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ABSTRACT

Three perspectives on President Ronald Reagan's Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI), which is intended to defend U.S. targets from a Soviet nuclear attack, are presented in separate sections. In the first section, "Soviet Interpretation and Response," Jerry F. Hough examines possible reasons for Soviet preoccupation with SDI. He discusses the perceived threat, diplomatic considerations, and domestic strategies. In the second section, "A New Dilemma for NATO," Stanley R. Sloan examines the web of political and military strategies and events that followed NATO's decision to embark on plans to deploy new U.S. intermediate-range nuclear missiles while continuing to pursue negotiations with the Soviets on limiting such weapons. He then applies the lessons from NATO's recent experiences to the next nuclear crisis looming on the horizon, SDI, and identifies its implications for NATO's future. In the final section, Paul Warnke and David Linebaugh appraise the arms race and the prospect for arms negotiations in "Breaking the Deadlock." They map a clear alternative to the present course, providing a formula that not only deals with SDI but also reduces warhead totals and bars destablizing weapon systems. A list of other Stanley Foundation publication and activities concludes the document. (LH)

Arms Control and the Strategic Defense Initiative: Three Perspectives

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Introduction

The significance of President Ronald Reagan's Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI) to defend US targets from a Soviet nuclear attack is difficult to overestimate. Some argue that SDI is necessary for US security; others claim it is an expensive, unworkable technology that will only worsen the arms race. Regardless of which side one takes, it is clear that SDI is the key to any discussion of arms control, whether in Geneva or among informed citizenry.

The Soviet Union has made no secret that SDI is its predominant concern in arms control talks. Why is this so, and how will the new leadership headed by General Secretary Mikhail Gorbachev respond? Jerry Hough examines possible reasons for Soviet preoccupation with SDI from perceived threat to political considerations and domestic strategies. Readers will find his analysis innovative and provocative. Policy makers will find it instructive, useful, and very difficult to ignore.

In December 1979, NATO decided to embark on plans to deploy new US intermediate-range nuclear missiles while continuing to pursue negotiations with the Soviets on limiting such weapons. Stanley Sloan examines the web of political and military strategies and events that followed this decision and identifies the basic elements that characterize NATO's nuclear dilemma. He applies the lessons from NATO's recent experience to the next nuclear crisis looming on the horizon, SDI, and identifies its implications for NATO's future.

Paul Warnke and David Linebaugh unambiguously appraise the arms race and the prospects for arms negotiations. They assert that the United States and the Soviet Union are entering a hazardous era in which the advent of new weapons technologies requires prompt action that is increasingly difficult to achieve. Drawing on their considerable experience and expertise, Mr. Warnke and Mr. Linebaugh map a clear alternative to the present perilous course. While most arms control experts agree that SDI is the key to success in any arms control endeavor, Mr. Warnke and Mr. Linebaugh go a step further by providing a creative formula that not only deals with SDI but also reduces nuclear warhead totals and bars particularly destabilizing weapons systems.

Arms Control and the Strategic Defense Initiative: Three Perspectives

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Soviet Interpretation and Response

by Jerry F. Hough

The Soviet Union has made the Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI) the center of its arms control diplomacy. While negotiations are being conducted in Geneva on SDI, intermediate nuclear forces, and strategic weapons, the Soviet Union has insisted that they be linked; it has stated flatly that progress on limitation of SDI is the prerequisite for success anywhere else.

To the United States, the Soviet focus upon SDI seems somewhat bizarre. A wide range of Americans have criticized SDI as being unworkable and vulnerable to countermeasures, and even its supporters have found it difficult to advance a coherent and convincing case for it. In a speech to the Republican Party of California in August of 1985, President Ronald Reagan, noting that critics had called the project unfeasible and a waste of money, asked, "Well, if that's true, why are the Soviets so upset about it?"

Perceptions of the Threat

There are several possible answers to the mystery of the Soviet focus upon SDI. One is in the military realm itself. From the Soviet point of view, a purely military case can be made that SDI is more of a threat to the Soviet Union than its US critics suggest.

First, of course, even if SDI does not work out as a comprehensive system, the research-and-development work on it will surely have other military applications. Conventional war is moving in a computerized direction with guided shells and the like, and the various types of work on miniaturized computers and beams is quite likely to feed into the conventional weapons systems of the future. Both before he was removed as head of the general staff in 1984 and afterwards (still under Konstantin Chernenko), Marshal Nikolai Ogarkov said in the Soviet press that nuclear weapons are essentially unusable. Before he was removed, in an article he wrote for a Soviet journal, he drew the logical conclusion that future wars are likely to be decided by conventional weapons and weapons based on "new physical principles." He warned that the West is making major advances in these realms and that SDI research is part of that Western effort.

Second, military officers are paid to think in worst-case terms, and if SDI really does work, it would leave the Soviet Union totally vulnerable. Since it might be too late to do anything if a breakthrough occurred, the weapon system has all the characteristics needed to arouse vague but strong anxieties about the future. This is particularly so in the Soviet Union where there has long been a strong tendency to exaggerate US technological capabilities and where the fear that the United States might pull it off is correspondingly greater.

Third, the apparent unworkability of SDI as a comprehensive defensive system paradoxically raises the very worrisome question: Why is the United States going ahead with the program? If the proclaimed mission of the program seems so implausible, then what is the hidden agenda? The Americans are a pragmatic people, and surely they would not be spending all that money unless they had something in mind.

The real answer to this question is probably that the pragmatism of the United States should not be exaggerated and that the ability of the United States to waste money in the defense field should not be minimized. Americans, however, seldom explain crazy Soviet defense programs as Soviet craziness but instead search for a rational—and ominous—explanation. There is no reason to suspect that the Soviet psychology is any different on such matters.

If the Soviet Union seeks an ominous explanation for SDI, one is readily available, at least if it is feared that the United States is pursuing a war-winning strategy and is contemplating a possible first strike at the beginning of one. The scenarios that make SDI seem particularly utopian are those that begin with a Soviet attack. If the Soviet Union expands the number of warheads and missiles, if it camouflages its warheads with dummies, even the destruction of a high percentage of Soviet rockets permits those that penetrate the defense to do unacceptable damage. If, however, the war begins with a US first strike and space defense is used to mop up the Soviet retaliation, the scenarios become more plausible. Then the number of Soviet rockets to shoot down would be far fewer, and the United States would have control of timing and be on the alert.

From this perspective, SDI looks particularly ominous to a Soviet worst-case analyst. It is not only that space defense might be militarily significant in a US first-strike scenario but also that SDI might serve as proof of a US first-strike strategy

and intention, for no other rational military explanation really suffices. Americans may think such reasoning extreme, but they should not forget that they have assumed a Soviet first-strike strategy aimed at US Minuteman missiles because there seems little other rational military explanation for the size of the large Soviet missile.

In any case, to the extent that SDI is taken seriously at all from a military point of view—and military men are paid to take military actions of the other side seriously—it absolutely destroys any Soviet incentive to accept any reduction in the number of offensive missiles or warheads. If space defense cannot conceivably be 100 percent foolproof in the foreseeable future, if a certain percentage of Soviet missiles will get through, why should the Soviet Union increase the effectiveness of US space defense and simplify the task of US planners by reducing the number of Soviet rockets to be shot down in case of war?

Diplomatic Considerations

The problem with the military explanation for Soviet emphasis on SDI is that arms control agreements have never succeeded in controlling technology that seems to have a chance for success. Conceivably, the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty resulted in some reduction in the level of spending on anti-missile defense, but antiballistic missiles were not a live possibility in the seventies. Research continued, and the money that was poured into multiple warhead (MIRVed) missiles, into cruise missiles, into the space shuttle, and so forth went in large part into guidance systems and computer-related capabilities that ultimately are relevant to antiballistic missile development.

If the Soviet Union thinks that the United States is serious about SDI for military reasons, why should the Soviet Union think that the Reagan administration—or any post-Reagan administration—will limit itself in a defense realm affording real payoff when it has a major technological advantage? That has never been the case in arms control. Why should it be so when the United States is in the early research-and-development stage and when the research-and-development work is so closely related to advanced civilian work? Even if SDI is officially reduced somewhat, the research money is likely to go into areas that ultimately will contribute to space defense. (For example, fusion nuclear research is closely relat-

ed to SDI beam research—a fact that explains why those same people who lobbied in airports for civilian nuclear power are now so strongly in favor of SDI.)

A second explanation for the great Soviet emphasis on SDI is diplomatic calculation. The campaign to prevent installation of the US Pershing II and cruise missiles was an abysmal failure. If the Soviet Union is going to play in the arms control game simply for propaganda reasons, it needs something.

From the diplomatic point of view, the SDI issue has certain advantages, at least in Europe. The question of US commitment to the defense of Europe in the case of nuclear attack has always been a source of anxiety, and SDI suggests the possibility that the United States is thinking of building a shell around itself that would allow it to be entirely isolationist. Moreover, Europeans worry about US technological superiority; SDI threatens to increase it and perhaps even to stimulate a brain drain from Europe to the United States.

Yet, the issue can be looked upon in another way in Europe. If the United States did have an effective shield, it would be easy to use its nuclear weapons in defense of Europe. In fact, it would have no reason not to do so. In addition, those who want an improvement in European technology may think that SDI will prove a stimulus. Finally, SDI still looks quite unworkable in the foreseeable future, and Europeans have no trouble understanding that the United States does crazy things for nonominous reasons. As a practical matter, it is hard to believe that a space defense that will not be effective for decades at best will arouse the same strength of emotions as US missiles actually installed on European soil that increase the danger for Europeans in time of war. To repeat, even in that latter ideal case, the peace movement was not successful.

In the United States, the Soviet campaign against SDI arouses even less support. The freeze movement legitimated the notion of a utopian ideal that freedom from the tyranny of nuclear weapons and deterrence is possible. In a sense, President Reagan simply took this main issue of the peace movement and made it more realistic by substituting SDI technology for freeze negotiations. (In fact, one suspects that this was the real reason for SDI as the president looked forward to the 1984 campaign.) The critics' derisive labeling of SDI as Star Wars may well have backfired, for the theme of the movie *Star Wars* was a struggle in which technology in the form of friendly robots and speed-of-light acceleration for space vehicles was vital for survival against a dark and evil empire.

Indeed, the Soviet campaign against SDI is probably counterproductive in the United States. If the Soviet Union acted unconcerned and simply ridiculed the notion as a waste of money, natural budgetary pressures would bring the program under control. The more the Soviet Union criticizes the program, the more difficult it is for an American to say that it is ineffective, and the easier it is for supporters of SDI to say that a vote against it is a vote for the Soviet position. The president's question posed before the California Republicans was extremely effective.

Although the Soviet Union had few good options after the failure of the intermediate nuclear forces negotiations, a strategy of focusing on a combination of first-strike weapons (for example, SS-18s, MXs, Trident warheads, and Pershing II missiles) might have been more effective in mobilizing the Western arms control community. It certainly would have been more effective in forcing the community to face up to real issues and to help the United States think about how its actions look to others.

Domestic Political Considerations

Americans are aware that domestic political considerations are a crucial element in US foreign policy, but they assume that foreign policy and defense considerations determine 100 percent of Soviet foreign policy. In reality, domestic factors have always been intimately connected with foreign policy in the Soviet Union, for the fundamental domestic question in the country is the relationship to Western institutions and values. A person's position on this question has often had a decisive impact on his foreign policy position. The interconnection is even closer today when the crucial question on the domestic agenda is the degree to which economic reform will introduce market mechanisms and will integrate the Soviet Union into the world economy. If we are to understand the emphasis that the Soviet Union has placed on SDI, a key factor to keep in mind—perhaps the key factor—is the domestic political one and especially the requirements of economic reform.

Serious economic reform that gives the Soviet Union the ability to export technology--and that is what is required—is politically extremely difficult to achieve. Many Westerners would say that it is impossible for any Soviet leader. Whatever the ultimate success of reform, however, the Soviet techno-

logical lag has such drastic consequences for the Soviet military, for the Soviet foreign policy position, and, consequently, for political stability that any intelligent younger general secretary will attempt it. In fact, General Secretary Mikhail Gorbachev has been talking incessantly about the need to bring Soviet technology up to world levels. He recently asked rhetorically, "Are we not turning too sharply?" His answer was direct. "No . . . a different, calmer approach would not suit us. The time dictates that this is exactly how we must act."

Hence the difficulty of economic reform should not lead us to some *a priori* assumption that Mr. Gorbachev will not attempt it. Rather, it should lead us to understand that he has a difficult political task and must subordinate other goals and policies to the imperatives of his first priority. This is perhaps even truer of foreign policy than other domestic policies.

Serious economic reform has a number of foreign policy imperatives, or at a minimum, a number of foreign policy steps would be highly beneficial for reform. Unfortunately, from the point of view of the Soviet leaders, they tend to be mutually contradictory. First, a foreign threat is always extremely useful to justify heavy sacrifices, and economic reform will require many sacrifices, especially in social policy (more wage inegalitarianism, more job insecurity, and a reduction in food price subsidies). Second, since reform requires a harsher social policy and growth requires investment, an increase in military spending or even the maintenance of the present level of military spending at the expense of consumption and investment is very counterproductive. Third, reform requires an attack on the massive protectionism enjoyed by Soviet industrialists—subjecting them to foreign competition both in the domestic and the foreign markets—and this in turn requires an opening of the Soviet Union to world markets and ultimately to the outside world in general.

The basic problem with the foreign policy imperatives of economic reform is that the threat that helps to justify the sacrifices undercuts the other two requirements. If a sense of the danger of war is created, this will create pressure for higher military expenditures, especially for weapons procurements and readiness. Moreover, historically in the Soviet Union, the foreign threat has been associated with a garrison state mentality and a closing of borders to the West, not an opening of them.

Two answers suggest themselves to this dilemma. First, the

old Gromyko bipolar policy of focusing on relations with the United States could be reversed, and a far greater differentiation could be made between the United States and Western Europe and Japan. The United States could be used as the threat and the opening to Europe and Japan as the way to guarantee access to the world's economy. Second, attention could be focused on a long-term threat rather than a short-range danger of war. In that way, pressure for readiness and procurements expenditures could be minimized, and pressure for research-and-development expenditures in high technology realms could be maximized.

In terms of this dilemma, SDI is a godsend for the Soviet leadership. It is absolutely no threat to the Soviet Union in the next decade or two, but it poses a potentially enormous danger in the distant future. The steps needed to meet it are precisely those that Gorbachev wants to achieve with economic reform: the raising of Soviet technological capacity. In a country that is backward in its computerization, the first step required for national defense is enormous research and development in this realm. The Soviet leaders can say that negotiations will never control the US program—and they are right on this—and that national defense absolutely depends on the sacrifices and effort required for economic reform.

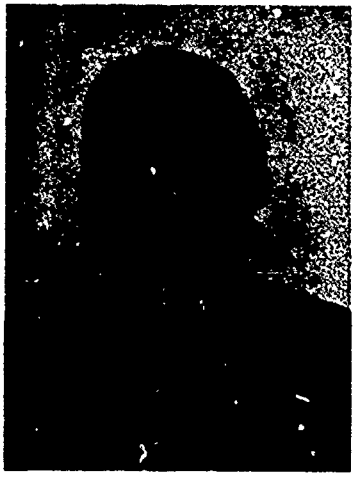
From this perspective, the great advantage of focusing on SDI in arms control is that it has resulted in a stream of articles in the Soviet press, not the foreign press. These articles never say that SDI will not work but tie the program in with a US first-strike intention. The message is quite clear-cut, and it is drummed in incessantly: US technological advantage threatens national defense. The implicit message is also clear-cut: The Soviet Union must catch up in technology. Gorbachev has been making this implicit message explicit and has been linking reform with the theme of patriotism.

If this analysis is correct, there is every reason to be pessimistic about arms control negotiations so long as they stay on the present path. Former Foreign Minister Andrei Gromyko, like many US presidents, liked arms control agreements for their own sake. His interest was in the reduction of tension and the prevention of a superpower confrontation, and he liked the atmospheric effects of agreements. General Secretary Gorbachev has an interest in agreements that suggest a reduced immediate danger of war, and he cannot play successfully to the Europeans if his rhetoric towards the United

States is too harsh. Basically, however, the last thing that he needs are atmospheric agreements that give the Russian people the sense that the conflict with the United States is dying down and that agreements are solving the SDI problem.

If Mr. Gorbachev is driven solely by domestic considerations, he will keep an SDI bargaining position that, as in the summer of 1985, is hopelessly unrealistic in order to guarantee that no agreement can emerge. However, especially since it does not appear that President Reagan will accept tight controls on testing, the general secretary may think it safe to move to a more accommodating position. If he could be very forthcoming in his proposals and could count on the United States to reject them, he could achieve all of his domestic objectives (indeed, even better than before) while making a major propaganda gain in the West. And, of course, if President Reagan does accept such proposals, Mr. Gorbachev can claim a victory that his predecessors were never able to achieve.

If Mr. Gorbachev really does change policy towards Europe and really begins opening the country to the West, the more fundamental task will be to try to explain to the American people that the Manichean image of a struggle between good and evil was always a heresy and that it is particularly dangerous when we are faced with an adversary who is beginning to play a sophisticated geopolitical game. A country that always thought that international relations were illegitimate except for interventions based on moral reasons, as in World War I and World War II, will have to learn how to handle the combination of cooperation and conflict that is inherent in normal international relations. Unless this is learned, the dominant position that the United States achieved when the Soviet Union was giving it a relatively mild challenge may be quickly eroded.



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A New Dilemma for NATO

by **Stanley R. Sloan**

In the past few years the NATO alliance has faced and survived a major political crisis provoked by a decision intended to enhance the credibility of its policy of nuclear deterrence. Ironically, the allies emerged from this controversy only to confront a new political challenge posed by a concept which, according to President Ronald Reagan's original claim, would seek eventually to do away with the policy of nuclear deterrence.

In December 1979, the allies decided to proceed with a dual-track approach: to modernize NATO's intermediate-range nuclear forces (INF) while simultaneously seeking to negotiate limits on such forces with the Soviet Union. The United States began deploying Pershing II ballistic missiles and ground-launched cruise missiles in December 1983, and the Soviet Union walked out of arms control negotiations in Geneva in protest. The East-West debate which preceded the initial deployments became a contest for the hearts and minds of Western Europeans. Within the West, the issue became part of a larger struggle between competing concepts of how best to deal with the Soviet Union.

The initial INF deployments brought both debates to an apparent end without settling the central issues. Now, many of the same issues which troubled the NATO alliance in the INF controversy have resurfaced in the discussion of President Reagan's Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI) which seeks ideally to replace nuclear deterrence with a future defense against nuclear missiles. Before the alliance finds itself further divided over SDI and its implications for NATO strategy and arms control, it might be useful to reflect on the lessons of the INF experience and their implications for the SDI debate.

The 1979 Decision and the Alliance

The 1979 dual-track decision was designed to be perfectly consistent with the stated objectives and strategies of the alliance. The decision was intended to enhance deterrence against Soviet aggression and to reassure Europe about the US nuclear guarantee.

The missile deployment attempted to deal with conflicting US and European perspectives on deterrence. In response to the US requirement for credible nuclear options, it sought to provide more flexible nuclear systems. These systems, however, given their ability to strike Soviet territory, could be seen as strengthening the link between the European theater and the strategic nuclear standoff—in response to the European requirement for extended deterrence with the hope of transposing the stability at the strategic level to the theater level.

According to the decision's rationale, deterrence for Europe would be strengthened because the Soviet Union, in contemplating any attack on Western Europe, would be forced to calculate that the West might respond by striking Soviet territory with the new systems. In using the systems, the West would know that the Soviet Union might respond by striking US, not just European, targets. Therefore, both sides would be aware that hostilities initiated in Europe might escalate rapidly to a strategic exchange.

This logic was no foolproof guarantee of extended deterrence. The US president could, in theory, decide not to use the new systems in case of a Soviet attack and could even choose to lose them rather than invite strategic retaliation. That decision, however, would have to be made much earlier in the conflict than might previously have been the case. The new deployments therefore would compress the time in which the Soviet Union could advance through Western Europe without risking a nuclear strike on Soviet territory.

Given the linkage rationale for deploying the new weapons, there was no magic number of missiles which had to be deployed or, for that matter, left deployed after an arms control agreement. The deployment in either case would have to be sufficiently large to guarantee (in combination with other factors such as mobility) survival of enough weapons to remain a serious option in a crisis. However, it need not precisely balance similar Soviet systems in Europe, such as the SS-20 missile system which Moscow was deploying in substantial numbers around its European periphery.

The arms control track of the decision also had a very specific purpose. It brought the decision in line with the Harmel Formula (originated by Belgian Foreign Minister Pierre Harmel) of defense and détente policies accepted as NATO policy since 1967, providing an arms control component to balance the deployment plan. It undoubtedly was clear to the

allies that they might need to demonstrate their interest in arms control in order to defend the deployment before their publics. The arms control initiative, however, could do something which the deployment would not accomplish on its own. Only if there were an arms control agreement with the Soviet Union to limit intermediate-range nuclear systems could the West restrain the extent of the SS-20 threat to Western Europe.

Why, when the INF decision seemed so well designed to serve the strategy of extended deterrence, did it ultimately provoke in Europe fear of nuclear war rather than produce increased reassurance that war would be deterred? The answer lies in the fact that the viability of extended deterrence rests on three pillars: the weapons themselves, a credible strategy relating the weapons to the purpose of the alliance, and political confidence that the weapons and the strategy will make it less rather than more likely that war will occur. The same general criteria will also determine whether SDI ultimately divides or unites the alliance.

Historically, the United States has tended to place greater emphasis on the weapons and the strategy for their use than on the political context for their deployment. Europeans, on the other hand, have attributed relatively greater importance to the political context, believing that wars usually are "about something," the product of conflicting political interests rather than spontaneous, unexplainable events.

As a consequence, extended deterrence does not work unless its political pillar is as reassuring to Western Europe as its weapons and strategy are threatening to the Soviet Union. For the INF decision to augument extended deterrence, its arms control track had to be just as credible and effective as its deployment track; the same rule likely holds true with SDI.

The Failure of INF Arms Control

Even under the best of circumstances, it would not have been easy to negotiate an arms control agreement limiting intermediate-range nuclear systems. As it happened, the negotiations were doomed from the start by the general deterioration in US-Soviet relations which had begun in the years immediately prior to the NATO decision and which quickened in its wake.

The Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, only two weeks after

the NATO 1979 decision, provided a rallying point for the critique of Soviet global intervention which had been building in the United States for a number of years. The critique had already been a major factor in the failure of the US Senate to ratify SALT II. The invasion effectively killed the treaty just as the United States entered an election year.

Ronald Reagan, after defeating Jimmy Carter in the 1980 elections, set US foreign policy on a new course. President Carter had already begun a defense buildup, which the Reagan administration promptly accelerated. Just as importantly, the Reagan administration came to office infused with great skepticism about arms control based on a perception of unrelenting Soviet antagonism toward US interests. The administration put arms control on a back burner and concentrated on developing its defense program.

Almost six months passed before the administration announced its willingness to negotiate on the INF systems and an additional five months before it adopted a negotiating position. The famous zero-option proposal, announced by President Reagan on 18 November 1981, called for the total elimination of all Soviet intermediate-range nuclear weapons in return for cancellation of NATO deployment plans.

In retrospect, the zero-option proposal made sense only as a ploy to gain a short-term advantage with European public opinion. It made little sense in terms of NATO strategy. If no new US intermediate-range missiles were deployed, the principal purpose of the 1979 decision to reinforce linkage to US strategic weapons would not be served. It made no sense in terms of an arms control proposal. Given the fact that Soviet intermediate-range weapons were designed at a minimum to balance British and French nuclear forces, and those of the Chinese as well, Moscow would not be willing to destroy them all and receive only cancellation of the scheduled US deployment in return. In other words, the proposal seemed bound to be nonnegotiable, and even if it had been acceptable to Moscow, it would have failed to serve the intent of the original decision.

The Soviets were no more conciliatory, never accepting the legitimacy of the West's desire to strengthen extended deterrence through deployment of the new systems. Moscow argued that there was already rough parity between East and West in such systems, counting British and French forces in the West's totals. Moscow was never willing to sanction new US deployments in an arms control accord.

The unveiling of the zero-option negotiating approach helped, at least temporarily, to abate concern about the administration's attitude toward the possible use of nuclear weapons. The administration's rationale for the position, however, provided little real consolation for Europeans whose concerns had been raised by the low priority assigned to arms control and whose fears had been confirmed by the administration's hard-line rhetoric toward the Soviet Union. The administration defended its approach by arguing that the West needed to "counter the SS-20" and "establish a balance" in intermediate-range nuclear missiles. When the administration eventually modified the zero-option proposal in 1982, it continued to seek a missile balance even though it invited the Soviet Union to pick a number at which level that balance would be established. However, the administration's defense of its negotiating position only tended to reinforce the impression of those Europeans who feared that the missiles were being deployed in order to make it easier to limit a nuclear war to Europe; the administration's hard-line policy toward the Soviet Union suggested that such a war had become more likely. The Reagan administration's approach to defending and implementing the 1979 decision therefore created exactly the opposite effect on public perceptions than was intended by the original decision, or even necessitated by the weapons in question.

The vote in the West German *Bundestag* on 22 November 1983 supporting deployment of the new missiles was a watershed event for both Washington and Moscow. The United States declared victory, and the Soviet Union discontinued the Geneva negotiations. The two principal Reagan administration managers of NATO nuclear policy, Assistant Secretary of State for European Affairs Richard Burt and Deputy Secretary of Defense Richard Perle, pointed accusing fingers at Moscow and charged it was up to the Russians to return to the negotiating table. For most Europeans it was of little concern who was at fault for the failure of the negotiations. The principal European concern was how negotiations might be resumed and how, in the meanwhile, to avoid further deterioration in East-West relations.

If the United States had wanted to reassure allied governments and their publics, the administration could have expressed its willingness to return to negotiations on INF systems in any forum, as it subsequently did when the Geneva negotiations resumed early in 1985. The narrow INF frame-

work had proven inadequate for the purposes of reaching an arms control accord, and most analysts outside the administration were coming to the conclusion that limits on intermediate-range systems would likely be possible only as a subcategory of a broader US-Soviet strategic arms control agreement, as had been the original intent prior to the collapse of the SALT process. However, instead of demonstrating their continuing interest in controlling intermediate-range systems, administration sources leaked to the press their fears that a consolidated discussion of intermediate and strategic systems would allow the Soviet Union to use European opinion as an added lever against the United States in the negotiation of strategic arms limitations as well as in the area of intermediate-range weapons.

Although the administration pushed successfully to the beginning of deployments, a substantial price had been paid in terms of public consensus and alliance solidarity. What lessons can be drawn from the experience that might have relevance as the alliance begins to struggle with the implications of the SDI?

INF Reflections and SDI Implications

The security of the NATO allies remains ultimately dependent on the viability of the US strategic guarantee. As the INF experience demonstrated, that guarantee is required to serve many masters. It must be a credible threat to the Soviet Union, sufficiently serious to discourage Soviet aggression against Western Europe and to deny coercive political advantages to the Soviets. It must simultaneously be a reassuring commitment to Western Europe, providing the most convincing guarantee of both peace and freedom. Finally, it must be on conditions which are tolerable to the United States both in terms of financial burdens and security risks.

The INF saga highlights a number of very important characteristics of NATO's nuclear dilemma. First, the dilemma is firmly rooted in the geographic separation of the United States from Western Europe. As long as the Soviet Union retains massive military superiority over Western Europe, and the United States and West European nations remain joined in a transatlantic alliance, some form of extended strategic deterrence will likely be essential to Western security. The geographic factor, however, will keep the policy from ever being perfectible. It will for the indefinite future fall short of a total,

unconditional guarantee for Western Europe and will include certain risks for the United States beyond those which would likely be incurred in the absence of extended deterrence.

In 1983, the SDI was presented by President Reagan in a way that reflected little concern about the likely impact on the alliance, given the geographic separation between the United States and Western Europe. Subsequently, the administration has argued that a strategic defense system against ballistic missiles could protect Western Europe as well as the United States. The technological feasibility of this, as well as other aspects of the initiative, remains to be demonstrated, and it is all too easy for Europeans to conceive ways in which the Soviet Union could get around (or under) such a strategic bubble to call Europe's security into question. Until much more convincing evidence has been produced, Europeans will remain skeptical concerning the ultimate effect on their security, and the strategic implications of the proposal will tend to divide rather than unite the allies.

Second, the nuclear relationship between the United States and Europe remains troubled by the fundamentally different attitudes one finds toward vulnerability on either side of the Atlantic. The United States still has not come to terms with its vulnerability in the nuclear age and longs for a return to its historic invulnerability to direct external threats. The policy of extended deterrence for Western Europe, which by its very nature increases US vulnerability, therefore has fundamentally weak foundations in the United States. This peculiarly US psychological orientation lies behind the SDI proposal and helps explain the degree of support that the concept of strategic defense enjoys among US citizens. The US reluctance to tolerate vulnerability may be just as potent a motivation for US national security policy as is the Soviet Union's deep paranoia for its military programs and policies.

On the other hand, Western Europeans have tended to accept vulnerability as a fact of life and find the US search for invulnerability incomprehensible. The Strategic Defense Initiative, therefore, appears conceptually absurd to many Europeans.

Third, NATO's nuclear dilemma is a product of the confrontation between East and West, between the United States and the Soviet Union. The forces and questionable intentions of the Soviet Union originally gave rise to the requirement for extended deterrence. History has shown that the

Soviet Union, through its weapons deployments and its diplomatic strategy, can directly affect the military credibility and political viability of the nuclear guarantee.

The West cannot afford to ignore Soviet moves which threaten the credibility of Western deterrence—unilateral Western deployments and strategy adjustments have been, and will in the future be, required to preserve the guarantee. At the same time, unilateral actions which invite Soviet retaliatory measures promise only a continued cycle of expensive and potentially destabilizing moves and countermoves. The West's security, therefore, can never be fully ensured by unilateral measures but will depend as well on encouraging a greater degree of Soviet cooperation to stabilize the East-West arms race. The Reagan administration's handling of the INF issue failed to reassure the European allies because it appeared to close off prospects for arms control, relying almost exclusively on deployment to ensure Western interests. By the same token, the Reagan administration's approach to SDI alarms many Europeans because it also has appeared to diminish prospects for negotiated limits on offensive nuclear systems.

SDI and NATO Unity

For the next few years, the European-US dialogue on defense strategy and arms control seems likely to be defined in terms of the strategic defense concept and particularly what SDI implies for the current strategy of extended nuclear deterrence for Western Europe. Current US approaches to SDI seem very likely at some point to provoke serious splits in the alliance. From a European perspective, SDI, as originally defined by President Reagan, called into question the very foundation of extended deterrence and, in the near term, blocks prospects for nuclear arms control and threatens a virtually unbounded race in offensive and defensive strategic arms.

The United States faces a serious choice. Is SDI, as it is currently defined, so important to US national security interests that it is worth the risk of dividing the alliance? Perhaps so. If not, what approach to SDI might be more likely to attract European support and avoid a debilitating crisis in transatlantic relations?

If the United States decides that the current approach to SDI does require adjustment for the sake of alliance solidarity, current European attitudes suggest that something like the following arms control and defense policy goals might be required:

—Seeking to negotiate with the Soviets a ban on testing and deployment of antisatellite and space-based weapons systems; in other words, agreeing **not** to build a full-blown strategic defense system.
—Attempting also to negotiate a modification of existing US-Soviet understandings to permit each side to improve protection for land-based missile systems, including the use of antiballistic missile technologies **not** based in space.
—Refocusing SDI away from he idealistic objective of population defense toward ways to enhance survivability of land-based missile systems in the United States and in Western Europe; such an approach would be consistent with the arms control objectives described above and compatible with the goals of preserving extended nuclear deterrence for Western Europe and strengthening strategic stability.
—Inviting the European allies to play a full role in the research, development, and production of such point-defense systems; the allies could also be invited to join in nonweapons space research, for example, research aimed at improving monitoring capabilities which could enhance verification possibilities.

This approach, combined with continuing US initiatives to achieve offensive nuclear arms limitations, might provide a solid basis for Western consensus. Such an approach, however, would represent a substantial shift from the current Reagan SDI policy. The administration has already modified some of the more idealistic aspects of the proposal, now arguing that current deterrent strategy remains valid and that there currently is no more effective alternative for preventing war. But further adjustments, such as those listed above, might be too substantial for the administration to accept. In any case, the choices which the United States makes among competing concepts and interests, between maximum SDI approaches and European interests, may hold the key to future alliance solidarity as well as to prospects for a less dangerous relationship with the Soviet Union in the years to come.

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Breaking the Deadlock

by Paul C. Warnke and David Linebaugh

The nuclear arms race between the United States and the Soviet Union is at the starting line of a dangerous new phase. Genuine and selective reductions in offensive weaponry must be achieved if strategic stability is to be preserved and the integrity of the arms control process maintained. However, the current US fascination with the overblown and oversold Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI) is diverting attention from this immediate, urgent task. Moreover, SDI in any form feasible with existing technology will make achieving such reductions vastly more difficult by putting a premium on more offensive weapons as the surest known countermeasures. A preoccupation with a distant, theoretical panacea is thus undermining the chances for early solutions to today's problems.

The United States cannot solve the problems created by the arms race unilaterally. Lasting solutions will only come from negotiated, mutual restraint. Without such restraint, the arms race will accelerate as each side deploys new destabilizing weapons: more multiple warhead (MIRVed) missiles that encourage "first-strike," "war-fighting" postures; sea-launched cruise missiles (SLCMs) that pose severe verification problems; and antisatellite weapons (ASATs) that threaten vital US and Soviet command and control systems. Further deterioration in US-Soviet relations will surely follow.

Yet, by the Reagan administration's own admission, there is currently little prospect of early results in the US-Soviet arms control talks in Geneva. The Soviets have made it abundantly clear—and there is little reason to doubt their sincerity—that they will not entertain proposals for deep cuts in their nuclear arsenals while the United States refuses to set limits on SDI. To achieve progress in Geneva, the stalemate on SDI must be broken soon.

Progress in Geneva can happen promptly if the United States undertakes three steps. First, SDI should be returned to its rightful status as a research program intended to keep the United States aware of potential defensive technologies. At the same time, the United States and the Soviet Union should reaffirm their commitment to the 1972 Anti-Ballistic Missile (ABM) Treaty as a renewed recognition that defenses have

little role to play in maintaining deterrence. Second, the United States should propose a simple, warheads-only nuclear reduction agreement. Finally, as a parallel agreement, the United States should propose a ban on those new weapons that form the cutting edge of the arms race—SLCMs, ASATs, and MIRVed missiles. These steps would both strengthen and restore order to the US strategic program and revive the desiccated negotiations with genuine measures to slow the arms race.

Step 1—Curbing Defensive Systems

To meet the Soviets' desire to avoid an extension of the arms competition into outer space and to preserve the single most effective arms control treaty to date, the United States should propose reaffirmation of the Soviet-US commitment to the ABM Treaty. At the same time, we should seek to negotiate improvements in the treaty to eliminate existing ambiguities. These changes would make clear that, although laboratory research on defensive technologies would be permissible, field testing and deployments would not. Currently, both sides are straining to thrust programs through these loopholes that risk tearing the treaty apart.

The current bundle of Star Wars programs lumped together under the SDI may or may not produce systems that are cost effective, survivable, or stabilizing. All but SDI's most ardent advocates concede that its military effectiveness will not be known until sometime in the next century and that genuine population defenses remain a chimera. In the short run, SDI's potential certainly could be diminished or eliminated if the other side chose to offset it by adding new offensive weaponry. Vigorously pursuing defensive technologies without strong limits on offensive weaponry simply threatens to provoke simultaneous offensive and defensive arms races that would leave the world with more nuclear weapons and less security than before. It will require years of research and discussions to determine whether or not SDI will enhance national security.

Step 2—Reducing Nuclear Warheads

The heart of this recommended three-step approach is a proposal to put effective limits on offensive weaponry. The United States should propose a simple, warheads-only reduction agreement. Such an agreement, which could consist of no more than a single clause, could be completed quickly. An agree-

ment between the United States and the Soviet Union to make deep cuts in their arsenals of strategic warheads—a quantitative limit—could improve US-Soviet political relations by providing the first genuine arms control achievement in this decade and could set the stage for much more difficult to achieve qualitative restraints and reductions.

Warheads matter most because these are the most telling single measure of nuclear capacity. The United States should propose dramatic reductions in strategic and intermediate-range nuclear warheads—50 percent from the current 8900 US warheads and 10,400 Soviet warheads to about 5000 on each side. The figure of 5000 warheads corresponds to the ceiling on strategic warheads proposed by the Reagan administration in the START talks. The reductions would be carried out over a five-year period at a rate of about 800 a year for the United States and about 1100 for the Soviet Union.

Limiting warheads, which could be readily embodied in a simple agreement, would provide a short cut to the tortuous pace of the SALT and START negotiations. SALT I required 2½ years to negotiate; SALT II consumed seven years. The complexity of the limits-within-limits approach, combined with a focus on delivery vehicles, permitted the US and Soviet strategic arsenals to increase nearly fivefold during the life of the negotiations. A warheads reduction agreement should require only a few months to complete and would stop and reverse this expansion. Deep cuts would yield important political benefits both domestically and in US-Soviet relations, while still leaving both superpowers with vast quantities of nuclear weapons.

No radical adjustments in US or Soviet force structures would be required by a warheads-only agreement. The fundamental asymmetries in the forces of the two nations—reflecting their different geography, history, and security concerns—has consistently hampered attempts to negotiate limits on delivery vehicles. The United States will not give up its triad of bombers and land-based and sea-based missiles. The Soviet Union will not give up its primary reliance on land-based forces. A nuclear reduction agreement that focuses on warheads would not challenge these basic interests.

The warheads-only agreement would leave the United States and the Soviet Union free to decide which weapons each would eliminate to achieve the required reductions. The United States would not demand that the Soviet Union give up any

specific number of its heavy land-based SS-18 and SS-19 missiles, the sources of the "window of vulnerability" anxiety in this country. However, because of the configuration of Soviet forces—land-based missiles make up 75 percent of its strategic weapons—deep reductions in these systems would be inevitable.

Any weapons eliminated to meet the warheads reductions would have to be dismantled or destroyed with the remaining delivery vehicles providing the basis for verification. The maximum number of warheads each type of missile delivers in its tests is known to the other side through "national technical means." For purposes of verification, each side would assume, as they did in the SALT II agreements, that the other's missiles carried this maximum number.

Intermediate-range, as well as strategic, warheads should be included in the reductions agreement, reflecting the US conviction that the defense of the United States and the defense of Western Europe are one problem, not two. Including these warheads would also resolve the Euro-strategic problem—the artificial focus on the nuclear forces in Europe without regard to the overall balance between East and West. This tunnel vision has strained NATO relations and introduced a new generation of nuclear weapons to the European continent.

In summary, an agreement for deep reductions in nuclear warheads would apply an effective, feasible, and meaningful brake to the current accumulation of ever higher levels of nuclear weaponry on both sides. It could pave the way for other, qualitative agreements to eliminate or control the most dangerous technologies on each side.

Step 3—Banning Three Destabilizing Weapons

A warheads-only reduction agreement would go a long way toward slowing the pace of the current US-Soviet nuclear competition. To achieve a greater measure of stability, however, it will be necessary to put real limits on the deployment of the most seriously destabilizing types of new weapons. Therefore, as an adjunct to the warheads ban—but not conditioned on it—the United States and the Soviet Union should negotiate a parallel ban on three critical systems: MIRVed missiles, SLCMs, and ASATs.

MIRVed Missiles

MIRVed missiles are a sad reminder of the single greatest lost

opportunity in arms control history. Multiple warhead missiles were originally developed in the 1960s as a potential counter to the antiballistic missile defense systems being developed by both sides. When the ABM Treaty negotiations made that role moot, MIRVed missiles became one of the first examples of a bargaining chip, whose mere existence was to induce greater Soviet responsiveness in the SALT talks. The US lead in MIRVed missile technology proved too tempting, however, and, like many other subsequent chips, was never bargained away. When the Soviets destroyed the US lead by deploying their own MIRVed missiles in the mid-1970s, the arms competition took a dangerous new turn.

Put simply, MIRVed missiles create a particular danger by making the possibility of a first strike against an opponent's forces appear theoretically more feasible. Along with improvements in missile guidance that permit greater accuracy, multiple warheads have made both US and Soviet land-based missiles far more vulnerable. In addition, each MIRVed missile becomes far more valuable to its possessor, and far more tempting a target to the other side. In a crisis, a dangerous use-it-or-lose-it mentality may grow, tempting preemptive strikes to escape one's vulnerability.

The new generation of highly accurate MIRVed missiles—the US MX and the Soviet SS-X-24—are the most dangerous and deadly weapons in the arsenal of either country. The essential vulnerability of land-based missiles is inescapable. The Soviets may be able to resolve some of their problems by developing mobile missiles. It is politically unlikely, however, that the United States will ever have access to the vast expanses of land necessary to make mobile missiles a survivable land-based alternative.

The best first step toward solving the MIRVed missile problem, and the vulnerability of land-based missiles as well, would be to negotiate a ban on further deployment of new land-based MIRVed missiles. The time such an agreement would buy could be spent in negotiating a long-term solution to the issue, perhaps an eventual phasing out of all MIRVed missiles and their replacement with single warhead missiles. Knowing the complexity of negotiating changes in each side's force structure, the urgent need is to avoid making the situation any worse. A ban on new MIRVed intercontinental ballistic missiles would accomplish that vital step.

Sea-launched Cruise Missiles

Land-attack SLCMs are a dangerous oddity in the arms race: a missile without a realistic mission that poses severe verification problems. Nuclear SLCMs are usually described as part of the strategic reserve, the nuclear forces that will be left to fight a protracted nuclear war once the initial exchanges have taken place. In addition, nuclear SLCMs figure in the grandiose schemes for the "600 ship" US Navy, which include plans to carry out nuclear bombardments of Soviet ports and installations from surface ships standing off the Soviet coast. Neither task is sufficiently plausible to justify the risk that SLCMs pose for arms control.

SLCMs threaten vastly to complicate the process of verifying arms control agreements. They are indistinguishable from their conventional counterparts, and the navy is currently ensuring their unverifiability by changing from their original launchers, which were distinctive, to a new launcher that is also used for a variety of other naval missiles. The navy's rationale is an arms control nightmare; the change in launchers will permit almost all US surface ships to be outfitted with nuclear weapons. In an interview with the *Washington Times* early in 1985, Vice Admiral Joseph Metcalf III, the deputy chief of naval operations, predicted that SLCMs in their new launchers would revolutionize naval warfare, allowing almost any US warship to launch a nuclear attack on the Soviet Union from a range of more than 1000 miles. The virtue of this from a nuclear planner's point of view is that it would complicate Soviet nuclear targeting, but it would also render arms control virtually impossible. It is simply not realistic to think that the United States—and the Soviet Union when it inevitably follows suit with nuclear SLCM deployments of its own—would accept limits or reductions on its navy simply because any of its warships, cruisers, or destroyers could theoretically be a nuclear delivery vehicle.

Since nuclear SLCMs serve no genuine role in the US or Soviet strategic arsenal, the obvious solution is a simple ban on their deployment. There is disagreement about how readily verifiable the ban would be if the two sides want to continue to deploy long-range conventional SLCMs; the simplest answer would be a ban on both conventional and nuclear land-attack SLCMs. If that is not feasible, then it may be possible to develop counting rules for ships carrying conventional SLCMs analogous to those created in SALT II for aircraft carrying cruise missiles. Since the navy's strongest interest

in SLCMs is in the shorter-range systems for ship-to-ship or ship-to-air combat, this might prove a workable agreement. It would be worth the price of some battles within the US bureaucracy to secure the necessary limits to this destabilizing new system.

Antisatellite Weapons

Both the United States and the Soviet Union have been pursuing ASATs programs off and on since the 1960s. The Soviet Union currently has a crude orbiting interceptor that is launched from rockets, but it can only threaten low-flying satellites. (Most of the important command-and-control satellites are in orbits out of reach of the Soviet system.) The United States has tested an antisatellite device launched from an F-15 fighter plane against an old satellite with reported success. However, although both sides possess a rudimentary antisatellite capability, neither has passed the point where control is impractical.

The problem from an arms control perspective is twofold. ASATs threaten to expand the arms race into a competition in space, which could in and of itself be seriously destabilizing. More particularly, ASATs could add another dangerous element to a crisis situation if they develop to the stage of seriously threatening the US and Soviet command-and-control systems. Both powers, but especially the United States, are highly dependent on satellites for intelligence information and communication. In a crisis, the vulnerability of communications lifelines would be a powerfully destabilizing element.

Since both the United States and the Soviet Union have demonstrated some antisatellite capabilities, but neither has yet developed major systems, the time is ripe to cap this technology. A ban on testing and deployment of ASATs would maintain the integrity of vital communications links and intelligence capabilities and remove a potentially contentious issue from the US-Soviet agenda. Ironically, an effective ASATs ban would also reduce the vulnerability of defensive systems, such as SDI, if any are ever deployed.

Conclusion

The arms control agenda is crowded, and it has been a long time since there has been a significant achievement. The integrity of the process—which will inevitably affect the tenor of US-Soviet relations—requires that progress be made in the

near future to slow the arms race. The three steps outlined in this essay would represent a genuine breakthrough in the current stalemate. They have the added advantage of being readily negotiable and achievable. Without the sort of progress these measures offer, there is real reason to fear a new, more destabilizing round in the arms race and an exacerbation of the already tense situation between the United States and the Soviet Union. The means to avoid this are available if the will exists.

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