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CIA report says Soviet anti-missile shield possible

By Bill Gertz
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The Soviet Union's potential to rapidly deploy a nationwide missile defense, if carried out, could dwarf any Soviet arms control violations to date, according to an administration analyst.

The warning of the emerging Soviet capability to throw up a shield against offensive nuclear missiles was issued in a report prepared by two CIA officials for delivery today before a joint congressional panel.

"We are particularly concerned that the Soviets' continuing development efforts give them the potential for widespread ABM deployment," the report warns. "The Soviets have the major components for an ABM system that could be used for widespread ABM deployments well in excess of ABM treaty limits," it adds.

Scheduled to testify today were CIA Deputy Director for Intelligence Robert M. Gates and CIA National Intelligence Officer for Strategic Programs Lawrence K. Gershwin.

A copy of their remarks was obtained by The Washington Times from administration sources.

The 1972 Anti-Ballistic Missile treaty permits the United States and Soviet Union to deploy one ABM system in an interior location. By leaving the remainder of each country vulnerable to attack, the treaty seeks to reduce the risk that a nuclear exchange will occur.

Supporters of the ABM treaty are concerned about its future in light of U.S. and Soviet efforts to develop defenses in space against incoming ballistic missiles.

The Soviets set up the only existing ABM system in the late 1960s

with the "Galosh" system around Moscow. The United States never deployed its one permitted system.

But the United States has launched a research program to determine whether a defense against nuclear missile attack is possible. Such research is allowed under the ABM treaty.

The research program, called the Strategic Defense Initiative and popularly dubbed "star wars," has drawn fire from critics on grounds that, if the research proves strategic defense feasible, the defense would be employed in violation of the ABM treaty. The program involves a system of weapons capable of knocking out ballistic missiles in outer space.

The two CIA officials, in what is expected to be rare public testimony, contend that by the 1990s the Soviet Union will be able to enhance its existing ABM system around Moscow to shield key targets in the Western U.S.S.R. In addition, the CIA projects that Soviet ABM defenses will be capable of extending the reach of its ballistic missile defense to cover "key targets" east of the Ural Mountains where a major portion of Soviet strategic weapons bases are located.

The Soviets are modernizing the Moscow ABM system, ABM-1, with a program designated ABM-3. The system includes a mobile radar designated "flat twin," a stationary radar known as "pawn shop," and two fixed-based missile interceptors

designated SH-04 and SH-05 for high- and low-altitude defensive attacks.

U.S. intelligence expects the Soviets to deploy up to 3,000 mobile ABM interceptors by 1987, according to the administration analyst.

The report prepared for delivery to the Senate Armed Services Committee and Defense Appropriations Subcommittee is entitled, "Soviet Strategic Force Developments." It is based on the latest national intelligence estimate of Soviet power.

Mr. Gates and Mr. Gershwin are expected to testify about Soviet advances in the use of laser weapons against incoming missiles.

"We are concerned about a large Soviet program to develop ground-based laser weapons for terminal defense against re-entry vehicles," the testimony states. Re-entry vehi-

cles are separate nuclear warheads dispersed from ICBMs.

The CIA expects the Soviets to test the laser weapon "during the 1980s," but the agency does not expect deployment until after the year 2000.

The CIA foresees growth of between 5 percent and 7 percent each year for the next five years in Soviet spending on offensive and defensive weapons. If the Soviets proceed with widespread ABM deployments, weapons spending is expected to increase 7 percent to 10 percent for the same period, the report states.

Besides ABM components, the Soviets have made "major strides" in deploying mobile intercontinental ballistic missiles. An additional 700 mobile SS-24 and SS-25 ICBMs are expected to be activated by the end of the decade, an administration source said.