START) talks. The Soviet Union is aggressively modernizing its submarine- and bomber-launched strategic missiles, and is bringing online a replacement for its current generation of ICBMs, scheduled to be operational in the early 1990s. Uncounted numbers of undetectable mobile SS-24 and SS-25 missiles are already operational.

The Soviets are offering to "destroy" the weapons which these new systems will replace, if the U.S. will agree to pull back air, ground, and eventually naval platforms capable of delivering weapons on Soviet soil.

The Soviets have been emboldened by a variety of actions and statements from U.S. theater commanders which indicate that planning for that eventuality is in an advanced phase:

- The cancellation of the annual Reforger (Return of Forces to Germany) exercise serves as a powerful stimulus to Soviet hopes that the U.S. will soon be out of Europe, and the Pentagon has announced that the military base closings that occurred in the United States this year are scheduled to begin overseas as well. Contrary to the apologist propaganda, which claims that these moves are forced by budgetary pressures, the General Accounting Office has produced studies which show no savings from base closures, and the Pentagon issued a report which said that the \$19 million allocated to Reforger would be spent on other maneuvers. What is being reduced is the overseas U.S. presence.

- The House and the Senate killed funds for construction at Clark Air Base in the Philippines and Kunsan Air Force Base in South Korea, the only Asian base where United States nuclear weapons are stored. The cut killed Air Force plans to station F-15E strike aircraft at both places. Planned

reductions in aircraft carrier wings mean that there will be a net cutback in strategic presence in Asia, if the current course continues. Most damning was the leak of a Joint Chiefs of Staff report which discussed plans to pull U.S. troops out of Korea by 1995—a strategy endorsed by the commander of the U.S. forces in Korea.

- This overall strategy—which apes the schemes pursued by Kissinger for decades—is outlined in published reports prepared for the administration by National Security Adviser Brent Scowcroft.

## DoJ restructuring defense industry

That this dramatic reorganization of U.S. priorities has occurred with so little protest is a reflection of the turmoil that has wracked the Pentagon this year. Richard Cheney is in effect the third secretary of defense to serve in the Bush administration. Frank Carlucci presented the last Reagan budget, which called for a net spending increase, to Congress in January. On Jan. 5, he announced the base closing plans, and on Jan. 6, U.S. Attorney Henry Hudson in Alexandria, Virginia returned the long-awaited "Ill Wind" indictments, marking a new phase in the witchhunt against the defense industry.

Carlucci left office soon thereafter, as John Tower moved in as secretary designate. Almost immediately, a rumor campaign, orchestrated by the White House and the FBI, targeted Tower and incapacitated his administration.

On Feb. 5, Scowcroft announced that he was planning to drop the SDI, giving the first glimpse of the real purpose of the "house-cleaning" going on at Defense.

On March 9, the Senate rejected the Tower nomination, and on March 10, George Bush sent a thank-you note to Paul Weyrich, the man who began the rumor-mongering against Tower—proving that the White House had orchestrated the entire episode. Cheney was nominated and approved in short order, and by March 28 he also announced that the SDI had been "oversold" by the Reagan administration.

On April 4, the first "Ill Wind" prosecution began. On April 25, Cheney presented plans for a \$10 billion budget cut, the prelude to the present request, which aims at defense reductions—not seen since the early years of the Carter administration.

Today, defense contractors are fleeing the Pentagon in droves, or are wasting resources defending themselves from an army of incompetent auditors who are aggressively demanding full law enforcement powers, including the right to carry firearms as they prowl through the corporate books, while the Justice Department has announced that \$400 million has been dedicated to expand prosecutions of defense contractors and military officers.

The Bush administration is presiding over an unprecedented assault on the U.S. military—from volunteers who are facing layoffs, to senior defense engineers who are facing jail terms.