

President reagan's strategic defense initiative: i



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n Relation With the SovietUnion

“ For the first time humankind has the power to destroy itself.” 1 The

nuclear age has changed the world, for the good and the bad. Though the bad, is

far greater than the good. We sometimes ponder to our selves, “ what would happen

if we were forced in to a nuclear war ware their are now winners.” The way life

would be after such an incident would change life as we know it drastically.

In

the event of a nuclear war with the Soviets we would have lost

approximately one

hundred and fifty million American lives. 2 The planet would be destroyed to

the extent that even thoughts who survived would have no place to live. No

Government, or persons, can win a nuclear war and as long as their are nuclear

missiles of mass destruction there will always be the risk of someone using them.

Once the first missile is unleashed their is no telling were it would stop.

Our dealings with the former Soviet Union was based on the French word,

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detente, that the Russians had defined as a freedom to purchase subversion, aggression and expansionism any were in the world. 3 The soviets have been, up until 1990, the U. S's defacto enemies. There goal was too destroy democracy and imposing communism. 4 This is way it was though to be inevitable for a nuclear war with the soviets. " The dream of a non nuclear world is a great and notable one, how ever for the foreseeable future it is unattainable in actuality and unwise in theory." 5 Because of this harsh the United States is left with a problem; How can we beet this so called inevitability? The answer is: space based defense weapons. The program, brought forth by the Reagan administration, was called the strategic defense Initiative, and some called " Star Wars." 6 Reagan's strategic defense initiative, created in the 80's, was an acceptable for the U. S; it worked to convince the Soviets not only to reduce there nuclear arsenal but to halt any chance for a nuclear attack by the Soviets.

" What is the worth of our society as we know it? Right now we hold an entire population hostage." 7 Ever since the 1960's our main defense against the soviets has been the MAD policy, Mutual Assured Destruction. Both the United States and the Soviet Union had enough nuclear weapons at their disposal so that if one fired at the other the one that was being fired at would fire it's missiles at the other too. In other words, they would share the same fate. 8 Wherever the President goes he carries a small plastic- coated card, and a military aid is always present. This aid carries a small bag called " the football," it contains directions for the launching of all our nuclear weapons. The card carried by the President listed codes confirming that it was indeed him, the choice to launch was entirely his. 9 This should not even be necessary. " Underneath it all, people don't think there is any hope to avoid a nuclear war, it has taken away peoples hope." 10 That hope was restored in 1983 when President

Reagan announced his commitment to the American people to do what ever it took

to make the SDI fly. For a lot of Americans his commitment to this program was

an alternative to a nuclear holocaust. 11 The SDI is a sidelight system that was

to be put in space with large lazier guns attached to it. These lazier would intercept and destroy nuclear missiles when they emerged from their silos.

Reagan was willing to share this technology with others willing to reduce their

nuclear arsenals. " One day a madman could come along and make the missiles and

black mail all the world. but not if we have a defense a against them." 12 " We

all got together in 1925 and banned the use of poisons gas. But we all kept our

gas masks." 13 Reagan was instrumentally right with this statement. The SDI gave

the United States an opportunity to almost force the world to pay close attention. If the entire world had the SDI it would make nuclear weapons

obsolete. So what was once "unattainable" yesterday might be, in time to come,

very attainable.

The SDI would end The arms race. Gorbachev "had to know that Americans military technology was overwhelmingly superior to his." 14 "He also had to Know

that we'(the U. S) could outspend the Soviets on weapons." 15 In 1983 the U. S

spent 34 thousand million on defense technology alone. 16 We spent 24 billion

dollars, over a seven year period, on the SDI. 17 We have 165 U. S satellites in

orbit right now, each one coasting in excess of one billion each. 18

Our economic system, capitalism, is far more superior to the Soviets system, communism. The proof is that our system our countries system is going

strong, theirs collapsed in 1989 with the fall of communism in eastern Europe.

This is also prop that we did out spend them.

With the deployment of the SDI the Soviets weapons would be no longer a
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thereat to the U. S. What leverage they had in the past would die with the SDI.

Their only hope to keep some of the power they had would be to agree to massive

arms reduction, on both sides. Above all it would bring a lasting peace between

our two nations.

The Soviets at first thought our research on the SDI was as an offensive, first strike capability. This was not the case at all. It was a defense weapon only. The SDI was not a bargaining chip, opposed to popular belief. Reagan wrote

in his diary in July of 1985, " Made a decision we would not trade away our program of research SDI for a promise of Soviet reduction in nuclear arms."

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While the Soviets were " whining" about the research we'd done on the SDI, they

had been conducting similar research for more than twenty years. 20

Gorbachev was

adamant that the U. S must cave in on the SDI. 21 Reagan stated that " this will

be a case of an irresistible force meeting an immovable object.” 22)

Gorbachev

was not willing to agree to any weapons reductions until we renounced “ the development, Testing and deployment of space-strike weapons,” a reference to

SDI. 23 Though in late 1988, the U. S and the Soviet Union agreed of a fifty percent reduction in both their arms, while keeping our research on the SDI.

Before Gorbachev, every Soviet leader had vowed to the pursuit of a

Marxist commitment and world ruled by the communist system; he was the first not

to push Soviet expansionism, the first to agree to destroy nuclear weapons, the

first to suggest a free market and to support open election and freedom of expression. 24

“ The two of us were in a unique situation. Here we were, I said, two men who had been born in obscure rural hamlets in our respective countries, each of

us poor and from humble beginnings. Now we were the leaders of our countries and

probably the only two men in the world who could bring about World War III.

At the same time, I said, we were possibly the only two men who might be able to bring peace to the world. I said I thought we owed it to the world to use the opportunity that had been presented us to work at building the kind of

human trust and confidence in each other that could lead to genuine peace.

Listening to the translation, Gorbachev seemed to nod in agreement." 25

Nuclear weapons serve no purpose in tomorrows world. Once nuclear weapons they power. Today we almost have the technology to destroy them if their

was an attempt to use them. Not only that but the world has come together and

reduced their nuclear capability's. We know that in nuclear war their are no winners just losers. Reagan's Strategic Defense Initiative, created in the 80's, was an acceptable risk for the U. S; it worked to convince the Soviets not only

to reduce their nuclear arsenal but to halt any chance for a nuclear attack.

Gorbachev wrote President Reagan in late 1988: " For the first time in

history, nuclear missiles have been destroyed. Nuclear disarmament is becoming

an established and routine practice.

“ In several regions of the world, a process of political settlement of conflicts and national reconciliation has got under way.

“ Our relationship is a dynamic stream, and you and I are working together to widen it. A stream cannot be slowed down; it can only be blocked or

diverted. But that would not be in our interests. Politics, of course, is the art of the possible. But it is only by working and maintaining a dynamic dialogue that we will put into effect what we have made possible, and will make

possible tomorrow what is yet impossible today.” 26

EndNotes

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