

Pre-summit talks with Moscow: All deals are off

by Kathleen Klenetsky

If the Gorbachov-Reagan summit takes place at all, indications are that it will be a purely *pro forma* meeting which will produce none of the agreements or agreements-to-agree for which George Shultz's State Department has been so ardently striving.

By all accounts, Shultz's mission to Moscow was a total bust. After 14 hours of "vigorous" discussion with Gorbachov and Foreign Minister Edvard Shevardnadze, a glum-looking Secretary of State admitted: "I can't say that anything definitive was settled as such, although we did, I think, narrow our differences. But, as I said, there are deep differences remaining."

Noting that every subject of contention between the superpowers had been discussed, Shultz reported: "There were one or two things that we can say, 'We agreed on that'. . . . Basically we have a lot of work to do."

Shultz's gloomy assessment has been confirmed by various administration officials who accompanied him to Moscow. In light of other recent developments, including the series of Russian defections and re-defections which President Reagan himself has suggested may be part of "a deliberate ploy, a maneuver" by the Kremlin, Shultz's abortive trip has led to widespread speculation that the summit may not take place at all. One rumor circulating in Washington, attributed to high-level White House sources, is that Reagan may develop a "bad cold" which would force him to cancel out of the summit altogether.

Shultz's failure to achieve a meeting of minds with the Soviet leadership was not for lack of trying. The secretary of state had made no secret of his desire to reach an accommodation with Moscow at the expense of U.S. national security, and had trotted off to Moscow for pre-summit consultations with the firm intention of reaching an "agreement in principle" to sell out American interests in the Pacific, the Middle

East, and Europe, as well as the President's SDI program.

Shultz was planning to tell the Soviets that the United States has no objections to their taking over the Middle East—as long as they grant Israel diplomatic recognition. He was also prepared to discuss the transfer of such U.S. allies as the Philippines to the Soviet orbit.

The secretary of state also intended to set the stage for a potential sell-out of the Strategic Defense Initiative, in exchange for some cosmetic Soviet "concession."

Hardened positions

But at this point, all deals appear to be off. Instead of any so-called breakthroughs, there has been a noticeable hardening of positions on both sides. Senior members of the Shultz entourage reported that Gorbachov and Shevardnadze were immovable on arms-control. In fact, the officials said, the Soviet leaders retreated from Gorbachov's recent "concession" that Moscow would permit the United States to continue pure research on the SDI, and are once again demanding a ban on the entire program.

The 68th-anniversary celebrations of the Russian Revolution, which came just days after the Shultz visit, were marked by a fresh wave of threats and warnings to Washington. "If the explosive international situation does not diminish, the Soviet Union and its allies in the Warsaw Pact will continue to strengthen its military might, equipping their armed forces with everything they need" to defend the Motherland, Defense Minister Marshal Sergei Sokolov declared in a Revolution Day speech.

Sokolov sounded the same theme in a *Pravda* article, claiming: "It now seems to the White House that the United States will achieve military superiority by creating a fundamentally new type of weapon—space strike systems." He then stated: "The U.S.S.R. will issue an adequate reply to

the challenge. . . . Only a complete ban on space strike systems, including a ban on target-oriented research, would clear the way to a radical reduction of nuclear armaments."

It is quite likely that Shultz's trip failed because the Kremlin leadership has realized that Reagan simply does not share his secretary of state's inclinations for appeasement. In particular, in the period immediately prior to the Shultz visit, Reagan made a series of statements making it quite clear that SDI concessions were out of the question.

In a widely publicized interview with BBC, Reagan went out of his way to stress his desire to share SDI technology—"one of the most momentous things in the century"—with the Soviet Union. Asked by BBC if he would offer SDI to the Soviets "off the shelf?" Reagan replied: "Why not? I think this is something to be discussed at the summit as to what kind of an agreement we could make. . . . I would like to say to the Soviet Union, we know you've been researching for this same thing longer than we have. We wish you well. There couldn't be anything better than if both of us came up with it. But if only one of us does, then why don't we, instead of using it as an offensive means of having a first strike . . . why don't we use it to ensure that there won't be any nuclear strikes?"

Moscow's reaction was immediate—and blunt: "It follows from the interview that the building up of the arms race and the pursuit of military strategic superiority over the Soviet Union remain the cornerstone of Washington's foreign policy," pronounced TASS. "The President made it clear that the highest levels of the U.S.A. do not intend to discuss the question of the non-militarization of space, but to reduce it to a mere statement of the well-known position of Washington."

The Soviets then censored out the President's repeated references to sharing SDI with the Soviet Union from the interview he gave to *Izvestia* on Oct. 31.

Thus, even before Shultz arrived in Moscow, the Soviets had signaled their total opposition to the core of Reagan's negotiating position—a global shift toward defensive systems. But the Soviets' recalcitrance also set the stage for Reagan to make his commitment to SDI even stronger; and once Shultz had been swatted around the Kremlin, Reagan began to up the ante in earnest.

Reagan took advantage of the confusion that arose over his statements to *Izvestia*, suggesting that the United States would not deploy SDI until it had dismantled its offensive nuclear weapons, to plug SDI with even greater fervor. In an interview with wire services Nov. 6, the President said his statements had been misinterpreted, and that, in fact, the United States is prepared to deploy the SDI unilaterally. "If we had a defensive system and we could not get agreement on [Moscow's] part to eliminate the nuclear weapons, we would have done our best and we would go ahead with deployment, even though, as I say, that would then open us up to the charge of achieving the capacity for a first strike."

Had he meant to give the Soviets a veto over SDI, he was

asked? "Forgive me if I say, hell no," Reagan responded. "When we've got it developed and know that we have that kind of defense weapon, we want to sit with the rest of the nuclear powers and say, hey, now, join us all in getting rid of nuclear weapons and institute a defensive system."

Reagan was then asked how flexible the United States would be on the SDI at the summit. Reagan replied that he plans to use the Nov. 19-20 summit to "try to impress upon them how firmly we believe in [SDI]." The SDI "means too much to the world and to the cause of peace. . . . Flexibility, I think, is not involved."

Although Defense Secretary Caspar Weinberger has not been included in the summit delegation, there is every indication he will play a strong role there nonetheless. Just four days before the summit opens, Weinberger will hand deliver to Reagan a new Pentagon report on Soviet treaty violations. Administration officials say the report, which Reagan commissioned several months ago, will allow him to face Gorbachov armed with specific details on Russian violations of both the SALT and ABM treaties. The report also contains options for the United States to retaliate by exceeding current limits on U.S. nuclear warheads, if the United States gets no assurances that Russian violations will stop. One option is for the United States to ignore SALT II limits on submarine-launched missile warheads.

In a Nov. 4 speech to the New York Foreign Policy Association, Weinberger warned that the United States cannot afford "to isolate arms control from the entire context of U.S.-Soviet relations," and called for a "comprehensive negotiating posture" at the summit that would address "Soviet aggression" in the Third World and Russia's violation of arms treaties. "We do not share the belief of those who hold that the mere process of negotiations on arms reductions, isolated from all other pressing disputes and competitions, is good in itself," he said, adding that focusing solely on arms control could "mask Soviet adventurism."

There is another possible reason behind the summit's devolution, which Gorbachov alluded to in his meeting with Shultz: the LaRouche factor. According to a senior administration official, Gorbachov believes "American policy is heavily influenced by small circles of extremist people who are ideologically anti-Soviet," and is "heavily persuaded by a view that there is an ulterior motive, a hidden agenda, an overriding anti-Soviet influence" in administration policy. The fact that Reagan has repeatedly insisted that he will not bargain away the SDI, despite pressure from the New Yalta crowd, may have convinced Moscow, which regards LaRouche as the intellectual author of the SDI, that the Reagan White House may not have broken "channels of personal contact" with the *EIR* founder.

As LaRouche writes in a Nov. 6 press release, "Soviet officials have stated that unless such channels were broken, Moscow would refuse to enter into summit negotiations with President Reagan—'summit' negotiations which may have now broken down in any case."