

Elephants and Donkeys by Warren J. Hamerman

GOP debates strategic doctrine

The least noticed discussion at the Republican Party's draft platform hearings in Dallas was in fact the most significant. The subject under raging debate was none other than the essence of the "Henry Kissinger Question"—namely, will the United States adhere to a strategic doctrine coherent with its national security interests.

The draft platform language adopted violently rejects the Kissingerian strategic doctrine of Mutually Assured Destruction (MAD), in favor of the Lyndon LaRouche-inspired doctrine of Mutually Assured Survival (MAS) publicly announced by President Reagan on March 23, 1983.

On Aug. 14, the National Security subcommittee of the Republican Platform Committee approved the following unambiguous language:

"President Reagan has launched a bold new strategic defense initiative to defend against nuclear attack. We enthusiastically support President Reagan's strategic defense initiative. We enthusiastically support the development of non-nuclear space-based defensive systems to protect the United States by destroying incoming missiles. Recognizing the need for close consultation with our allies, we support a comprehensive and intensive effort to render obsolete the doctrine of mutually assured destruction (known as MAD). The Democratic Party embraces mutually assured destruction. The Republican Party rejects it.

"We will begin to eliminate the threat posed by strategic nuclear missiles as soon as possible. Our only pur-

pose (one all people share) is to reduce the danger of nuclear war. To that end, we will use superior American technology to build space-based and ground-based defensive systems as soon as possible to protect the lives of the American people and our allies.

"President Reagan has asked 'Would it not be better to save lives than to avenge them?' The Republican Party answers 'Yes!'"

Meanwhile, Sen. Jesse Helms (R-N.C.) issued a press release which attacks "liberal Republicans like Lowell Weicker and Jim Leach" for "trying to undermine the President by attacking President Reagan's space-based defense program and strategic defense initiative." The release cites Helms as saying that the GOP platform "should strongly support the President's proposal to develop a defensive shield to protect our people from Soviet ballistic missiles," and announces that the senator will introduce "specific strengthened language supporting Reagan's position on a 'star wars' defense system." "Such a defense system would save lives—it will also lessen the possibility of nuclear war, by motivating the Soviet Union to accept a verifiable and mutually acceptable arms control agreement," Helms concluded.

Simultaneously with the adoption of the "anti-Kissinger" strategic doctrine plank by the Republicans in Dallas, Lt. Gen. James Abrahamson, the head of President Reagan's Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI) program, announced a new plan to speed up SDI research. The plan calls for a rapid-fire contracting procedure to spur defense companies to complete their research projects in the fastest possible time by holding out the promise of new contracts to those companies who work fastest. Abrahamson said that his "horse race" concept will be applied at first to the most difficult SDI project: the computer targeting of enemy warheads. On Aug. 10-12, Abraham-

son led a classified briefing in Washington for over 1,000 potential contracting firms for the Strategic Defense Initiative.

Are we mobilized?

Is the United States, therefore, fully mobilized to defend the Western Alliance through a crash-effort to develop and deploy a SDI system? Unfortunately not, on three devastating accounts:

1. Despite all the fine rhetoric by the Republicans, the White House and all concerned have repeatedly made clear that nothing will really move ahead on the SDI until "after the elections."

2. For "political reasons" Moscow's favorite spoon-bender, Lt. Gen. Daniel Graham of High Frontier, has been brought into the action as an "equal player." Scientists at Lawrence Livermore Labs who hold their noses at the technical aspects of High Frontier are nonetheless under orders to "not embarrass" Graham publicly. Furthermore, the Republican Study Group session of Aug. 9 nearly gave Graham co-authorship of their policy paper.

3. The Soviet Union, which disavows "mere political excuses," is rapidly accelerating its own strategic beam defense. At the Republican Study Group hearing Edward Teller, Lowell Wood and Malcolm Wallop (R-Wyo.) revealed that the Russians may launch and test a space-based laser next year. The Russians have open production lines for enough mobile radars and anti-missile interceptor rockets (SH-4 and SH-5) to deploy a nationwide ground-based anti-missile defense, augmented with first generation beam weapons, in this decade.

In sum, reality is *not* the manic euphoria in the Reagan camp on the eve of the Republican Convention, where "the name of the game" is getting Reagan re-elected.