

Gorbachov's 'perestroika' as a plan for war

by Susan Welsh

Imagine for a moment that President Reagan were to fly in for a briefing from top rocket scientists at the White Sands missile-testing range, then announce to a national television audience that the United States was embarking upon a crash program of economic, scientific, and industrial mobilization, as prescribed by studies prepared by the Los Alamos and Livermore National Laboratories. Imagine that this mobilization were to scrap the zero-growth assumptions of the Gramm-Rudman bill, and to place the highest priority on the space program and the Strategic Defense Initiative, and on cranking up the industrial capacity which could allow such a build-up, without reliance on foreign imports.

Improbable? Yet this would be exactly the American counterpart of the great "restructuring" (*perestroika*) that General Secretary Mikhail Gorbachov has launched in the Soviet Union.

The very Western media and "authoritative opinion" which have hailed *perestroika* as heralding a "capitalist restoration" in the U.S.S.R., and Gorbachov's *glasnost* ("openness") as signifying the introduction of democracy, are the same which insist that the kind of military-industrial build-up we have described is impossible—even undesirable—in the United States. Under the sway of these "expert" advisers, President Reagan has been led to the tragically mistaken belief that a summit meeting with Gorbachov, leading to signing of the "zero-option" arms-control treaty, would deliver him from the persecution of the Irangate investigators, insure his presidency a lasting place in history, and guarantee the defeat of the Democrats in 1988.

And so the drumbeat for a summit continues. As is always the case when imperial tyrants are appeased, every U.S. concession to Moscow elicits new Soviet appetites. The Reykjavik summit last fall foundered when Gorbachov insisted that an agreement to reduce missiles in Europe would have to be linked to dismantling the SDI. Since then, the Soviets seemed so anxious to achieve the "zero-option" agreement, that they dropped that linkage, and the deal moved ahead. The U.S. side has even agreed to a Soviet demand to destroy the missiles removed from Europe. And now, the Soviet delegation at the Geneva strategic arms talks has put



forward a "new proposal," calling for a 50% reduction in strategic missiles, coupled with a ban on testing of ballistic missile defense systems in space.

Uniquely among the U.S. media, *EIR* has long insisted that Gorbachov's economic mobilization and internal housecleaning had one purpose: the implementation of Marshal Nikolai Ogarkov's plan for war-economy mobilization. Ogarkov and other Soviet military writers correctly maintain, that a future war will not give the Soviet Union the "luxury" of the gradual military build-up which Stalin was able to achieve. In the age of thermonuclear weapons, the initial phases of war are decisive, and that economy which can sustain the initial shocks of World War III and survive, is the one which will win the war.

This notion, which derives rigorously from classical military theory, was thrown out the window in the United States, with the "cost-accounting" and "limited war" doctrines of Defense Secretary Robert S. McNamara in the 1960s. The very idea that World War III was possible, was rejected in the United States—but never in the Soviet Union, despite some contrary propaganda from Georgi Arbatov's disinformation channels. U.S. doctrine reached its most absurd point under Defense Secretary James Schlesinger, who argued ex-

PLICITLY that industrial potential was irrelevant to modern warfare.

Since Gorbachov's assumption of power, the Soviet High Command has moved ruthlessly toward achieving the goal outlined by Ogarkov, wiping out those vested interests of the Brezhnev era which could not take the pace. Just in the last weeks, the Politburo took new actions in this direction:

- On July 17, a resolution was adopted prioritizing research in high-energy physics, and committing national resources to achieve this goal;
- On July 24, Gorbachov chaired a meeting at the Central Committee, to launch a new program for modernizing the machine-building sector.

EIR will soon release a new Special Report on the Soviet *Global Showdown*, which will document, more exhaustively than anything we have hitherto produced, the full extent of the Soviet war mobilization. Even the retired military officers and intelligence professionals who participated in assembling the data for this report, were shocked to see the extent of Western vulnerability at this time. Take, for example, the simple fact that, during 1986, 91 of the 103 successful world rocket launches were Russian—and you get a sense of the dimensions of the problem.