

## Pentagon report confirms Soviet war-economy buildup

by Leo Scanlon

The recently released edition of the Pentagon's annual review, *Soviet Military Power '86*, could be described as an interim report on the implementation of what *EIR* has characterized as the "Ogarkov Plan." The volume's most important addition over previous years, is its discussion of the in-depth economic capabilities which sustain the Soviet military apparatus. This chapter situates the role of the growing Soviet industrial base as a fundamental factor in the strategic balance. The undeniable importance of this element of Soviet power was brought to public attention with the publication of *EIR's* April 15, 1985 *Quarterly Economic Report*, and was further developed in *EIR's* Special Report *Global Show-down*, released in July of last year.

*Soviet Military Power '86* emphasizes the point that modernization of basic industry has been a long-term Soviet commitment, and is given top priority by the Gorbachov leadership. The results are presented in "red vs. blue" tables which compare NATO and Warsaw Pact production rates of basic military goods—a comparison most unfavorable to NATO.

The presentation of this subject-matter in a forum such as this Pentagon report, represents a real advance in the "official" thinking process which shapes Western governments' analysis of the Soviet threat. If such considerations are systematically introduced into policy discussions, and the implications of the facts presented in this report are rigorously accounted for, we may soon end the farce of National Intelligence Estimates which assert that the fastest-growing industrial power on earth can be dismissed as a "crumbling empire."

Any well-constructed report presenting the spectrum of Soviet weapons systems has a dramatic impact, and *Soviet Military Power '86* is such a report. The military component of these developments involves advances in strategic missile forces, decisive improvements in the equipment available to Warsaw Pact ground forces, similar technological improvements in Soviet air defenses, offensive and defensive, chemical and biological warfare capabilities, which cannot be matched in the West, and the continuing expansion of Soviet global naval operations. The space-based component of these developments is treated by the detailed description of the history of the Soviet directed-energy weapon program.

We will briefly review the main new weapons systems presented, and then turn to the economic section of the Pentagon report.

**Strategic forces:** The deployment of the mobile SS-25 and the SS-X-24 is the most significant development in Soviet strategic missile forces, but by no means the only one. The Soviets are now well on the way to fielding a fully modernized ICBM force which, by the mid-1990s, will be comprised of the SS-25, SS-24, SS-19, and a new heavy ICBM. Currently under development are a more accurate version of the huge SS-18, a solid propellant missile larger and more accurate than the SS-24, and a MIRVed version of the SS-25. These missiles will be deployed in a mix of about 50% mobile, and 50% in silos three times harder than any existing in the United States. The SS-11 silos that are currently being retired are soft silos which will not be modernized. Other existing systems will undergo refurbishing, consistent with

Soviet policy of never mothballing a workable system.

Soviet SLBM improvements will give a hard target capability to their submarine launched weapons systems by the end of this decade. All of this "silo-busting" capability is complemented by the SS-20, now deployed in Europe, which has intercontinental range in certain configurations and will become more accurate in later versions. The SS-20, in addition to being road-mobile, can also be transported by the AN-124 Condor, the world's largest transport aircraft, first deployed this year with Soviet air forces. The SS-20's European mission will be complemented by a new ground-launched cruise missile, now under development, which can cover the SS-20's targets from bases deep within Soviet territory.

**Conventional air defense forces** are being significantly upgraded by the fielding of a range of fighter aircraft, including the SU-27 Flanker, equipped with look-down shoot-down radar capability, a most formidable obstacle to cruise missiles. As with other weapons systems where the desired total numbers have been deployed, the air forces are now being dramatically modernized with avionics and navigation systems which are the equivalent of their Western counterparts.

**Soviet and Warsaw Pact ground forces** are undergoing developments which have grave implications for NATO. Certain types of weapons systems are now being deployed by Warsaw Pact forces, which are only in the research phase in the West. Further, it is now admitted that the quality of technology available to the numerically overwhelming Soviet land armies is comparable to its NATO equivalent.

**Directed-energy systems**, ground and space based, are discussed, and this year's edition points out the historical depth of the Soviet commitment to these weapons. The charts illustrating this point confirm the 1985 predictions that the Soviets would be capable of deploying laser and other systems for strategic defense, defense of air forces, theater forces, and point defense of ships at sea by the late 1980s to early 1990s. The report provides substantial underpinning to back the contention of Dr. Edward Teller that the Soviets have *already* deployed a space based x-ray laser weapon, an assertion which has gained credibility with the March 25 statements of Strategic Defense Initiative director Lt.-Gen. James Abrahamson, weapons in 1982—tests which the United States will not be able to duplicate until 1987.

**Soviet chemical-biological warfare** command and training infrastructure was described in last year's report; this issue presents the most detailed picture to date of the enormous chemical and biological warfare capabilities of the Soviet military, including the targeting procedures, deployment modes, and dispersal patterns of these weapons. This is a capability which is possessed in its offensive and defensive mode and which, according to a knowledgeable source, "we could not hope to match in the West."

The much touted stories of Soviet technological espionage

capabilities have begged the question of what these technologies are being integrated into. Similarly, the clamor which surrounds the yearly release of the CIA estimate of Soviet military spending is, as Defense Secretary Caspar Weinberger has pointed out, an academic exercise; the real issue is that the Soviets produce enormous amounts of military equipment. How do they do it?

*Soviet Military Power '86* reports: "The Soviet leadership has shown the same inclination to upgrade the country's industrial capacity, particularly the military sector, as it has for military systems by the introduction of new technologies. Since the 1960s, a concerted effort has been made to introduce computers and automation. . . . The current emphasis is on applying robotics and sophisticated machine tools as widely as possible. . . . If they succeed, the Soviets will realize increased efficiency in all phases of industrial production." (p. 116)

"The cumulative effect of this trend has been to provide the Soviets with a huge, broad-based R&D capability which can and does provide weapons for all segments of the Soviet arsenal." (p. 111)

"The Soviets are implementing a three-pronged approach for military production. First, there is a thrust to use the huge R&D base they have assembled to upgrade the quality of their weapons and to produce more capable equipment. Second, the Soviet Union is expanding existing factories, building new ones, and providing on a priority basis new and modern manufacturing technologies to those industries that support military related production. Finally, the Soviets are further integrating East European industries into their military-industrial complex." (p. 115)

"Personnel changes General Secretary Gorbachev has implemented have brought more technocrats into positions of power. More than three-fourths of the Politburo and the Council of Ministers have technological backgrounds . . . resolutions provide one-time multiyear approval for the entire duration of the program . . . any state asset—that is, any individual or resource regardless of affiliation—can be coopted to support a particular weapons program. . . ." (p. 111)

Most important, it is pointed out that it is the "technological level of the machinery and equipment manufacturing sector which provides the basis for Soviet economic and military might . . . widespread modernization of the Soviet industrial base will ensure future military production capabilities."

To underline these points, one can refer to a letter issued by the National Machine Tool Builders Association, which reported on the quality machine tools displayed by the Soviet Union at a recent European trade show. In one category of lathe machine, the Soviets are producing over 800 per month—*more than five times the total U.S. yearly output of similar machines!* We ignore such facts at our great peril.