

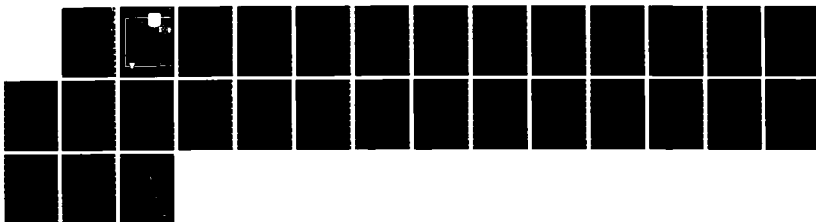
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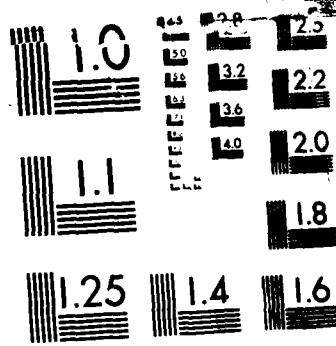
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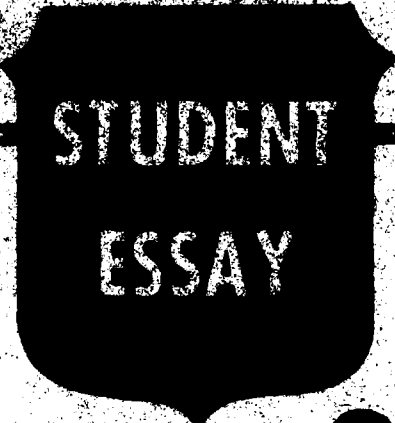




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THE STRATEGIC DEFENSE INITIATIVE

BY

COLONEL W. LEE MILLS

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The Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI) is a research program in which President Reagan asked key scientists and technological leaders to conduct research aimed at determining whether there are cost-effective defensive technologies that could improve the deterrent capability of the United States and allies. The concept of the SDI program envisions a layered defense where hostile missiles could be attacked shortly after launch during the boost and postboost phase, individual attack on the warheads themselves or attack as they approach the end of their flight. Standard arguments for and against the		

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SDI program were examined. Information was gathered using a review of the literature and thorough analysis of the views of key military and civilian leaders. While it has been argued that a U.S. SDI program will cause instability rather than promote stability, it must be realized that the Soviet Union has been emphasizing defense and survivability and has been pursuing an extensive SDI program for many years. The SDI program facilitated dialogue and negotiations between the United States and the Soviet Union as well as has the potential to enhance our basic defense strategy of deterrence. The program was in part responsible for the successful Geneva Summit meetings in November 1985. The U.S. Congress, the elections of 1988 and U.S. public opinion will play a significant role in the future of the SDI program.

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USAWC MILITARY STUDIES PROGRAM PAPER

THE STRATEGIC DEFENSE INITIATIVE

An Individual Essay

by

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14 April 1986

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ABSTRACT

AUTHOR: W. Lee Mills, COL, MP
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The Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI) is a research program in which President Reagan asked key scientists and technological leaders to conduct research aimed at determining whether there are cost-effective defensive technologies that could improve the deterrent capability of the United States and allies. The concept of the SDI program envisions a layered defense where hostile missiles could be attacked shortly after launch during the boost and postboost phase, individual attack on the warheads themselves or attack as they approach the end of their flight. Standard arguments for and against the SDI program were examined. Information was gathered using a review of the literature and through analysis of the views of key military and civilian leaders. While it has been argued that a US SDI program will cause instability rather than promote stability, it must be realized that the Soviet Union has been emphasizing defense and survivability and has been pursuing an extensive SDI program for many years. The SDI program facilitated dialogue and negotiations between the United States and the Soviet Union as well as has the potential to enhance our basic defense strategy of deterrence. The program was in part responsible for the successful Geneva Summit meetings in November 1985. The US Congress, the elections of 1988 and US public opinion will play a significant role in the future of the SDI program.

Strategic Defense Initiative

Introduction. The purpose of this paper is to provide an examination of President Reagan's Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI) as a strategy for enhancing our capacity to deter nuclear attack. At its current stage of development, the Strategic Defense Initiative is simply a research program in which the President asked key scientists and technological leaders to conduct research aimed at determining whether there are cost-effective defensive technologies that could improve the deterrent capability of the United States and our allies. President Reagan provided a clear definition of the program and its objectives in his speech on 23 March 1983:

What if free people could live secure in the knowledge that their security did not rest upon the threat of instant US retaliation to deter a Soviet attack, that we could intercept and destroy strategic ballistic missiles before they reached our soil or that of our allies? The way to realize this vision was to embark on a program to counter the awesome Soviet missile threat with measures that are defensive . . . I call upon the scientific community in our country, those who gave us nuclear weapons, to turn their great talents now to the cause of mankind and world peace, to give us the means of rendering these weapons impotent and obsolete.¹

The concept of the SDI program envisions a "layered defense" where hostile missiles could be attacked shortly after launch during the boost and postboost phase, individual attack on the warheads themselves or attack as they approach the end of their flight.

Considerations Favoring the Strategic Defense Initiative. SDI decreases the likelihood of a successful Soviet first strike; reduces the effectiveness of the USSR ICBM force; enhances the United States' arms control negotiating posture and brings pressure on the Soviet Union

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to treat arms reduction negotiations seriously (if indeed SDI can be considered as a bargaining chip); provides a defense against accidental launches and against ballistic missile launches that may fall into the hands of radical leaders.

Considerations Against the Strategic Defense Initiative. The SDI program is extremely expensive; could spur the offensive arms race to even greater heights; facilitates Soviet consideration of a preemptive nuclear first strike; and threatens the continuance of the ABM Treaty of 1972.

Even though all countries have an inherent right to explore measures necessary to ensure the defense of the nation, it would be prudent to curtail exploration of a Strategic Defense Initiative if the initiative itself is not in the best interest of the nation. SDI would be counter-productive if it actually caused the Soviet Union to initiate a preemptive nuclear first strike or to abrogate the ABM Treaty and deploy a nationwide ABM system, or dramatically increase the numbers of its strategic offensive missile force. The Soviets might consider this option if they truly believed that we were pursuing a first-strike capability and planned to cope with a USSR second strike through the use of a strategic defense.

Soviet Strategic Defense Initiatives. The Soviet Union could be far more advanced in the SDI arena than the United States. While the US Strategic Defense Initiative has been a daily topic in the news media, there has been very little mention of the Soviet Strategic Defense Program. This is partially due to the very secret nature of the Soviet Union but it is also due to the fact that the Soviet news media would probably not be allowed to publish such information (if they are all

even made aware of it). The Soviet Union currently has a Strategic Defense System in existence today. At a minimum the Soviet Union has already made considerable strides toward the deployment a defensive shield of antiballistic missiles around the city of Moscow for the protection against incoming nuclear weapons. This is the only known system of this type in existence. An example of the strategic defense developments made by the Soviet Union are outlined below.

- o Upgrading and expansion of the world's only operational Anti-Ballistic Missile (ABM) system around Moscow;
- o Construction of the Krasnoyarsk ballistic missile detection and tracking radar that violates the 1972 ABM Treaty;
- o Extensive research into advanced technologies for defense against ballistic missiles including laser weapons, particle beam weapons, and kinetic energy weapons;
- o Maintenance of the world's only operational antisatellite (ASAT) system;
- o Modernization of their strategic air defense forces; and
- o Improvements in their passive defenses by maintaining deep bunkers and blast shelters for key personnel, and enhancing the survivability of some offensive systems through mobility and hardening.²

Treaty Violations. The Soviet Union has been accused of numerous violations of arms limitation treaties with the United States. Although the Soviet Union has been a signatory to various multilateral and bilateral treaty agreements with the United States, she has continued to expand her strategic arms across the board, to include areas prohibited

by treaty agreements. It appears that the USSR does not make any attempts to cover their treaty violations. A perfect example of a USSR treaty violation is the development of its SS25. Once the Soviet Union developed the SS24, which was permitted under SALT II, the SS25 was developed, clearly in violation of SALT II which does not allow for the development of more than one new type of ICBM. At the same time, the Soviets accuse the United States of violating the ABM Treaty because of research into SDI. Article V of the treaty between the United States and the Soviet Union on the limitation of antiballistic missile systems states that, "Each party undertakes not to develop, test or deploy ABM systems or components which are sea-based, air-based, space-based, or mobile land-based."³ A key phrase in Article V is the phrase: "undertakes not to develop." The Soviet Union might argue that to conduct research is the first stage of the development process and, therefore, the conduct of research is in opposition to undertaking not to develop. It is indeed difficult to imagine a multibillion dollar research program which does not envision at least the intent to develop at some future date.

It is noteworthy that there is no specific terminology in Article V with regards to research. The language of Article V has apparently been interpreted by the United States to mean that as long as the United States does not go beyond laboratory research and development, nor test an ABM system, we do not violate the 1972 ABM Treaty. The language contained in multinational treaties is carefully scrutinized by all parties and if a country was not to be allowed to conduct research, specific language should be included in the treaty stating that research cannot be conducted. It should also be noted that a ban on research may

not be meaningful to either country particularly since a research ban cannot be verified. Regardless of which point of view is supportable, the wording of Article V leaves room for interpretation and both sides have interpreted it to suit their own purposes; both have correctly interpreted it differently.

Even though it is the opinion of this author that the United States SDI research program is not in violation of previous treaty agreements, when and if the United States makes the decision to pursue testing and deployment of SDI-related weapons systems, it will be necessary to revisit the 1972 SALT Treaty prior to such developments.

Verification. The verification issue is an extremely difficult problem for both the Soviet Union and the United States as well. While it is difficult to verify the actual development and construction of missile systems, it will be next to impossible to monitor SDI research and ensure that a given country does not exceed the limits of applicable treaties. Perhaps this is one of the reasons that the Soviet Union is so concerned over the SDI program. Research can, of course, be conducted inside laboratories with virtually no way for an outside source to determine what is going on short of an intelligence leak. The Soviet Union is constantly providing obstacles to mutually agreed upon methods of verification exercised by the United States. On the other hand, the United States has gone as far as to extend invitations to the Soviets to act as observers at certain of our weapons projects. With specific regards to verification of US SDI efforts, the issue is being overstated by the Soviet Union because President Reagan has already informed the Soviet Union that SDI research and technology will be provided to them.

As new technology emerges, advances may be made in new or existing satellites, radars and high-powered cameras which may allow us to get a better handle on the verification issue. As of the writing of this paper, effective arms verification does not appear to be on the horizon.

The Summit. In order to provide an adequate evaluation of the success of the Geneva Summit meeting between President Reagan and General Secretary Gorbachev the following questions must be considered:

- o What was the purpose of the summit?
- o What were the expectations?
- o What were the results?
- o Should more have been accomplished? .
- o Was the summit a success?

The purpose of the summit conference seemed to change as the meeting drew nearer. Although it is very difficult to determine the sincerity of the Soviet Union regarding their desire for meaningful negotiations, the apparent purpose of the summit appeared to center around the subject of this paper. Through many public announcements they tried to make it seem that no serious negotiations could be made unless the United States was willing to completely abandon the SDI program. The USSR would have been pleased if they could have negotiated an agreement to effect limitations on the SDI program. Additionally, the USSR seemed to have a strong desire to get the United States to make commitments to continue to abide by the terms of SALT II. Such commitments on SALT II would be desirable for the USSR because of their significant lead in certain areas of the arms race. The third purpose from the USSR perspective may have been simply to avoid any costly embarrassments due to past transgressions such as shooting down the South Korean airliner filled

with more than 300 passengers and to avoid serious discussions on human rights or arms control violations. Mr. Gorbachev has expressed his position on these issues in the news media and any US concessions on them would be in his favor.

From the US perspective, I believe President Reagan genuinely seeks significant cuts in the nuclear weapons arsenals of both countries. At one point President Reagan and Mr. Gorbachev discussed the possibility of fifty percent reductions in different types of nuclear weapons. Even though at the close of the summit it may have appeared that both sides were determined to declare the summit meeting a success for political purposes, it is clear that initially they hoped to achieve substantive agreements.

During the weeks leading up to the summit speculation and media hype about what might be accomplished at the summit were rampant, and in large part, very unrealistic. A few of the popular goals expounded are outlined below:

- o Major Breakthrough in Arms Control
- o Eliminate the Strategic Defense Initiative (Soviet Expectation)
- o Produce a Plan for the Reduction of Nuclear Weapons Stocks
- o Arms Control Direction (Short of Major Breakthrough)
- o Agreement on Areas for Cooperation
- o Greater Mutual Trust
- o Agreement in Principle that Nuclear War is not in the Best Interest of the US or the USSR
- o Agreement for Additional Summits and Continued Meetings by Arms Control Negotiators.
- o Agreements on Human Rights

While President Reagan was not very vocal on what exactly he expected to achieve, at least not initially, media comments by Mr. Gorbachev and the Soviet Union seemed to indicate that Mr. Gorbachev expected a significant breakthrough on arms control issues. President

Reagan eventually revealed that he was not looking for major breakthroughs in any of the areas where the United States and the Soviet Union had considerable disagreement. It appeared that once Mr. Gorbachev understood what President Reagan wanted, he channeled his expectations to fall more in line with those of the United States. While all of the issues outlined above may have been discussed to some degree, it is certainly not realistic to expect the two leaders to come up with agreements on the more difficult issues in such a short period of time.

Secretary of State George Shultz indicated that we should not expect too much from the Geneva Summit. This view seemed to have developed as a result of his visit (along with Mr. Robert C. McFarlane, National Security advisor) with Mr. Gorbachev in Moscow a week prior to the summit. According to media reports, Secretary Shultz found General Secretary Gorbachev very aggressive and difficult to deal with. Secretary Shultz was apparently displeased with his meeting and saw no reason for things to change when President Reagan and General Secretary Gorbachev meet in Geneva.

It is clearly in the best interest of both countries to work out a schedule of future meetings not only by the two heads of state but also by arms control negotiators so that continued progress can be made. Easing of the arms race would certainly allow the US and the USSR to decrease the vast sums of money spent in this area and allow for funds to be applied in other needed directions.

President Reagan was very clear about his expectations when, during an exclusive interview by a team of Russian journalists, he was asked what he felt would constitute a successful summit:

For one thing, if we set a plan for continued negotiations, an agreement to go on seeing each other and working on these various problems. Another standard is if we eliminate enough distrust so both nations recognize that the details of arms control should now be turned over to our negotiators in Geneva, where the focus of our effort would be. Remember, the Soviets are on public record that they would like to see the elimination of nuclear weapons and certainly a reduction that might eventually lead to that. Well, if we both are agreed on that, then we certainly ought to be willing to find a way to get at it.⁴

Following the summit talks, the White House published the full text of a joint United States - Soviet Union Statement agreed upon by the two leaders. Some of the more significant agreements between the two leaders are outlined below:

- o Improved relations between the two countries.
- o Additional meetings.
- o Abandon attempts to achieve strategic superiority.
- o Nuclear war must not be fought.
- o Speed up nuclear/space negotiations.
- o Risk reduction centers.
- o Prohibition of chemical weapons.
- o Scientific, educational and cultural exchanges.
- o Safety on air routes in the North Pacific.
- o Consulates general in New York and Kiev.
- o Cooperation in combating cancer diseases.

There have been many reports which indicate that political leaders on both sides feel that more meaningful results could have been achieved at the summit. During the planning stages, it appeared that both leaders had high expectations for accomplishments at Geneva. Even

though their expectations were shared by leaders of other NATO and Warsaw Pact nations, as the talks grew nearer, expectations diminished and significant arms control agreements seemed less likely. In hindsight it appeared that Mr. Gorbachev wanted to pursue new arms control initiatives, particularly upon his arrival in Geneva on 18 Nov 1985. An article contained in the 19 Nov 1985 Washington Post indicates that Mr. Gorbachev and the Soviet Union were seeking positive results:

Gorbachev, who said Wednesday that he will not go empty-handed into the talks, was reported by the Soviet Union to be bringing new proposals - which could include surprises - in the arms control field.⁵

Although Mr. Gorbachev may have simply been involved in media hype, on several occasions prior to the summit he showed conciliatory implications which is generally uncharacteristic of the Soviet Union unless they mean business.

During the 1986 summit meetings, both leaders should resolve to be much less concerned about the big show, the cosmetics and the pomp and circumstance and get on with the business of serious discussions on arms control with the express intent of achieving meaningful results.

Although there have been many reports to the contrary, I feel that the Geneva Summit meetings between President Reagan and General Secretary Gorbachev were a complete success. The above agreements alone tend to show that the summit was successful. Even more important than the agreements reached is the fact that the two most powerful countries in the world have initiated a process of communication which could lead to significant agreements in the future. My view of a successful summit is shared by allies of both the United States and the USSR. Those who feel that we did not accomplish our mission during the summit meetings

appear to have misunderstood what our expectations were. The agreements outlined above cannot be discounted even though there are opinions that more could have been achieved.

Allied Support for SDI. At the outset of the Strategic Defense Initiative many allied countries that normally support the United States showed a great deal of reluctance on this issue. Some allies were in outright opposition. The reasons for this initial lack of support ranged from opinions that President Reagan's defense initiative was unrealistic and could not be achieved, to beliefs that such a program would cause the USSR to pursue an even greater escalation of their nuclear weapons arsenal. At one point it appeared many countries questioned whether President Reagan was seriously committed to this program and whether the program itself would be cost prohibitive.

Great Britain, a long time staunch political ally, has always shown its resolve to act in the best interest of freedom and democracy. Even in the face of strong pressures to the contrary, Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher was the first among the allies to show official support for the SDI research program. Britain and the United States signed a memorandum of understanding in December 1985 which will facilitate British - US cooperation in this regard.

In an apparent attempt to influence the German government to side against the US SDI program, Mr. Gorbachev sent a letter to Chancellor Helmut Kohl expressing the Soviets' concern over the implications of cooperation by West Germany with the United States on SDI. Throughout most of 1985 West Germany showed some reluctance to join the research program; however, on 18 December 1985 the German government officially announced its support of the program:

Chancellor Helmut Kohl's center-right coalition announced today that it would negotiate with the United States over a role for West German industry in the so-called "Star Wars" missile defense program. A statement said Economics Minister Martin Bangemann would go to Washington next month to negotiate the agreement on the program, officially known as the Strategic Defense Initiative.⁶

Although we have not received an official positive response in support of the program from the Italian government, there has been strong indication that Prime Minister Bettino Craxi is in favor of the program. Italian industry has voiced an eager desire to participate in the program. In view of the fact that the Italian communist party plays a significant role in the political system of Italy, the reluctance of the Craxi government to go public with its support can be understood.

Italy, like West Germany and Britain, has been edging toward participation in the \$26 billion, five-year US program. But, because of Italy's large Communist Party, Prime Minister Bettino Craxi's two-year-old Socialist-led coalition has put off committing the Italian government to official cooperation with the US space initiative. It is the political wisdom here that any decision by the government to go along with Reagan's SDI will be opposed by Italy's powerful Communist Party because of the program's military and strategic implications. The Communist party is supported by about 30 percent of the electorate.⁷

Sometimes the French position on SDI issues is difficult to determine. French rhetoric tends to indicate that France would favor a strategic defense initiative between itself and other nations of the region rather than promote cooperation with the US SDI research program. This approach is consistent with the French tendencies toward nationalism but does not imply that they will not join the US SDI research program at a later date. France has already initiated a

civilian space research program that could be of supplemental value to the US SDI program in the future. Although France encourages a combined European response to their strategic defense, as of this writing, there is no evidence to indicate that other European nations were actively taking part (financially or otherwise) in France's civilian space research program.

Even though our allies are coming closer towards participation in the SDI program, they raise questions about whether SDI would enhance deterrence in Europe and whether it would cause a separation between the security concerns of the United States and Western Europe. The thrust of President Reagan's vision was to render strategic ballistic missiles impotent and obsolete. In the eyes of our European Allies, while this might provide for the strategic defense of the United States, it may not provide for the defense of Western Europe. To solve this potential problem, they are considering the pursuit of a European Defense Initiative.

Our European allies are very concerned that the United States and the Soviet Union might reach an arms agreement which does not take into account the conventional security of Western Europe. Such an agreement could involve the reduction of short- and medium-range missiles. The Warsaw Pact enjoys conventional force superiority in Europe. Our European allies would prefer that arms reductions between the United States and the Soviet Union are accompanied by reductions in the Soviet conventional strength. In view of the massive buildup in Soviet conventional forces, even if SDI came to pass, Europe could be vulnerable to conventional attack as well as nuclear attack by Soviet bombers or cruise missiles. Considering the superior conventional

forces of the Warsaw Pact nations, withdrawal of nuclear weapons could increase the conventional threat to Western Europe.

In various treaties which need not be discussed in this paper, the United States pledged our support to our allies. An attack on our allies will be considered as an attack on the United States. Even though I can understand their concern, our allies should not think that the US pursuit of the Strategic Defense Initiative would otherwise jeopardize their security. The United States has demonstrated that we will stand behind our security commitments to our allies.

IMPACT OF CONGRESS. Although the Strategic Defense Initiative is considered of the highest priority by President Reagan, if the United States Congress does not agree with this initiative, it will exert significant impact on the program over the next five to ten years. Congress can slow or even stop the research program simply by declining to provide the necessary funding to keep the program on schedule. Congress has already shown a decrease in support by cutting a large amount from the SDI 1986 budget request:

The question, as it often does on Capitol Hill, will come down to money: Should SDI receive \$26 billion over the next five years, as the Reagan administration has requested? This year legislators waved their shears over the SDI budget and proclaimed victory. In an authorizing bill, \$900 million was trimmed from SDI's 1986 budget request -but the \$2.75 billion that remained represented an increase of almost 100 percent over 1985.⁸

An indication of dwindling congressional support for the program was apparent when the administration sought an additional \$100 million in funds to support an SDI-related underground nuclear testing program, which, according to some Congressmen, contained serious design flaws.

Showing their displeasure, the following comment was made to Secretary of Defense Casper Weinburger in a letter from a group of 30 congressmen:

We are disturbed that at this time of skyrocketing deficits and cutbacks in defense spending money is being wasted in a test that does not provide accurate data.⁹

The presidential and congressional elections in 1988 could have significant impact on the future of the SDI program. President Reagan is in his second term which means we will have a new president and it is very possible that the new president could be a Democrat. Would a democratic administration be less likely to provide the funds for the SDI program and more inclined to utilize those funds for social programs such as proposition H, medical programs for the elderly, and many other programs that have lost their momentum under the Reagan administration? Even if the new president is a Republican, it is very possible that his support for the program will be less aggressive than President Reagan's.

It is also important that the US Congress does not allow itself to be used as a political football by the Soviet Union. A possible example of Congress being used by the Soviets occurred during the Strategic Arms Limitation Talks (SALT) when the Russian delegation readily accepted the United States offer of NCA. NCA was a proposal in which the United States would agree with the Soviet Union maintaining a strategic defensive shield around Moscow and would allow the construction of a defensive shield around our National Command Authority, Washington D.C. The quick reaction of the Russian delegation to the NCA proposal is emphasized in the following comment by John Newhouse:

"NCA, which the American delegation, as instructed, also offered during this brief period, was not only positive but remarkably swift. It took the Kremlin less than a week to instruct the Soviet delegation to say yes to NCA."¹⁰

The Soviets continue to enjoy a defensive shield around Moscow and the US failed to construct a shield around Washington. The requirement for Congressional approval is a major difference in the political systems of the two countries. Even after decisions have been made by the White House and agreements have been reached between the United States and the Soviet Union, there is no guarantee that the US Congress will make funds available. The Soviet Union is very much aware of the role played by Congress and they realize that there is no guarantee that Congress will continue to provide support to the SDI program.

Although congressional support appears reluctant, it is likely that funds will continue to be made available in the near term. Congressional support beyond 1988 cannot be determined but will be largely affected by the elections in 1988.

US Public Opinion on SDI. According to the 1984 presidential elections, the US citizenry is in solid support of President Reagan. The SDI program was of public knowledge prior to the election and every state in the country with the possible exception of Minnesota (the home state of the Democratic candidate for the presidency) gave their support to President Reagan. While it is realized that simply because a person voted for President Reagan it does not necessarily mean that he is in favor of the SDI program; it does mean that the public's endorsement gave the president a public mandate to continue the pursuit of SDI and other programs that he began during his first term of office. A good indication of public support for the program was obtained in a Gallup survey which was released in November 1985:

61 percent of the respondents said "yes" when asked:
"Would you like to see the United States go ahead
with the development of (SDI), or not?"

Similarly worded questions drew a 59 percent positive response in a recent Time magazine poll, and 78 percent positive answers in a poll taken for the Committee on the Present Danger, an organization that favors SDI.¹¹

Although the general public appears to favor the SDI program, there is a considerable number of well educated people who are in adamant opposition to the program. Many colleges and universities throughout the nation have united in an effort to stop the success of the SDI program. This effort appears to have its most popularity among college professors and graduate students who are pledging their nonsupport of the program. This effort is apparently spearheaded by physicists and has been reportedly signed by thousands of people. The following is an excerpt from the pledge:

We, the undersigned science and engineering faculty, believe that the Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI) program, . . . is ill-conceived and dangerous. Anti-ballistic missile defense of sufficient reliability to defend the population of the United States against a Soviet attack is not technically feasible. . . .

The program is a step toward the type of weapons and strategy likely to trigger a nuclear holocaust . . .

We hope . . . to persuade the public and Congress not to support this deeply misguided and dangerous program.¹²

As can be seen, US public opinion for the Strategic Defense Initiative can best be characterized as divided with a slight edge in favor of the program. College and university professors are very small in number when compared to the total population of the country. On the other hand they are very vocal and key communicators who have a great deal of influence on large numbers of people. They can be very instrumental in causing the mood of the public to change direction.

Public support for SDI in the future could be influenced by this trend. More importantly, the outcome of the elections in 1988 will impact significantly on whether the US public will remain in support of SDI.

Conclusion. Although the SDI program has provided incentives for serious negotiations between the United States and the Soviet Union, the program may have caused the Soviet Union to raise their own strategic defense initiatives to even greater heights. Since the program has already had impact upon US/USSR arms control negotiations, it could put us at an even greater disadvantage to discontinue the initiative.

The Soviet Union has maintained an effort to achieve strategic superiority over the United States for a long period of time. Although they publicly state that they do not strive for superiority, their massive weapons buildup over the past 2 decades does not bear this out. General Secretaries Brezhnev and Andropov have made statements indicating that they only seek parity and at the same time the weapons gap continues to widen. Despite Soviet rhetoric, it is unlikely that they have decreased their efforts in the arms race. A more realistic view of Soviet intentions was expressed by Soviet Deputy Foreign Minister Kuznetsov during the Cuban missile crisis:

For its part, Moscow made no effort to hide its intentions. Indeed, after the Cuban missile crisis of October, 1962, John McCloy, operating on assignment from President Kennedy, found himself hosting Soviet Deputy Foreign Minister V.V. Kuznetsov at his Connecticut home. Kuznetsov assured McCloy that Moscow would observe the agreement to remove Soviet missiles and bombers from Cuba, but warned: 'Never will we be caught like this again.'¹³

There is no real evidence that General Secretary Gorbachev will be significantly different from Brezhnev or Andropov. We can effectively

deter Russian intervention if they realize that if they attack the United States, we will exact a price that they are not willing to pay. It is probably not possible to provide a defense that will guarantee that no single warhead will break through. What is needed is a defensive system that will stop enough of the Soviet weapons to ensure effective survival and thereby give us the opportunity for a massive second strike. If SDI, when fully developed and deployed, causes other nations to realize that an attack on the United States would probably result in failure and could result in their own destruction, they would not be likely to risk such an attack.

On 26 September 1985 Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard A. Shevarnadze announced that the USSR would propose a 50 percent cut in nuclear weapons. This plan also suggests that the United States would cease the SDI program. President Reagan has already indicated that he would not curtail the research on SDI as a result of new Soviet initiatives (which they refer to as "Star Peace"). Even though President Reagan has indicated that he will not compromise on the development of defensive ABM systems, as long as the United States and the Soviet Union maintain such divergent points of view, progress cannot be made towards a meaningful agreement without some degree of compromise by both sides. Although I do not support the offering of a compromise position to the Soviets at this time, it will be to our advantage to have well developed alternate positions for possible compromise at some time in the future. Several possibilities for compromise were advanced by Leslie H. Gelb in the following article:

Signing a joint communique' stating that both sides would abide fully by the 1972 treaty limiting antiballistic missile defenses, but leaving everything else undefined.

Agreeing to limit Mr. Reagan's missile-defense program to "research," but seeking to define it in later talks in such a way as to allow planned testing programs to go forward.

Agreeing to limit the program to "research," but trying to draw a line between permissible activities, such as tests of systems to find and track objects, and banned activities, such as the development and testing of actual weapons or their components.

Seeking to limit all development and testing to subcomponents of tracking systems or weapons.

Proposing that the two nations be able to develop and test in agreed ways, but that no weapons or systems could be deployed before one side gave notification and delayed deployment for an agreed number of years.¹⁴

Having alternative positions for possible compromise is consistent with the theory of using SDI as a bargaining tool and it should be noted that many analysts have suggested that President Reagan is serious about his desire to rid the world of the threat posed by nuclear-armed ballistic missiles and he does not see SDI as a bargaining tool from which to achieve compromise with the Soviet Union.

It is recognized that pursuit of a Strategic Defense should not mean that strategic offensive initiatives should slow down. The Soviet Union probably has a must win policy regarding any future war with the United States and we should view them in the same manner. While I support the President's Strategic Defense Initiative, we should not allow SDI to cause us to abandon strategic offensive considerations. We will not win a war by remaining in a defensive mode.

One would be hard put to find a large number of written, signed and published agreements between the Secretary of State, George P. Shultz and the Secretary of Defense, Caspar W. Weinberger. It sometimes seems that the two officials almost diametrically oppose each other. But both

of them agree on the basic concept of SDI which can be seen in a joint statement signed by the two Secretaries:

The Strategic Defense Initiative is a prudent and necessary response to the ongoing extensive Soviet anti-ballistic missile effort, including the existing Soviet deployments permitted under the ABM Treaty. The SDI provides a necessary and powerful deterrent to any near-term Soviet decision to expand rapidly its ABM capability beyond that permitted by the ABM Treaty. The overriding importance of the Strategic Defense Initiative, however, is the promise it offers of moving to a better, more stable basis for deterrence in the future and of providing new and compelling incentives to the Soviet Union to agree to progressively deeper negotiated reductions in offensive nuclear arms.¹⁵

After a thorough review of the evidence, it is the opinion of this writer that the Strategic Defense Initiative is a very good program even at the high cost that is likely to occur in the future. It is concluded that this program is in part responsible for the successful Geneva Summit meetings between Mr. Reagan and Mr. Gorbachev. This summit has produced meaningful results already discussed in this paper. US public opinion is behind this program and the program currently enjoys a degree of financial backing by the US Congress. Currently, the United States and the Soviet Union appear to be genuinely concerned about the control and reduction of strategic arms. Both countries have made significant overtures toward reductions in existing nuclear arsenals. SDI can continue to be of value in the negotiations process.

The arms race between the United States and the Soviet Union appears to be at such a high state that we cannot afford to cease negotiations. The Strategic Defense Initiative facilitated negotiations and dialogue between the United States and the Soviet Union as well as has the potential to enhance our basic defense strategy of deterrence. If we

are to convince each other that neither is pursuing a first strike capability, it will be through meaningful negotiations coupled with improved dialogue and understanding of our respective countries.

ENDNOTES

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