Advanced science and technology —Soviets' bottom line on SALT

As the Soviet-American Strategic Arms Limitation agreement comes under debate, we find that the ostensibly most diverse positions in the U.S. on SALT boil down to a common core: the USSR should be restrained, in this and in future agreements, from inordinate technological advances. Individuals from Paul Nitze of the hawkish Committee on the Present Danger to Marshall Shulman's Soviet Affairs desk at the State Department, staffed by reputed soft-liners, agree on this.

Their motive is defined by the New York Council on Foreign Relations, the wellspring of current U.S. SALT policies, in the nuclear strategy installment of the Council's "Project 1980's" series. The CFR looks forward to a "controlled disintegration" of the world into a prolonged decline, during which nations are to be stripped of their nuclear technology through a series of disarmament and non-proliferation agreements.

The CFR design will be difficult to accomplish while the USSR remains committed, as it is today, to its own progress in science and industry.

The highest ranking Soviet science and Communist Party officials have confirmed in recent statements that precisely this commitment is the bottom line of Soviet policy for the next decade. The Soviets may compromise, for the sake of SALT, sometimes with dangerous effect, on issues ranging from Jewish emigration to the extent of their intervention to stop British intelligence provocations in Central Asia, but not on this.

In the *Pravda* article we excerpt here, Academy of Sciences President Anatolii P. Aleksandrov promises that Soviet science and economic development will go on with or without input from the Western countries. We add: before a nuclear war, or afterwards.

The clash of these mutually exclusive policy impulses—that of the CFR and the one Aleksandrov represents—is a fundamental source of the danger of world war—above and beyond the agglomeration of "hot spots" in every corner of the globe, which is why SALT is a war issue today.

More than "SALT" at issue

The Soviets are not responding to the on-again/off-again signals from Washington DC on SALT, or to ebbs and flows around the outstanding technical points in the agreement. What concerns Moscow is the global sweep of United States policy.

Central Committee Secretary Boris Ponomarev met with a large delegation of U.S. congressmen in Moscow April 19. Although he noted that SALT was "considerably closer" than before, Ponomarev quickly launched into a survey of American policies which are hurting detente: the Middle East separate agreements, the China card NATO's arms buildup (which "forces us to strengthen our defense potential"), and the linkage of SALT to developing sector politics. In parting, Ponomarev told the congressmen that the conclusion of SALT would not guarantee the prevention of war as long as so many other matters remain problematic.

Commentators Vishnevskii of *Pravda* and Anichkin of TASS bluntly charged the U.S. with adopting military doctrines—and testing them, as in the coming "Global Shield" test of the Strategic Air Command—that lead straight to nuclear war.

Retrenchment for war

An honest assessment of Soviet thinking must conclude that there is a strong sentiment in the Kremlin for writing off the West as hopelessly committed to war. That judgment gains when the chief Western European powers appear to submit to the American and British confrontation drive. (President Giscard d'Estaing's April 26 trip to Moscow, on the other hand, will provide a chance for renewing war-avoidance efforts.)

Moscow's moves with respect to the USSR's economy are a barometer of Soviet strategic expectations. At the April Central Committee plenum this year, Yakov Ryabov, a key party official for the defense industry, was shifted to a government responsibility in the State Planning Commission, the institution where

national growth rates and resource allocation are plotted.

Simultaneous with the plenum, a number of articles in the Soviet and East European press advocated a higher level of energy and economic independence. Academician Aleksandrov's *Pravda* piece was one; another, in the East German weekly *Horizont*, a review of socialist sector nuclear energy programs, called for a goal of 90 percent energy independence.

The Soviets have not made a final decision for retrenchment for war. Their calls for international cooperation in science and technology, such as Academician Velikhov's that we excerpt here and an April 23 scientists' appeal in *Pravda* for scientists to rally for detente and pooled international efforts in energy technology, reflect a search for paths to avoid war and an opportunity for U.S. policymakers who want to do the same.

—Rachel Berthoff

"Provocative action"

TASS commentator Oleg Anichkin wrote a sharp criticism April 14 of the United States' planned "Global Shield" test of the Strategic Air Command. After describing how U.S. strategic bombers will wing toward the Soviet Union with no advance notice, he observed:

The American military will be ready to play a sinister farce of nuclear apocalypse practically any time, depending on its strategic designs....

It looks as if a further deepening of international detente, and in particular the prospect that the Soviet-American SALT treaty will be concluded, scares the American hawks so much that they are ready, like the notorious Doctor Strangelove of Stanley Kubrick's famous film, to blow up the whole world or at least carry out an imitation of such an explosion, that would be as close to reality as possible.

In this light, the Pentagon's strategic exercises may prove to be highly risky. ... Does it not seem to Washington that the military strategic games planned by the Pentagon generals are a rather provocative action? Everybody knows how dangerous it is to let children play with matches. But one can clearly understand the dangers stemming from the games of the generals with nuclear missiles.

"Do not raise the sword of war"

The article excerpted here, written by S. Vishnevskii, one of Pravda*'s top international analysts, appeared April 18.*

... The idea of a "first strike" was taken up in the West immediately after the end of World War II....

The achievement of strategic parity between the USSR and the U.S. cooled the ardor of some American strategists. They realized that any first strike against our country would not go unpunished and would lead to catastrophic consequences for America....

But the aggressive conception of a first strike was not consigned to the archives. In the summer of 1975, Defense Secretary James Schlesinger (now Secretary of Energy, and handling the development and production of nuclear weapons), openly stated the possibility of the United States being the first to use the means of mass attack....

The present Washington administration does not make such monstrous statements publicly, and talks rather about defense. But in the bowels of the Pentagon, of Schlesinger's agency, and of the militarist "think tanks," methods of inflicting a first strike are quietly being developed.

"Soviet physicist on world scientific cooperation"

E.P. Velikhov, Vice President of the Soviet Academy of Sciences and a nuclear physicist, contributed an overview of Soviet scientific work in frontier areas in Izvestia *April 15. He included several paragraphs on international cooperation, particularly for the crucial area of thermonuclear fusion power:*

The fusion of light elements has turned out to be the hardest nut for science to crack. There has been rapid progress in this area in recent years. ... The next step is to demonstrate the technological feasibility of thermonuclear fusion, and the USSR proposes to accomplish this through the joint efforts of countries from different continents. Planning for the international Tokamak "Intor" has begun under the aegis of the International Atomic Energy Agency. ....

In science today, we must know the correct proportions of what we should do ourselves and what should be achieved through international cooperation and division of labor. There is no need for every single country to set up its own scientific "natural economy." International cooperation of scientists is valuable for all participating countries. ... The language of science is one of the most universal languages on the planet.

"A review of scientific forces"

A.P. Aleksandrov, President of the USSR Academy of Sciences, wrote "A Review of Scientific Forces" concerning the Soviet Union's determination to achieve independent development in science and technology in the face of the West's threat of nuclear war:

... Lenin stressed that the Soviet republic must achieve the "possibility independently to supply itself with all the main raw materials and industrial goods," and pointed to the necessity for wide electrification of the country. ....

... When a nuclear threat hung over the country, at the call of and with the constant aid of the party, scientists and engineers of our country independently solved all the most difficult scientific and technical questions of the creation of atomic energy and nuclear weapons in the same amount of time that it took the USA, drawing on the major scientific forces of many countries.

The military bases with which the imperialists encircled our country posed new complex tasks before Soviet scientists and engineers. They accomplished a real victory, creating intercontinental missiles and thermonuclear missile weapons and thereby excluding the possibility of launching a war "safe for the aggressor" against our homeland. The enormous contribution of Soviet science to raising the economic and defense might of our homeland greatly helped our party in its subsequent conduct of the Leninist peace policy.

Recall how during the "cold war" period, aggressive circles of the West strove to unleash "preventive" war against the Soviet Union, calculating on using their temporary advantage of possessing atomic weapons, which we did not have. Western papers and magazines of those years can still be found in libraries, pointing out with arrows what routes and from what bases atomic bombers would fly to bomb the cities and industrial centers of our country! And today the same circles who strove to turn the "cold war" into a hot one, have the nerve to talk about a threat from the Soviet Union they dreamed up themselves!

Soviet scientists love their homeland and consider it their primary duty to guarantee the defense might of our country on the level necessary and sufficient for the preservation of peace.

However we are opponents of the arms race; it lowers the living standards of all peoples and increases the danger of war. With the might of modern means of destruction, a thermonuclear war would be suicidal for all humanity; therefore the policy of preserving peace ... has no reasonable alternative.

Our homeland, having carried out the order of V.I. Lenin to ensure the possibility for the independent development of science and technology, created its own reliable fuel-energy complex, a diverse raw materials base, all types of industry. There is no scientific-technological task beyond our powers.

Of course, exporting our surplus production, we buy some types of goods abroad (for example gas pipelines), and industrial equipment. This helps us to speed our forward motion in necessary areas, but is not a vital necessity for us.

The same goes for scientific-technical exchanges. They are useful to the cooperating sides, but there is no vital necessity there for our side. The threats of certain Westerners to cut off scientific ties with us, though unpleasant, do not frighten us. It seems simply irrational to break off contacts which help, to one degree or another, to normalize relations, to lessen the probability of confrontation.

The mighty scientific-technical potential of the USSR allows it to solve problems standing in the way of its development, and its rich natural resources ensure its needs. Our country, as experience has repeatedly shown, is able to withstand all kinds of blockades.

A completely different situation exists in various Western countries. Before our eyes the United States, which has to buy half its oil and gas abroad, is using all means of pressure against sovereign states, right up to the threat to use force to secure the uninterrupted supply of oil. A two to three year interruption would cause—in the USA—but not there alone—the most serious economic crisis.

The same goes, albeit less intensively, for many other types of raw materials imported by the USA. It is interesting that it is not a lack of fuel resources that has led to this situation—coal supplies in the USA are sufficient to supply electricity requirements for 90 years—and, furthermore, the necessary atomic power could be completely developed. It is mainly the desire of the oil monopolies for maximum profits that has created this complex situation.

Throughout its history, Soviet science has tried to solve tasks that are necessary not only for our country, but for mankind as a whole.

Thus, having built the first atomic power station in the world, Soviet scientists reported on it to the scientists of the whole world at the Geneva Conference, which undoubtedly facilitated successes in atomic power. Soviet scientists undertook work on controlled thermonuclear fusion, and I.V. Kurchatov made this known openly at Harwell (England). ... Many successes of Soviet science and the technical achievements of the USSR gave an impulse to similar work in the West. ....

Our country's policy of mutually beneficial international cooperation in science and technology is dictated by noble motives and corresponds to the improvement of relations between peoples. ...