

Reagan slashes ABM budget to appease the Congress

by Robert Gallagher

President Reagan ordered his staff to cut in half his planned increase in funding for research and development on strategic anti-ballistic missile (ABM) defense systems in the new budget from \$560 million to \$250 million "to avoid presenting a large target to Congress in budget hearings," according to *Aviation Week and Space Technology* magazine Jan. 31.

This action followed halving the \$1 billion increase recommended by the conservative Fletcher Commission. The originally planned doubling of the ABM budget has become an election year casualty. The President retreated when he had the opposition outnumbered and outflanked. His March 23, 1983 speech calling for overthrowing the doctrine of Mutually Assured Destruction (MAD) by developing an ABM shield against nuclear missiles has received more support from the American people than any other administration program.

But the President has deemphasized the pace of ABM program, especially in development of deployable ABM hardware. For example, he has cut the budget for deployable conventional ABM systems, anti-missile missiles, from \$539 million in 1983 to \$469 million in 1984 and to \$356 million in the new budget. On the other hand, he has provided support for a vigorous research program at national laboratories, such as Lawrence Livermore. These have become a wellspring of ideas for directed-energy ABM systems and the work does not require much funding to make considerable progress as a research program. Typical of the program's weakness is that the President has yet to appoint a director.

Responding to this policy, Edward Teller—the leader of the laboratory research programs—recently warned that a U.S. retaliation against Moscow for a Soviet nuclear attack would not get through because Moscow's extremely effective SH-04 and SH-08 ABM interceptors are armed with neutron warheads. The United States itself could rapidly deploy such a defense system, he emphasized.

Reagan's refusal to fight now has made the remaining 17% increase in the Strategic Defense Initiatives an easy

target for the press. In coverage of the \$305 billion budget authority for defense, the *Washington Post*, *Boston Globe*, and *Baltimore Sun* all zeroed in on the \$1.7 billion ABM request.

Budget little greater than Carter's

The overall defense budget is in worse shape than that for ABMs. Congressional budget cuts since 1981 have "de-fanged" the President's five-year buildup plan. In 1981, the President proposed a plan that would have spent \$116 billion more than Carter's five-year plan by 1985. Now, the administration plan is only \$12.3 billion greater than Carter's, Defense Secretary Casper Weinberger testified before the Senate Armed Services Committee the week of Jan. 30.

Nonetheless, alleged ultra-conservative John Stennis (D-Miss.) whined to the secretary: "When you passed the \$300 billion mark you left me somewhere out in the void." Sam Nunn (D-Ga.), a proponent of Henry Kissinger's build-down proposal for unilateral U.S. arms reductions, predicted that Congress will cut \$13 to \$18 billion from the budget request, reducing its real growth from the 13% requested by the administration to 5% and its total figure to below the 1981 Carter plan for 1985. Then Carl Levin (D-Mich.) outrageously asserted: "How we can reverse a decade of neglect [in defense] with only \$12.3 billion is beyond me, unless there wasn't much neglect."

John Tower (R-Tex.) attempted to set the record straight: Rage against the defense budget is "misdirected," he said. "The American people ought to be outraged that the Soviet Union has from 1960 to 1980 established numerical superiority over the U.S. with regard to virtually all weapon systems [and] that our nation moved from a position of nuclear domination in 1960 to nuclear inferiority by 1980."

The accompanying chart shows how this happened. U.S. defense spending was still 40% of the federal budget when Henry Kissinger became head of the National Security Council in 1969. Defense then tumbled to 22% of the budget over

10 years. In this time period, the U.S. Navy has fallen to second place and the nation has become vulnerable to a Soviet pre-emptive strike. The administration's defense program has yet to restore defense spending to even 30% of the total budget.

Overall, the President's program is built around modest steps in the direction of plugging the numerous holes in our defenses that have appeared since the adoption of MAD. In general, the administration is doing "too little." Democratic Party leader Lyndon H. LaRouche, Jr. has called for a \$500 billion dollar defense budget to clear all such problems out of the way. Among them are:

1) Command, control and communications: When Reagan came into office, it was highly probable that a Soviet pre-emptive nuclear attack could destroy the means of a U.S. President to order retaliation before that order could be given, or destroy the entire U.S. chain of command. There was no means of communicating in an emergency with our submarine force on station at their operating ocean depths.

The Carter administration had killed the Navy plan to build an extremely low frequency (ELF) radio transmitter whose transmissions could penetrate hundreds of meters below the surface of the ocean to the U.S. ballistic missile submarines force. The Reagan administration has reactivated this plan and is building an ELF system that will permit some communications with the subs but is only a fraction of the size of the system required. The administration is also taking measures to harden existing command and communications networks against the effects of nuclear attack. Lastly, six new NAVSTAR satellites for improving the targeting of our ballistic missile submarines will be procured.

2) Air defense and early warning: In 1980 it was pos-

sible for a bomber to fly from the Soviet Union to the central United States without being detected because of "gaps" in the early warning radar network of the North American Aerospace Defense Command (NORAD). There were no surface-to-air missiles (SAMs) deployed on U.S. soil to stop such a bomber, and the United States had only 269 aging interceptor aircraft (compared to the Soviets 2,550).

Gaps in radar systems for detection of submarine launched ballistic missiles (SLBMs) could enable Soviet submarines firing from the Atlantic to strike U.S. command and control centers without warning—since the two early warning satellites over Central America and the Atlantic are vulnerable to destruction and in any case, cannot provide enough data to enable ground-based systems to pinpoint SLBM targets.

The Reagan budget includes funds for:

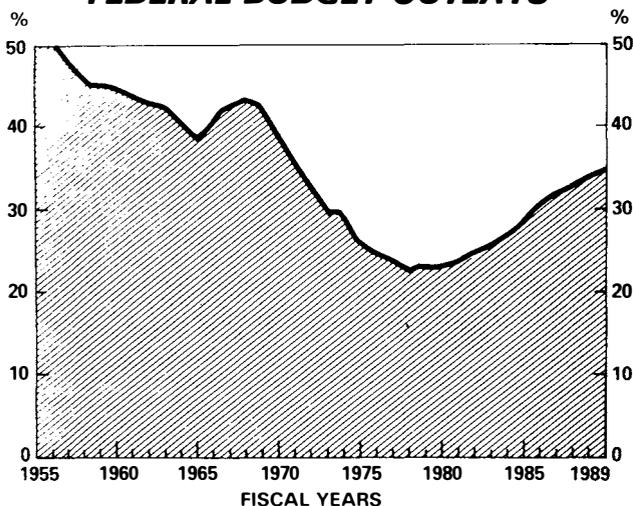
- deployment of new early-warning satellites;
- construction and activation of two additional PAVE PAWS phased-array radars in Texas and Georgia to close gaps in radar detection of SLBMs;
- construction of new microwave radars and gap-filler radars to replace the antiquated Distant Early Warning radars; and
- construction of eight Over-the-Horizon Backscatter radars for warning of bomber attack on the United States from all altitudes.

This program will not close gaps in radar systems for warning of missile or bomber attack until 1988. Furthermore, the Soviet Union will deploy next year bomber-launched supersonic cruise missiles that can penetrate even most of this barrier. Clearly, the President's defense plan is "conservative." It calls for no serious surface-to-air missile defense of the United States and little improvement in interceptor squadrons.

3) Naval Warfare: In 1980, the Soviet Navy had 643 major surface combatants, almost twice the United States' 345. (Major surface combatants are aircraft carriers, cruisers, destroyers, frigates, and submarines.) The Soviets have a formidable anti-submarine warfare capability in waters close to the Soviet Union, while the U.S. capability is largely non-existent due to the lack of sufficient numbers of surface ships, submarines, and aircraft to cover Soviet submarine staging areas. The new budget makes steps to improve U.S. naval capabilities, but, again, nowhere near what is required for defense against Soviet ballistic missile submarines is proposed. It would authorize:

- The first three TAGOS anti-submarine warfare ships to tow long-range hydrophone arrays for detection of Soviet submarines—closing down existing "sanctuaries" for these submarines. However, the vessels will not be operational for years. Meanwhile, Soviet submarines can function in northern Canadian waters free from detection.
- Four new Los Angeles-class attack submarines for seeking out and destroying Soviet submarines in the event of war. These new subs are being modified to operate under the

DOD SHARE OF FEDERAL BUDGET OUTLAYS



ice against Soviet ballistic missile subs.

- Reactivation of a third Iowa-class battleship. Reactivation of the New Jersey occurred in 1983; reactivation of the Iowa will be complete by early in 1984.

Strategic defense initiatives program

The new budget will be the first for the new Strategic Defense Initiatives Program that President Reagan called for on March 23, 1983. The program brings together research and development for conventional anti-missile systems, directed energy, battle management, and early warning and assessment technologies required for interception of Russian missiles in their boost phase, or for launching U.S. missiles on warning of a Soviet attack.

In addition to the \$1.78 billion requested by the Defense Department for the SDI program, the Department of Energy—which funds Lawrence Livermore, Los Alamos, and Sandia national laboratories—is requesting \$210 million for the program for work at the labs. Sources in Washington report that wholly one-fifth of Lawrence Livermore's budget is devoted to directed energy weapons. This would be about \$150 million for the current fiscal year or 75% of the publicly known Energy Department SDI budget—indicating that additional classified funds are allocated.

The breakdown for the Defense Department's share for FY85 follows (figures given in millions of dollars):

Category	Amount
Surveillance, acquisition, tracking	\$721
Directed energy	489
Kinetic kill (conventional ABMs)	356
System concepts, Battle management	99
Support programs	112
Total Defense Department	1777

The reorganization of the directed-energy program corresponds to the state of the technology as reported in *EIR* (see *EIR*, July 19, 1983). This program has been divided into:

1) *Space-based lasers*. The Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency program to develop a space-based chemical laser—\$237 million.

2) *Ground-based lasers*. This new program brings together work on two excimer laser technologies emphasized by *EIR* and the Fusion Energy Foundation: the free electron laser and the krypton-fluoride laser—\$199 million.

3) *Space-based particle beams*. The U.S. Army program to develop a neutral particle beam for boost phase intercept of ballistic missiles in space—\$46 million.

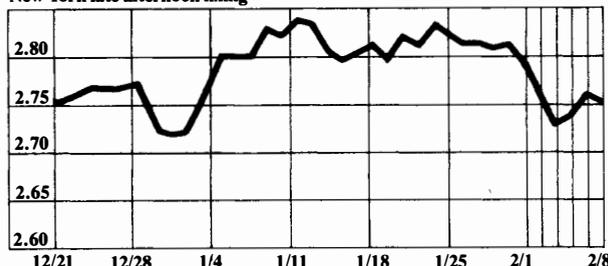
4) *Nuclear-pumped lasers*. In addition to Department of Energy funding—\$7 million.

In addition, because administration technicians believe that ABM applications of electron beams are far, far away, the Navy and DARPA still control this program at Lawrence Livermore (the Advanced Test Accelerator) and elsewhere.

Currency Rates

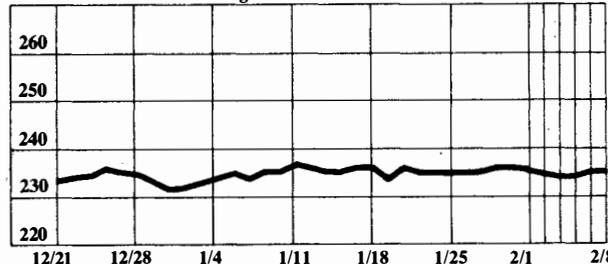
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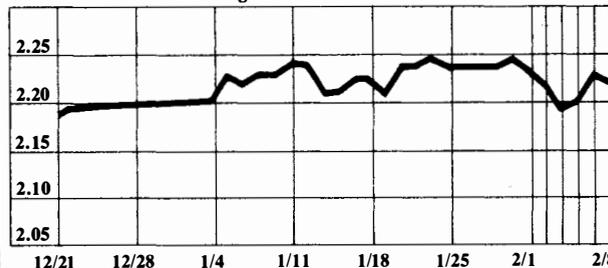
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New York late afternoon fixing



The dollar in Swiss francs

New York late afternoon fixing



The British pound in dollars

New York late afternoon fixing

