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## STRATEGIC DEFENSE AND AMERICA'S ALLIES

### INTRODUCTION

The NATO alliance has weathered many storms since its founding in April 1949. It now confronts another possible squall--this one over the Reagan Administration's Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI). As revealed most recently by British Foreign Secretary Sir Geoffrey Howe's skeptical remarks, a number of West European leaders appear to have reservations about SDI in general, its impact on the East-West balance, and most particularly, its effect on the U.S. ability to defend its NATO allies.<sup>1</sup> The Soviet Union, always alert for opportunities to split the Western Alliance, is already trying to use SDI as a wedge to push the allies away from Washington.

European concerns about SDI are understandable and legitimate. Any change in U.S. nuclear policy, or in the overall U.S.-Soviet strategic relationship, inevitably affects the allies since they rely mainly on the U.S. nuclear umbrella to deter a Soviet attack. The allies prefer the certainties of the status quo to the uncertainties of gradually shifting to a new security paradigm. To soothe allied apprehensions, the U.S. must be willing to enter into a lengthy dialogue with Western Europe to demonstrate how an

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<sup>1</sup> Sir Geoffrey Howe, "Defense and Security in the Nuclear Age," speech delivered to the Royal United Services Institute, London, March 15, 1985. Europeans have voiced many of the same arguments made by American critics of SDI. This paper addresses only those with the most direct impact on U.S.-European relations and the NATO alliance. For more background, see: "Strategic Defense: Implications for the Western Alliance," in W. Bruce Weinrod (ed.), Assessing Strategic Defense, Six Roundtable Discussions, Heritage Lecture 38 (Washington, D.C.: The Heritage Foundation, 1984), pp. 143-165.

effective strategic defense will enhance Western security. The Reagan Administration should seek to defuse exaggerated concerns and to correct apparently pervasive misconceptions about SDI;<sup>2</sup> it should also stress the high probability that technologies for an effective defense of the U.S. and Western Europe can be developed.

The U.S. should emphasize how the various defensive options can strengthen military stability, increase the likelihood of genuine arms reduction, and provide spin-off technologies of use to Western Europe's civilian economic sectors. Most important, the U.S. should stress that strategic defense, if managed judiciously at the political level, can improve alliance solidarity and make it more likely that the U.S. actually will respond to a Soviet attack on Western Europe in the manner prescribed by NATO's flexible response strategy.

## EUROPE AND STRATEGIC DEFENSE

European skepticism about strategic defense is nothing new; allied reaction to the U.S. anti-ballistic missile (ABM) effort of the late 1960s and early 1970s was generally unenthusiastic at best. Europeans uniformly expressed concerns that ABM system deployment would destabilize the East-West strategic environment. They feared that a Soviet ABM system could neutralize the independent British and French nuclear forces, and that a U.S. ABM deployment would lead to a return to "Fortress America" isolationism. Many Europeans then and now embrace the doctrine of mutual assured destruction (MAD) because it enshrines the principle of "shared risk," underscores allied solidarity, and conforms with their desire to let security abide in maximum deterrence and minimal defense.<sup>3</sup>

The détente era experience increased European reluctance to consider defensive systems. For Europe, détente had some perceived benefits, and any action that might create a different West European-Soviet relationship has since been viewed warily. Even today, despite Soviet violations, the 1972 ABM Treaty and the arms control "process" are viewed in Western Europe as sacrosanct and inviolable symbols of détente.

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<sup>2</sup> For a comprehensive review of these European concerns, see: David S. Yost, "European Anxieties about Ballistic Missile Defense," The Washington Quarterly, Fall 1984, pp. 112-129.

<sup>3</sup> Johan J. Holst, "Missile Defense: Implications for Europe," in Johan J. Holst and William J. Schneider, Jr., eds., Why ABM? Policy Issues in the Missile Defense Controversy (New York: Pergamon Press, 1969); Theodore Sorenson, "ABM and Western Europe," in Abram Chayes and Jerome Wiesner, eds., ABM: An Evaluation of the Decision to Deploy an Antiballistic Missile System (New York: Harper and Row, 1969), pp. 179-183.

## INITIAL EUROPEAN REACTION TO SDI

In his March 1983 speech introducing SDI, Ronald Reagan did not ignore Europe altogether, as was initially charged by allied critics. Rather, he asked: What if "free people" could live under defensive protection, could move away from the threat of massive instant retaliation as deterrent to attack, and had the capability to destroy incoming strategic missiles "before they reached U.S. soil or that of our allies?" Reagan also reassured them by stating that "their [U.S. allies] vital interests and ours are vitally linked. We must and shall continue to honor our commitments."

After an initial flurry of European complaints and disbelief, cautious interest in SDI began to develop. But skepticism remains rampant, particularly on the political left. The West German Social Democratic Party (SPD) immediately politicized SDI, calling it an obstacle to arms control and evidence of U.S. intentions to regain strategic superiority. Other opposition parties, such as the British Labor Party, are also hostile to SDI.<sup>4</sup> Among the European governments, however, only France has expressed serious reservations and has not backed NATO's March 1985 endorsement of SDI research.

## PROTECTING EUROPE

One of the fundamental issues raised is whether strategic defense can defend Western Europe.<sup>5</sup> Former West German Chancellor Helmut Schmidt raised this issue by asking: "Who protects us Europeans from the [Soviet] SS-20...?" From a European perspective, the principal value of SDI depends on whether it can "work" in the European context by affording: a) protection of relevant military sites such as airfields, ports, missile sites, and communications; and/or b) significant population defenses.

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<sup>4</sup> The German Social Democrats remain fiercely opposed to SDI and have called for a moratorium on the "militarization of space," effectively underwriting the Soviet Position. Foreign Broadcast Information Service (FBIS), March 13, 1985, J5: "SPD Reiterates Demand for Space Moratorium." According to Horst Ehmke, the deputy chairman of the SPD parliamentary group, "Europe must pay attention to the stability of its alliance and not let itself be downgraded to a zone of lesser security." FBIS, March 8, 1985. Neil Kinnock, the leader of the Labor Party is extremely hostile to the idea of research because "there was no way of knowing when research turned into production and production into deployment." Ian Murray, "'Star Wars' Condemned by Kinnock at NATO," The Times, March 7, 1985.

<sup>5</sup> There are a number of possible scenarios for the deployment of strategic defense depending upon whether it is the U.S., the allies, the Soviets, or some combination thereof, which possesses defenses. A full analysis must consider all these possibilities and, in addition, the degree of protection afforded by the system must be taken into account.

Military site protection and substantial population defense are already feasible using current SDI technology. Advances in data processing, miniaturization of components, and precision guidance systems make a European strategic defense more feasible than a decade ago. It is uncertain exactly how soon strategic defense can be deployed and what its overall effectiveness will be, but a European anti-tactical ballistic missile (ATM) system, as Fred S. Hoffman, the Director of the Future Security Strategy Study, noted "might be available relatively early."<sup>6</sup> In many respects, defending Europe is easier than defending the U.S. and even a modest point defense could provide a considerable degree of protection to the civilian population, given the small area to be defended and density of population. Strategic defense potentially can be effective against a variety of Soviet ballistic missile threats to Europe:

Long-Range Missiles. Soviet long-range land-based (ICBM) and sea-launched (SLBM) missiles are generally trained on the U.S., but some of them probably have been designated as a strategic reserve for an attack on Western Europe.<sup>7</sup> Their trajectory and longer range renders them vulnerable to the same generic systems currently under consideration for a U.S. anti-ICBM strategic system. Some space-based weapons would be effective against these missiles as well, which means that strategic defense protecting the continental U.S. could cover Europe against long-range Soviet missiles. Sea-launched missiles flying on a suppressed trajectory could be intercepted by ground-based defenses in Europe.

The Soviet SS-20 travels on a lofted trajectory carrying it high into space before its three warheads reenter the earth's atmosphere at much slower speed than ICBM warheads. Despite its short flight time, the combination of lesser speed and flight path through space may render SS-20 warheads even more vulnerable than ICBM warheads to intercepts by a broad range of space-based systems. Given adequate reaction time, the surviving attacking warheads could be destroyed by ground-based point defenses.

Short-range missiles (SS-21, 22, and 23) are even more vulnerable to defenses, although quick reaction time is very important. Missiles fired at Western Europe are visible to fairly simple missile tracking radars throughout most of their flight because they travel much slower than ICBMs or SS-20s and can be tracked and targeted more easily. Furthermore, without the benefits of flying through the weightlessness of space, it is

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<sup>6</sup> Fred S. Hoffman, Ballistic Missile Defense and U.S. National Security, Summary Report, prepared for the Future Security Study, October 1983, p. 2.

<sup>7</sup> Knowledgeable observers estimate that Moscow has targeted about 120 SS-11s and some SS-19s on Western Europe. This would be consistent with Soviet penchant for redundancy and overinsurance. Lawrence Freedman, "The Dilemma of Theatre Nuclear Arms Control," Survival, January-February 1981, p. 5.

much more difficult for Moscow to add so-called "penetration-aids" to confuse NATO radars. A defensive system consisting of airborne infrared detectors (perhaps on AWACS planes), computer-assisted ground-based radars, and batteries of non-nuclear air defense missiles is being investigated by the Pentagon. According to one estimate, such a system built around 50 to 75 improved Patriot missiles could cost about \$30 billion. Defense against this nuclear threat thus could rest on advanced terminal/site defenses consisting of modified surface-to-air (SAM) missiles such as an upgraded Patriot anti-tactical missile, Improved Hawk, or new ground-based low-altitude defense systems (LOADs) currently in development.<sup>8</sup>

Defenses against Soviet cruise missiles could employ (1) air-to-air missiles launched from interceptor aircraft with look-down/shoot down radar; (2) surface-to-air missiles (SAMs) comparable to the Soviet SA-12; (3) electronic countermeasures and other techniques to confuse cruise missile flight computers; (4) laser weapons such as the NKC-135 Airborne Laser Laboratory; (5) "Swarm-jet," a high velocity radar-controlled energy gun; and 6) space sensor directed defenses.

Admittedly, there is no total protection against every means of nuclear delivery, such as a "suitcase bomb," a miniature bomb carried as luggage. Yet SDI could deal with the most serious threats: (1) Bombers can be intercepted with anti-aircraft systems; (2) Multiple warheads (MiRV) can be destroyed by space-based systems during the boost phase before they disperse their warheads, in mid-course and during reentry into the atmosphere, by advanced ground-based interceptors; (3) Submarine-launched ballistic missiles, which travel slower than land-based missiles, can be intercepted at various points on their flight path. Flying on a suppressed trajectory, SBLMs are more difficult to engage, but their slower speed during reentry can render them vulnerable to various localized defense systems; (4) Nuclear capable artillery are mostly vulnerable to enemy fire since range limitations force their deployment at the forward edge of the battle area; and, in any event, their own range and damage capabilities are limited.

#### DETERRENCE, STABILITY, AND FLEXIBLE RESPONSE

The full implications of strategic defense for strategic stability will depend to a large extent upon the type of systems deployed, their lethality, the scope of Soviet defenses, and the

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<sup>8</sup> "A Patriot for Europe?" The Economist, January 12, 1985, pp. 39-40. According to recent reports, research on near-term technologies is progressing rapidly and there is considerable interest in exploiting advances, especially in the area of ground-based defenses. Michael Getler, "Pressure Growth for Early Use of 'Star Wars' Technology," The Washington Post, February 14, 1985; the SS-21 is more difficult to intercept than the others.

overall strategic environment and force balance existing at the time NATO strategic defenses become operational. Despite these uncertainties, there are solid and persuasive reasons why SDI will bolster NATO's deterrent and defense position.

Any analysis must start with the recognition that strategic stability is already eroding. If present trends continue, it will be precariously brittle by the early 1990s, just when SDI deployment could begin.

Strategic defense of the U.S. could enhance stability of NATO's deterrent in a number of ways:<sup>9</sup> (1) Even a limited point defense of hardened missile silos and command, control, communications, and intelligence (C<sup>3</sup>I) installations increases their chances of surviving a Soviet attack and thus strengthens the credibility of extended deterrence.

2) Defenses will multiply the uncertainties Moscow would face in planning and executing a disarming first strike against the U.S. This will deter Moscow from launching a preemptive first strike against the U.S. land-based deterrent, enhance crisis stability, and instill confidence in the availability of the U.S. nuclear deterrent.

3) An area defense protecting the U.S. civilian population not only would increase the likelihood that the U.S. would risk a retaliatory strike but also would allay doubts about the American nuclear commitment to Western European security. Said one NATO Defense Minister to his colleagues last year: "For years, I have been listening to you fellows raise questions about the credibility of American commitment. Now obviously, if the Americans had a strategic defense, that would greatly increase the likelihood that they would be prepared to use nuclear weapons to defend us, because they would not be putting themselves at risk. I would like to see the United States with a strategic defense even if it could not protect Europe, because in the fundamental sense it would assure the credibility of the American strategic deterrence."<sup>10</sup> If European reluctance to close ranks with the U.S. in confronting Moscow can be attributed at least in part to misgivings about U.S. politico-military reliability, then strategic defense should give the allies renewed faith in U.S. readiness to come to their defense. This should boost political cohesion and a sense of common purpose in the Alliance. As Norwegian defense analyst Johan J. Holst observed, a U.S. population defense "may make it less likely that the U.S. would be blackmailed by the threats or

<sup>9</sup> See commentary by Manfred R. Hamm in Weinrod, *op. cit.*, pp. 153-158.

<sup>10</sup> Quoted by Richard N. Perle in Political and Military Issues in the Atlantic Alliance Hearings, Subcommittee on Europe and the Middle East, Committee on Foreign Affairs, House of Representatives, 98th Congress, 2nd Session, August 1, October 1, 1984, p. 108.

execution of exemplary attacks into backing down in a crisis over Europe."<sup>11</sup>

4) A European strategic defense system, perhaps combined with such passive defenses as hardening of key military installations and civil defense, would increase the credibility of the West's deterrent forces. The Soviets would be less tempted to launch a nuclear or conventional attack on Western Europe if crucial NATO military sites, such as airfields, supply points, nuclear weapons storage sites, port facilities for U.S. and U.K. reinforcements and command facilities were shielded against a Soviet preemptive strike. Strategic defense thus could make NATO's flexible response more likely and more feasible.

5) The extended area coverage of limited point defenses could protect civilian populations considerably.

6) Strategic defense could raise the nuclear threshold. A European based strategic defense that protected NATO nuclear and conventional military facilities, particularly those central to NATO reinforcement from the U.S., would actually strengthen NATO's conventional staying power, and thus delay and perhaps avoid the necessity for a nuclear response.

7) If both the Soviets and the West were to deploy strategic defense systems, strategic stability would be increased. Both superpowers would have their retaliatory forces protected, as well as their command, control, communication and intelligence centers and perhaps much of their civilian populations as well. Strategic defense of Europe would reinforce this stability, by lessening the vulnerability of NATO's nuclear systems and diminishing their role in NATO deterrence strategy.

#### STRATEGIC DEFENSE AND ARMS CONTROL

Most Europeans share concerns expressed by its American critics that it may lead to the demise of the 1972 ABM Pact--détente's sole remaining strategic weapons agreement. Europeans also worry that SDI will trigger another "round" in the arms race.

#### Strategic Defense and the ABM Treaty

At the heart of the dispute in question is whether the preservation of the ABM Treaty justifies forfeiting the potential benefits of strategic defense.<sup>12</sup> It seems, however, that there is not much left of the ABM Treaty to preserve.

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<sup>11</sup> Johan J. Holst, op. cit.; Holst has been somewhat critical of SDI.

<sup>12</sup> Some strategic defense deployments which could protect Europe are not restricted by the ABM Treaty. For the legal aspects of the Treaty, see Heritage Foundation Background No. 421, "U.S.-Soviet Arms Accords Are No Bar to Reagan's Strategic Defense Initiative," April 4, 1985.

1) The ABM Treaty has not halted or reversed the strategic nuclear buildup as supporters a decade ago stated it would.<sup>13</sup> To the contrary, Moscow has fielded two new generation nuclear missiles, quadrupled its warheads, and acquired a first-strike force that undermines strategic stability.

2) Moscow seems to be ignoring the Treaty's restrictions. The Soviets, for example, in violation of the Treaty, are building dual capable surface-to-air interceptor missiles, acquiring reloads for ABM interceptors, constructing the Krasnoyarsk ABM battle management radar. They appear to be setting the stage for a "breakout" from the Treaty.<sup>14</sup>

3) Technologies that can be applied to ballistic missile defense are no longer just those clearly restricted by the Treaty. Even if it were desirable to maintain the ABM, to serve its purposes it would have to be amended extensively.

Strategic Defense and the "Arms Race." Concerns about a possible "arms race in space," must be considered in the context of past and current Soviet military space efforts,<sup>15</sup> Soviet possession of the only operational ABM system and fully tested anti-satellite weapon, the difficulties in verifying an anti-satellite (ASAT) pact, and the positive impact of strategic defense on the arms control process.

Soviet and Western deployment of equivalent defensive systems could make offensive arms reductions more likely.<sup>16</sup> By rendering much less useful those weapons capable of launching a disarming surprise attack, defenses could help produce an agreement on meaningful reductions not only of ICBMs but also, if Europe were

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<sup>13</sup> The link between the ABM Treaty and limitations on offensive nuclear systems was spelled out by Ambassador Gerard Smith in his unilateral statement of May 9, 1972, "The U.S. Delegation believes that an objective of the follow-on negotiations should be to constrain and reduce on a long-term basis threats to the survivability of our respective retaliatory forces...If an agreement providing for more complete strategic offensive arms limitations were not achieved within five years...it would constitute a basis for withdrawal from the ABM Treaty." U.S. Department of State, TIAS 7503.

<sup>14</sup> For one of the first accounts on the Krasnoyarsk (Abalakova) radar, see: Manfred R. Hamm, "Soviet SALT Cheating: The New Evidence" Heritage Foundation Executive Memo No. 31, August 8, 1983.

<sup>15</sup> David B. Rivkin, Jr. and Manfred R. Hamm, "In Strategic Defense, Moscow is Far Ahead," Heritage Backgrounder No. 409, February 21, 1985; Sayre Stevens, "The Soviet BMD Program," in Ashton B. Carter and David N. Schwarz, eds., Ballistic Missile Defense (Washington, D.C.: The Brookings Institution, 1984), pp. 182-220.

<sup>16</sup> Zbigniew Brzezinski, Robert Jastrow, Max M. Kampelman, "'Defense in Space is Not 'Star Wars'," New York Times Magazine, January 27, 1985; Carolyn Meinel, "Fighting MAD," Technology Review, April 1984, pp. 32-51.



protected, of intermediate-range weapons (INF). Negotiating such reductions would be helped greatly by the confidence building effect of defenses as a hedge against Treaty violations.

#### THE INDEPENDENT NUCLEAR DETERRENTS

England and France plan to increase more than sixfold the warheads in their small national nuclear arsenals by the end of the decade.<sup>17</sup> These forces are designed to deter direct Soviet attacks on both countries by threatening devastating retaliation against Soviet urban and industrial areas. Paris and London are worried that Moscow would respond to a Western strategic defense system by accelerating and expanding Soviet defenses. This would diminish the potential threat to the USSR from the British and French nuclear forces and thus weaken deterrence.

British and French concerns about this, however, are exaggerated and premature. The Soviets would need a near-perfect, extremely effective defensive shield to prevent British or French missiles from striking some Soviet cities. Moscow will not achieve this for quite some time, if ever. Until then, the British and French nuclear forces will continue to force the Soviets to reckon with devastating retaliation since Paris and London aim their missiles at Soviet urban and industrial areas rather than hardened military sites.

Even if Moscow develops an advanced defensive system, the existence of some European nuclear forces would make the Kremlin more cautious than it otherwise would be because it could never be certain that its defenses could destroy all the attacking British and French warheads. European independent forces, meanwhile, would continue serving as symbols of national power, prestige and influence in international politics. This prestige, in fact, would be enhanced by Europe's deployment of strategic defenses. Without a European strategic defense system, the French and British nuclear forces will be degraded even more by Moscow's defense efforts, including civil defense. A European defense would help counter these Soviet attempts to confound the anti-city mission of European nuclear forces.

Finally, the impact of a Soviet strategic defense on the independent nuclear forces should be weighed against the overall gains for deterrence, the credibility of the U.S. commitment to defend Europe, the raising of the nuclear threshold, and the benefits of protecting U.S. and European civilian populations with a combined U.S.-European strategic defense capability.

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<sup>17</sup> For a discussion of the French and British nuclear force modernization programs and the impact of SDI, see Lawrence Freedman, "The Small Nuclear Powers," in Carter and Schwarz, *op. cit.*, pp. 251-274.

## IMPLICATIONS FOR CONVENTIONAL CONFLICT

Conventional conflict is equally as unacceptable to West Europeans as nuclear war. They fear, therefore, that a strategic defense deployment, by limiting or negating the Soviet nuclear option, diminishing NATO's nuclear options against Moscow and creating what would amount to superpower nuclear sanctuaries, would result in a greater likelihood of conventional conflict.

Strategic defense indeed may increase demands on conventional defenses. Yet other policies supported by the West Europeans, such as nuclear arms agreements, also would enhance the role of conventional arms. Further, as Henry Kissinger has observed, "even if successful, reductions will finally return us to our starting point...the problems of regional defense will reemerge in a more acute form." These other policies, moreover, do not, as SDI would, strengthen NATO's conventional deterrence and warfighting posture. Current NATO warfighting doctrine already contemplates an intense conventional phase. In recent years, in fact, NATO military commanders have been emphasizing strengthening conventional capabilities.

A synergistic effect of strategic defense and conventional force improvements could enable the Alliance to fight and win a defensive conventional engagement. This will require, of course, greater West European budget outlays on conventional arms. If an attack occurs, strategic defenses could protect crucial assets in the European infrastructure, as well as the U.S. mobilization base.

## THE CHANCES OF NUCLEAR CONFLICT

Critics contend that strategic defense could make limited nuclear war more attractive because casualties and damage would be much less than at present and the risk of uncontrollable escalation may be reduced. But NATO hardly would be more likely to use nuclear weapons. NATO's flexible response doctrine, in fact, calls for the use of nuclear weapons only if a Soviet attack cannot be otherwise halted. Today's NATO conventional force shortcomings make resort to nuclear weapons almost mandatory very early in a conflict. Strategic defense, by strengthening conventional defense, will reduce the need and likelihood of nuclear use and raise the nuclear threshold. It will thus support NATO's no-early nuclear use doctrine which, in the past, was in constant tension with NATO's de facto reliance on the nuclear tripwire.

## THE SPECTER OF "FORTRESS AMERICA"

West Europeans are very sensitive to signs that the U.S. may be retrenching from its longstanding commitment to the defense of their countries. Detractors suggest that a strategic defense system indicates a U.S. retreat and is a mechanism for the U.S. to insulate itself from European-Soviet conflict. French Foreign

Minister Claude Cheysson suggested recently in an interview with the Catholic newspaper La Croix: "Imagine a situation in which the U.S. thought itself protected by a Maginot Line in space while its allies were threatened by shorter range missiles. Could these countries...still believe in American protection?"<sup>18</sup> The French, of course, have been questioning consistently U.S. commitment to defend Europe since Charles de Gaulle's return to power a quarter century ago. In this time, U.S. commitment has never wavered.

Strategic defense does not inherently require the U.S. to drop its European commitments. Quite the contrary. Ronald Reagan and other Administration officials even have invited the West Europeans to work with the U.S. in developing strategic defense.

West Europeans also are wary that full-scale U.S. development and deployment of SDI may divert resources from conventional weapons programs, thereby reducing the U.S. contribution to West European defense. To be sure, some of the SDI procurement money will come from planned defense allocations. Yet there also will be savings if the U.S. offensive force modernization program can be slowed because SDI leads to arms agreements that reduce the size of nuclear arsenals.

For the West Europeans, the best insurance against funding reductions will be to share with the U.S. some of the financial burdens involved in fielding SDI. Such European contributions could also have a positive impact on congressional attitudes that they are not paying their fair share for the common defense.

It is difficult to imagine that strategic defense could create political problems worse than those plaguing the alliance in the past. Current U.S. efforts to improve NATO's conventional capabilities, for instance, already prompt West European complaints about nuclear "decoupling"--that the U.S. may renege on its nuclear commitment and watch Europe fight it out with the Soviets with conventional weapons. Some critics of the Pershing II and ground-launched cruise missile (GLCM) deployment argued that it would result in a U.S. retreat from the defense of Europe.

It is not SDI but other developments in the U.S. that could produce a "Fortress America" foreign policy. As the U.S. defense budget growth is slowed dramatically, Americans may start asking if scarce defense dollars should be spent to defend Western Europe. West Europeans should be concerned about growing American public resistance to higher defense budgets, the neo-isolationism on the U.S. political left, demands for more unilateralism by Americans disgruntled about what they see as a lack of West

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<sup>18</sup> Quoted in "Europeans to Press for Space Talks," The Washington Post, August 5, 1984, pp. A19-20. The Maginot Line was a barrier defense against German attack which instilled a false sense of security in France but collapsed rapidly when German forces invaded the country in 1940.

European willingness to defend themselves, pressures for some U.S. troop withdrawals from Europe, and the possibility that security concerns regarding Latin America could require the U.S. to reduce its peacetime troop commitment to Europe.

#### EQUAL VULNERABILITY

Europeans often contend that strategic defense might violate the principle of shared vulnerability to Soviet attack. Observes the President of West Germany's Bundestag, Phillip Jenninger: "The concern is...that there might be two types of security, one for the U.S., and another type for Europe." However, if a European anti-tactical missile (ATM)-type strategic defense is technically possible and West European governments opt not to deploy it, they and not Washington would be responsible for a widening vulnerability differential between Europe and the U.S. Adds David S. Yost of the Navy Postgraduate School at Monterey, California, "Western Europe is already much more vulnerable than the U.S., owing to threat of land invasion and less warning time regarding air and missile attack...."<sup>19</sup>

Even if SDI deployment protects the U.S. alone, it merely would restore the situation of the 1950s and early 1960s when the U.S. was almost completely invulnerable while Europe was not. Despite unequal vulnerability, U.S. credibility and alliance solidarity were unquestionably firm, perhaps more so than today.

#### IMPLICATIONS FOR U.S.-EUROPEAN TECHNOLOGY BALANCE

West Europeans worry that SDI will widen the already broad technological gap between the U.S. and Europe. To allay these concerns, Defense Secretary Caspar Weinberger has invited West Europeans to work with the U.S. on SDI. Europe could share R&D and subsequent system procurement contracts and take advantage of the civilian technological spinoffs likely to result. West European firms already are engaged in research related to SDI. West German Chancellor Helmut Kohl responded to Weinberger's offer by urging West European involvement in SDI research. But he insisted that the U.S. must give the Europeans full access to know-how and technology.

#### EUROPE AND SDI: A BLUEPRINT FOR U.S. POLICY

U.S. policy should encourage full and open discussion of strategic defense and Western Europe. In addition, the U.S. should:

A) Increase resources for research and development on non-nuclear strategic defense systems and technologies such as an

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<sup>19</sup> Yost, op. cit., p. 122.

Improved Patriot system. These are technically feasible in the short run and could begin providing some protection to European defense sites. Such R&D has a triple payoff of protecting Europe, protecting U.S. defense sites, and serving as the initial stage in deploying a full strategic defense system.

B) Work with NATO allies to 1) coordinate strategic defense efforts, sharing the financial and research requirements (the so-called "two-way street"), and the spin-off technological benefits; 2) review if and how the current NATO flexible response doctrine and force posture will be affected by the deployment of a U.S. and/or U.S.-European strategic defense; 3) examine the Western negotiating positions at the Vienna Mutual Balanced Force (MBFR) and the Stockholm Confidence and Security Building Measures and Disarmament in Europe (CDE) conferences in the light of SDI deployment in Europe; 4) analyze how the non-ballistic missile nuclear threat to Europe (such as bomber and cruise missile threat) can be diminished in a strategic defense environment and how civil defense may be useful as part of a European strategic defense deployment; 5) review how U.S. concerns about the Western strategic technology flow to the Soviet bloc through Western Europe can be reconciled with a strong European role in the development of strategic defense.

C) Foster an allied consensus on: 1) the legal permissibility under the ABM Treaty of deploying a European strategic or anti-tactical missile defense. Alternatively, options should be developed for ABM Treaty revisions to accommodate such a deployment; 2) the possible U.S. and NATO arms control bargaining response should the Kremlin offer significant reductions in its intermediate SS-20 range missile force in return for a halt to SDI. If it is made clear in advance that such offer is unacceptable to the West, subsequent major controversy within NATO may be avoided; 3) an arms reduction proposal that would integrate deployment of defense systems with the gradual reduction of offensive nuclear systems in Europe.

D) In presenting SDI to Europe, the U.S. should emphasize that: 1) the credibility of the U.S. deterrent against a Soviet attack could increase once the U.S. was protected against nuclear attack; 2) there have been significant improvements in strategic defense technology since the 1960s ABM debate; 3) strategic defense may be a way over the long term to reduce the role of nuclear offensive weapons; 4) SDI technologies generally do not involve nuclear explosives, rendering even anti-tactical missile intercepts in the lower atmosphere feasible without collateral destruction below; 5) Soviet strategic defense efforts are far ahead of the U.S. and have been violating the ABM Treaty; 6) potential spinoff technologies may prove economically beneficial to Western Europe; 7) there is a potentially positive relationship between strategic defense and arms control; and 8) SDI is consistent with, and reinforces, NATO's purely defensive character.

E) Stress the moral dimension of strategic defense without eroding the case for continued modernization of offensive nuclear systems. It should be emphasized that defensive deployments in Europe will not occur in the short-run.

F) Address such important questions concerning Western Europe and strategic defense as: 1) how can political divisiveness within NATO such as occurred during intermediate-range nuclear force (INF) deployment be minimized for SDI; 2) who would control the decision to use the strategic defense system; 3) how would decisions be made concerning where to locate strategic defense systems in Europe.

## CONCLUSION

The review of military strategy that has begun in Western Europe is of historic importance. Ultimately, technology will determine the possibilities for strategic defense, but it is European perceptions of the balance of opportunities and risks that will shape the political fate of SDI in Europe. Until more complete answers concerning defensive system effectiveness are available, the Reagan Administration should continue its consultation, dialogue, and public diplomacy over unresolved issues surrounding SDI. The non-nuclear and defensive aspects of SDI should appeal to many Europeans. Most important, the U.S. should anticipate and deal effectively with Soviet attempts to use SDI to divide the allies.

Two requirements are essential if NATO unity is to be preserved as defensive systems are explored: 1) the U.S. must acknowledge the legitimacy of West European concerns, and 2) the Europeans must remain open to the possibility of defensive deployments in the U.S. and in Europe. To be sure, questions remain about the effectiveness of a European strategic defense system. But even an imperfect theater nuclear defense would improve the current, unsatisfactory situation where no defense exists against either Soviet ICBMs and SLBMs or intermediate-range missiles. Further, the possible benefits and problems of SDI should be weighed not against an ideal world but against the current NATO realities and against the impact on NATO if Moscow possessed a strategic defense but NATO did not.

The U.S. is now committed to exploring strategic defense fully. With West European cooperation, the basis of Western deterrence could be shifted from the threat of nuclear annihilation to the denial of Soviet hopes of victory.

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