

There are visible indications of the Soviets' unsettled policy. On Thursday, Jan. 10, the Politburo heard Gromyko's report on his talks with Shultz. The next day's press carried an account of the Politburo session which differed from normal such accounts.

Pravda reported: "The Politburo heard the report of Comrade Andrei Gromyko. . . . A unanimous opinion was expressed about the importance of the agreement reached. . . ." The routine statement that the Politburo "heard and *approved*" the report was missing.

At a Jan. 13 press conference, Gromyko reported that Soviet policy on these questions was worked out in consultation with the U.S.S.R.'s "allies." The next day, a previously announced Sofia, Bulgaria summit of the Warsaw Pact countries was abruptly canceled.

What is Moscow to do, in the face of Reagan's SDI commitment? As is obvious from the history of the Soviet strategic defense program (See p. 35), the alternative to Mutually Assured Destruction is not only well defined in Soviet military literature; it is also Soviet practice to build it. So far, however, the Soviet command seeks this alternative for itself, but proposes not to tolerate the adoption of such an alternative by the West.

If the United States unleashes a deployment of ballistic missile defense based on "new physical principles," the Soviets know that the United States must, in effect, return to pre-1967 domestic and foreign economic policies. This means both a genuine economic recovery within the sphere of influence of the U.S. economy, and a pace of technological breakthroughs that many Soviet leaders are persuaded they could not match.

The beginnings of a solution to this objection are contained in the repeated offer by President Reagan to share strategic defensive technologies with the Soviet Union. That means, to accept the continued existence of the United States as a major power and surrender the design for Moscow to be the capital of a last "Roman" empire. In an era of Mutually Assured Survival and world economic development, then, there could be an approach to solving the fundamental problems of the Soviet economy.

The Soviet response to Reagan's inaugural speech, like Marshal Ogarkov's marching orders on "buying time" for a war mobilization, failed to manifest interest in such a path. TASS said that Reagan had "tried to justify the arms race" and had praised his "Star Wars" program, while he "did not specify whether the U.S. intended to take a constructive stand at the talks on space weapons."

On Jan. 18, TASS attacked Defense Secretary Weinberger, the foremost administration proponent of Mutually Assured Survival, as if he were a wayward Central Committee member deviating from the party line. Calling him a "reckless squabblor" creating obstacles to arms-control talks by advocating the SDI, TASS complained that he "is talking of his intention to make the Russians accept the plans for a militarization of outer space."

West Germany

Bonn warming up to space defense idea

by Rainer Apel

Friday, Jan. 17, was a day of surprise for many in Bonn. First, Dietrich Stobbe, a leading Social Democrat with long-time connections into U.S. policy-making circles, especially the Eastern Establishment, surprised his party colleagues with the remark that "under certain circumstances, that is, in the context of a mutual agreement between the U.S.A. and the U.S.S.R., the idea of space-based defense against nuclear missiles can be supported."

What made this statement important is that Stobbe made it on his return from a six-day visit to the United States which included meetings with some of the leading U.S. arms-control experts such as Ed Rowley, Paul Nitze, and the head of the State Department's European desk, Michael Armacost. Stobbe's statement did not at all fit with the general chorus of the Social Democrats in Bonn chanting that the SDI policy was bad and destabilizing. The remarks made by Stobbe provided more evidence that the Social Democratic front against the SDI is beginning to crumble.

Several hours after Stobbe's statements, the Social Democracy's arms-control mafia received an even greater shock: Gathering at a panel on disarmament policies in Bonn on Friday afternoon, Egon Bahr, Karsten Voigt, Horst Ehmke, and others almost fell off their chairs when German Minister of Defense Manfred Wörner endorse the SDI.

Wörner said that, since there was no doubt of the U.S. administration's firmness on the SDI policy forced the Soviets back to the Geneva talks, it would be quite stupid to slow the program down now that the dialogue had been reopened between the United States and the U.S.S.R. The minute the Americans slowed down the program, Soviet interest in further talks would decrease drastically, said Wörner, and added: "Apart from that, Moscow also began research and development in this field long ago."

The Social Democrats around Egon Bahr did not believe their ears. Was this the same Manfred Wörner who, just nine months ago at the NATO defense ministers' meeting in Cesme, Turkey, functioned as the self-proclaimed "spokesman of European opposition to this program"? Before Jan. 15, Manfred Wörner had not come out once in public with a positive statement on the SDI, and was known for his deeply rooted scepticism of space-based defense. That was probably why the SPD had invited him to speak at the panel, and now this!

But that wasn't all: Wörner added a remark that Soviet

peace talk was not quite convincing since they were training their own troops for blitzkrieg attacks through NATO's defense lines—a military aggressiveness coupled with a general aggressive posture in international politics. “The Soviet don't want a war, but they are getting prepared in order to win a war at any cost. The Soviets have a war-winning strategy.”

Wörner added that all this occurred while the Soviets knew quite well that the West had neither enough troops nor materiel nor reserves to pose a serious threat to the Warsaw Pact's strategic position in Europe.

The Social Democrats who were shocked by this new and unknown Wörner reacted in a predictable way. On Jan. 19, the leader of the SPD opposition in the national parliament, Hans-Jochen Vogel, called for a complete reshuffle of the Bonn government, and for the immediate replacement of Defense Minister Wörner.

But this did not succeed in halting the wave of pro-SDI statements flooding Bonn. On Tuesday, Jan. 22, the head of the planning staff in the Bonn defense ministry, Dr. Hans Ruehle, published a one-page feature on “Chernenko's Star Wars” in the national daily *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*. Ruehle wrote that while the concept of anti-nuclear, anti-missile defense has always been disputed in the West, the Soviets have worked on such systems ever since the end of World War II. Air Defense was made an independent armed force in 1948, and the first evidence of Soviet work on missile defense was provided in public remarks by Defense Minister Marshal Malinovskii in 1957. Soon after, the American U-2 reconnaissance plane spotted a huge missile or air-defense testing complex near the city of Saryshagan.

In September 1961, Ruehle continued, the Soviets completed a first successful test of an anti-missile missile, according to U.S. strategic intelligence accounts. One month later, Marshal Malinovskii told the 22nd Party Convention of the CPSU that the problem of destroying intercontinental missiles had been solved. In 1968, the Soviets began building the “Galosh” missile defense system around Moscow and continued at full speed during and after the talks with the U.S.A. which led to the signing of the ABM treaties in 1972 and 1974.

While the West dropped all research and development efforts after 1972, writes Ruehle, the Soviets did not, and they have worked on laser weapons since at least the 1960s. Ruehle predicts that, by the early 1990s at the latest, the Soviets will be able to test a laser weapon in space, while the West will be lagging behind because all research and development on space-based ABM systems had been halted there between 1972 and 1983.

All in all, Ruehle's message was that the Soviets have been preparing for “Star Wars” since at least 1957, and that the West has not yet put up anything to cope with the in-depth Soviet efforts. This having been said publicly by a leading official of the Bonn defense ministry, one can expect that the ministry and the West German government as a whole may voice open support for Reagan's SDI policy soon.

Documentation

The Soviet lead in ABM technology

In one of the first articles of its kind outside this publication, Dr. Hans Ruehle, planning chief of the West German defense ministry, contributed a full page on the Soviet lead in anti-missile laser weapons to the Jan. 22 Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung. Under the headline “Chernenko's ‘star wars,’” Ruehle provided a historical outline of Soviet defensive-system development, from Soviet defense minister Malinovskii's 1957 speech on anti-missile defense.

In America at the same time, Robert McNamara proclaimed the principle of Mutually Assured Destruction, i.e., assured American vulnerability, to be the national-security dogma of the United States. This was ultimately codified in Henry Kissinger's 1972 ABM treaty.

Ruehle's Jan. 22 article reads in part:

While the Soviet missile programs silently continued, the American activities were buried formally and de facto by the Anti-Ballistic Missile treaty. Thus, this treaty prevented any progress towards an efficient American missile defense system, without stopping Soviet research programs and modernization measures.

Since the 1960s, the Soviet Union has been undertaking an impressive military research and development program in the field of beam weapons. . . . On the basis of this work, one has to assume today that the Soviet Union has the potential and the technology for building militarily efficient beam weapons.

This is true especially for laser weapons, where the Soviet Union has invested three to five times as much as America has done. They have 12 big research centers and 6 big testing facilities. In Troitsk, they have built plants for the production of laser weapons. In Saryshagan, a huge ground-based laser has been under construction since 1971. . . .

No less alarming are the massive research programs in the field of producing radiofrequency beams and particle-beam weapons. . . . It can be taken for granted that the Soviets are ahead. . . .

They are also in the process of building heavy transport rockets. In the works is a rocket of 100-meter length with a transport capacity of 150 tons. This would enable the Soviet Union to transport very heavy weapon systems into space within a very short period, without engaging in any complicated assembly work.