

CIA Curried Favor With Khomeini, Exiles

Sources Say Agency Gave Regime List of KGB Agents

By Bob Woodward
Washington Post Staff Writer

The Reagan administration's secret overtures and arms shipments to Iran are part of a seven-year-long pattern of covert Central Intelligence Agency operations—some dating back to the Carter administration—that were designed both to curry favor with the regime of Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini and support Iranian exiles who seek to overthrow it, according to informed sources.

In 1983, for example, the CIA participated in a secret operation to provide a list of Soviet KGB agents and collaborators operating in Iran to the Khomeini regime, which then executed up to 200 suspects and closed down the communist Tudeh party in Iran, actions that dealt a major blow to KGB operations and Soviet influence there, the sources said. Khomeini also expelled 18 Soviet diplomats, imprisoned the Tudeh party leaders and publicly thanked God for "the miracle" leading to the arrests of the "treasonous leaders."

At the same time, secret presidential intelligence orders, called "findings," authorized the CIA to support Iranian exiles opposed to the Khomeini regime, the sources said. These included providing nearly \$6 million to the main Iranian exile movement, financing an anti-Khomeini exile group radio station in Egypt and supplying a miniaturized television transmitter for an 11-minute clandestine broadcast to Iran two months ago by Reza Pahlavi, the son of the late Shah Mohammad Reza Pahlavi, who vowed, "I will return."

One well-placed intelligence source said that this support of the anti-Khomeini exile movement is "just one level above [intelligence] collection," and that the money involved was equivalent to the "walking-around money" frequently distributed in American political campaigns. Administration officials stressed that the CIA operations are not intended to bring about Khomeini's downfall but are aimed primarily at obtaining intelligence about his regime through the exile groups.

The White House and administration spokesmen declined to comment on these CIA operations. Vice Adm. John M. Poindexter, the president's national security affairs adviser, told a television interviewer Sunday that "I don't want to confirm or deny any other operations" and added that "we aren't seeking the overthrow of the Khomeini regime."

Press and broadcast reports from Iran have repeatedly accused the U.S. government of backing anti-Khomeini exile activities. Informed sources said that the Khomeini regime knows many of the details of the CIA operations because it has agents inside the Iranian exile groups.

Some of the Iranian exiles in Paris said it is well-known within their groups that they have received CIA money. Sources also said that some of the CIA money was used to speculate in currency markets in Switzerland.

Administration sources said that all CIA programs concerning Iran have been designed with several objectives: to build bridges to potential Iranian leaders, to use the exiles for information about what is happening in Iran, to develop independent intelligence sources, to win friends, to diminish Soviet influence and to keep pressure on the Khomeini regime by demonstrating that the exile and dissident opposition is active.

Iran is strategically vital because of its oil supplies, warm-water ports on the Persian Gulf and proximity to the Soviet Union. Iran's political turbulence and the possibility that one of the exile groups could some day assume power justifies a U.S. strategy that proceeds on several tracks, according to several administration officials, and that view is shared by some former U.S. intelligence officers.

"I have no knowledge that the Reagan administration is giving money to the Iranian exile groups, but I see no reason not to give them money and at the same time extend a hand to Khomeini," Stansfield Turner, CIA director in the Carter administration, said Monday. "Playing both sides of the fence is not unusual, as long as they did not fund any exile group to the extent that they would try to overthrow the [Khomeini] government. There is not a prayer that they could do that."

But one well-placed administration source said the CIA operations involving Iran were ad hoc and inconsistent, rather than being the result of a coherent U.S. strategy. "The U.S. does not have a policy but a series of actions," said the source, who described the administration as "groping in a maze" on the Iran issue.

Despite the CIA efforts to curry favor with the Khomeini regime, Iran continued to encourage violence against American interests, sources noted. For example, intelligence shows that Iran directly supported the October 1983 bombing of the Marine Corps barracks in Beirut in which 241 U.S. servicemen were killed. This was less than a year after the CIA received a list of KGB agents in Iran from a Soviet defector and gave the names to the Khomeini regime. Sources said that the British intelligence service also participated in the operation that revealed the Soviet agents in Iran.

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recent overtures made under President Reagan to "moderates" in Tehran have stopped Iranian government sponsorship of terrorist actions against Americans.

In January 1981, when Reagan took office and 52 Americans returned after 444 days' captivity in Tehran, the CIA had already begun under President Carter a number of anti-Khomeini operations. One was designed to gather intelligence about Iran and support Iranian exiles, sources said; another was a more ambitious plan that one senior source said was designed to inflict "punishment" on the Khomeini regime, which was holding the U.S. hostages.

Under Reagan and his CIA director, William J. Casey, the first major Iranian operation was intended to support an exile group headed by the shah's former naval commander-in-chief, Rear Adm. Ahmad Madani. The Madani group received several million dollars, but proved too independent by insisting on control of their own anti-Khomeini operations, and the CIA connections were soon dissolved.

In 1982, the CIA began supporting the main Iranian exile movement, the Paris-based Front for the Liberation of Iran (FLI). Headed by former prime minister Ali Amini, the FLI advocates Khomeini's ouster and since 1983 has called for restoration of the Iranian monarchy.

The CIA has given the FLI \$100,000 a month. But beginning about two years ago, two members of the National Security Council staff, Lt. Col. Oliver North Jr. and Vincent M. Canistraro, became involved in supervising the CIA operation after hearing allegations that the FLI was mismanaged and ineffective.

The allegations included charges that some FLI members were providing useless and questionable information to the CIA and that CIA funds were being used to speculate in currency markets in Switzerland. Consequently, the FLI member functioning as liaison with the CIA was ousted in 1985. His successor, however, was discovered to be a former communist who advocated hostage-taking and who was a suspected Khomeini informer, according to U.S. and Iranian sources.

That liaison was removed earlier this year, and the CIA appointed one of the shah's former cabinet officers as the new overseer of the FLI money, the sources said.

Neither the CIA nor the White House ever seriously believed that exile groups were strong enough to overthrow Khomeini, sources said, and none of the current operations includes paramilitary support.

As part of the FLI support, the CIA also provides equipment and \$20,000 to \$30,000 a month for the organization's Radio Nejat, or Radio Liberation, which broadcasts anti-Khomeini programs for four hours a day from Egypt to Iran, according to U.S. and Iranian sources.

As the links to the exile groups were being built, the CIA received an unexpected windfall of intelligence information in Iran through the defection of Vladimir Kuzichkin, a senior KGB officer in Tehran whose job it had been to maintain contacts with the Tudeh party. Kuzichkin defected to the British in late 1982 and was debriefed later by the CIA, giving the United States details of Soviet and Tudeh operations in Iran.

The CIA then provided Khomeini with lists and supporting details of at least 100 and perhaps as many as 200 Soviet agents in Iran, sources said. After arresting and executing most of the alleged agents, Khomeini outlawed the Tudeh party on May 4, 1983, and expelled the 18 Soviet diplomats believed to be involved in KGB operations. Many Tudeh members were arrested, including the party's secretary general and six central committee members, and they were forced to make televised confessions that they spied for Moscow.

One well-placed source said the CIA action was intended to cripple KGB operations in Iran while offering "a gesture of good will" to Khomeini.

There were reports at the time of an upheaval in the Tudeh party, but it was not known that the CIA had a role. The role of Kuzichkin also passed largely unnoticed except for a 1985 column by Jack Anderson and Dale Van Atta reporting that the defector had brought with him two trunks full of documents about the KGB and the Iranian communist party. The column reported that the British "secretly turned the information over to Khomeini."

A CIA memo of May 17, 1985, saying that the United States was lagging behind the Soviets in cultivating Iranian contacts for a post-Khomeini era, was apparently one of the first actions that led to Reagan's decision to begin secret overtures to the Iranians and eventually to ship them arms this year.

A recent CIA-supported operation was the sudden appearance on Iranian television two months ago of Reza Pahlavi, son of the late shah. That clandestine anti-Khomeini broadcast was made possible by the CIA, which provided technical assistance and a miniaturized suitcase transmitter, the sources said. The broadcast disrupted two channels of Iranian television for 11 minutes at 9 p.m. on Sept. 5. It is not known whether the shah's son knew that the CIA had provided support for the broadcast.

The Khomeini regime apparently was aware of or suspected a U.S. role in the clandestine appearance and responded with a radio broadcast of its own, declaring that "the terrorist government of Reagan . . . in a disgraceful manner was the vanguard of this puppet show."

Staff researchers Barbara Feinman and Ferman Patterson contributed to this report.

USA TODAY
17 November 1986

COVER STORY

President's men mobilize to save face

How the arms deal came about, timeline; Congress reacts, 4A

By Johanna Neuman
USA TODAY

Vice Admiral John M. Poindexter — point-man for a White House on the ropes in its effort to justify an arms-for-hostages deal with Iran — fingered his pipe Sunday and told Congress to back off.

"I will make arrangements to talk informally with them,"

said Poindexter, on the eve of this week's congressional hearings into the affair. But, he told NBC's *Meet the Press*, "I probably will not participate."

Poindexter finds his National Security Council at the eye of the hurricane. Once a paper-shuffling White House unit that gave Henry Kissinger cover for his secret missions to China, the NSC, critics charge, has become Reagan's "A-Team" — a cowboy venture into back-channel, soldier-of-fortune diplomacy, answerable to no congressional committee.

Comparisons to Watergate rumble. Critics rail against

foreign policy crafted by aides who talk of invoking executive privilege to avoid testifying before Congress and presidents who cite national security concerns to explain secrets.

President Reagan's response to the crisis, in a powerful speech last week, was to wrap the arms shipments in the banner of U.S. foreign policy, arguing that the short-term hope for release of hostages was the stepchild of a long-term need to improve relations with Iran.

But Congress is returning with a Democratic majority, setting the stage for a confrontation. Friday, the House Intelligence Committee begins hearings to explore the White House's credibility and legal posture.

Ever since news of the deal leaked two weeks ago, the White House has unleashed a massive damage control patrol, with top administration officials like Chief of Staff Donald Regan defending a president who put concern for the hostages above other considerations.

But Secretary of State George Shultz, whose primary concern is relations with allies and foes in other world capitals, has been putting distance between himself and the Iranian affair.

There is no need, he said on CBS's *Face the Nation*, "for further signals" of "good faith" in the form of arms to Iranian moderates. Asked whether he had "the authority to speak for the entire administration," Shultz replied, "No."

The secretary of state had taken a back seat to the NSC staffers hired and once directed by Robert McFarlane, who has since left government.

For 18 months, they opened diplomatic channels to Iran, sent defensive arms and Bibles as "signals of good faith." It was a secret held so tight that the Joint Chiefs of Staff were not even informed.

"It is an unconstitutional exercise of power," said Scott Armstrong, director of National Security Archive, a research group. "The last time we had such an extreme example of it was Watergate. People forget that the Constitution splits foreign policy power between the president and Congress."

The NSC's autonomy has made it a unique back door for presidents exercising foreign policy judgments that might be unpopular on Capitol Hill — or need the cloak of secrecy.

Created in 1947 to advise the president on risks to U.S. security, it is estimated to have a staff of 100 and an official budget of \$4 million.

Under President Reagan, it has gained a reputation for activism, counting among its successes the invasion of Grenada and the intercept of terrorists responsible for the Achille Lauro hijacking. NSC survived previous flare-ups over its interference in Nicaragua.

Former CIA Director Stansfield Turner thinks the NSC should be faulted

for performing ineptly.

"They appear to have acted with a lot of amateurishness and naivete in this case," he said. Opening sincere channels to Iran "may happen some day, but this, if anything, would have been a very, very small toe in the water, had it succeeded."

But an ABC poll taken after Reagan's Thursday plea "for your support," found 72 percent disapproved of arms transfers to Iran. Despite Reagan's claim that the transfers were not "ransom," 56 percent did not believe him.

House Democratic Leader Jim Wright, D-Texas, Sunday warned the White House not to claim the mantle of executive privilege to mask details.

Recalling "that very, very sad episode in American history surrounding Watergate," Wright urged the administration to cooperate.

Other critics, like Sen. Patrick Leahy, D-Vt., are in a position to make life uncomfortable for the White House.

The *Washington Post* reported Saturday Reagan ordered CIA Director William Casey's silence about the operation. Leahy — vice chairman of the Senate In-

telligence Committee — believes Casey broke the law by violating a 1984 pact to keep Congress informed.

"There is a provision in the law which allows the White House to delay reporting of a covert action provided it is reported in a timely fashion," said Leahy. "Many Republicans and Democrats question whether 11 months is timely."

The White House will argue what Reagan calls his "secret diplomatic initiative to Iran" was an act of humanitarianism.

But some will wonder if humanitarian concerns are the first priority of a nation's foreign policy.

"He has damaged credibility everywhere," said Sen. James Exon, D-Neb. "And if the American people buy this one, God help us."

The president's men will also point to a Hill that leaks, congressmen who cannot keep a secret, as reason enough for a private brand of diplomacy.

But observers questioned whether Reagan's "Teflon" has worn off. In a season of foreign policy bombshells:

First there were reports that the administration had lied about Libya, launching a deliberate "disinformation" campaign to discredit Colonel Moammar Gadhafi — and topple his regime.

Then there were denials that USA journalist Nicholas Daniloff had been freed from a Soviet prison as part of a swap for a spy held in New York.

Later, there were attempts to rewrite the history of the Iceland summit, where Reagan nearly signed an arms deal that British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher has since talked him out of.

And then there was Iran.

Contributing: Tony Mauro and Patrick O'Driscoll

16 November 1986

Arms for Hostages, 1980 Version

A Strange Tale of Iran, Arms Dealers and the John Anderson Campaign

By Alton Frye

THE DEAL WAS the same: arms to Iran for hostages. But the year was 1980, and the complications extended not only to Ronald Reagan and Jimmy Carter, but to the presidential candidacy of independent John B. Anderson.

Within weeks after war erupted between Iran and Iraq in September 1980, Tehran was growing desperate for military supplies. The shah's departure had thrown the Iranian military into disarray. Because of their previous close contact with the American military, officers were finding it difficult to overcome the suspicions of the ayatollahs and the revolutionary guards. Thus Iran's military capacities were in sharp decline. Now Iran's need for spare parts and other supplies intersected the protracted negotiations to free Americans then held hostage in Tehran.

Signals of a possible "arms-for-hostages" trade came from an Iranian who had served as an agent in earlier sales of F-14 aircraft to the shah's government. Apparently acting on behalf of Iranian President Bani-Sadr, the man sought unsuccessfully to make contact directly with senior officials of the Carter administration. A few days after the war began, he turned to an American attorney with whom he had dealt previously—Mitchell Rogovin. At that point the situation became a volatile mixture of international intrigue and domestic politics—for Rogovin was serving as general counsel in the presidential campaign of John Anderson.

Rogovin immediately came to me as Anderson's director of policy planning. The accident of Rogovin's prior acquaintance with the Iranian intermediary presented us with an extraordinary dilemma. To involve Anderson in negotiations regarding the hostages—directly or indirectly—was too dicey to contemplate. Yet, if the overture had any substance at all, it had to be brought to the president's attention. With Anderson's approval we met with Harold Saunders, the assistant secretary of state handling the hostage crisis.

Saunders heard us out and asked the right questions. How could we be sure the agent represented those for whom he claimed to speak? Previous maneuvers to release the hostages had collapsed when contacts in Iran proved incapable of carrying out their commitments. Did this man speak for authorities who could actually deliver the Americans to freedom? Rogovin and I took no position on the merits of the proposed exchange, but we undertook to determine if the approach was valid and reliable.

When we resumed discussions with the Iranian, we pressed for credible evidence that he was authorized to act and that those he represented were in a position to bargain. He resolved the first question conclusively by producing a lengthy computer print-out providing parts numbers and specifications in such detail that they could only have come from the Iranian air force. Most of the equipment was for F-4 and F-14 aircraft, the mainstays of the Iranian force. The Iranians also wanted Phoenix missiles, the most sophisticated weaponry for the F-14s.

We conveyed the parts list to Saunders for review within the government. On Oct. 5, CIA Director Stansfield Turner briefed Anderson on the war situation and indicated that it would be difficult for the United States to provide Iran anything so potent as the Phoenix missiles, but we inferred that supplying some materiel might not be out of the question.

Meanwhile, we probed for a better sense of the agent's ability to guarantee results, if the United States were willing to meet the request. A series of exchanges, interrupted for communications with Tehran, produced a straightforward offer to fly the hostages to Pakistan or another mutually agreeable location, where the Iranians would pick up a plane load of the most urgently needed supplies. But there was an even more forthcoming offer. To demonstrate their good faith, the Iranians would release American chargé d'affaires Bruce Laingen in advance of any deliveries. These developments, too, Rogovin and I reported to the State Department.

When reports of a possible swap of weapons for hostages began to surface in the press, our suspicions flared, for we knew that we were not the source. Bani-Sadr was obviously trying to use the option to bolster his standing in Tehran, and we speculated that Carter might manage to turn the possibility into an "October surprise" with decisive impact on the election. Failing that, we worried that our role as message-bearers might be used against Anderson, if the deal went sour. The irony did not escape us that the overture conveyed by the Anderson camp might rescue Jimmy Carter, even if it did not save the hostages.

We now know that a number of factors were converging to produce a measured offer by the Carter administration that ran in a broadly parallel direction to that suggested in the approach we conveyed. In

mid-October the president approved a message offering to make available \$150 million in aircraft parts and other equipment previously ordered by the shah's government, but being held in U.S. warehouses. As Carter put it in the debate with Ronald Reagan on Oct. 28, "If the hostages are released safely . . . we would make delivery on those items which Iran owns."

Strangely, the Iranians never acknowledged the offer. Then, as now, in bargaining with fanaticism, pragmatism has little leverage.

Alan Frye is Washington director of the Council on Foreign Relations.

Dealing With Iran: How Experts See It

President Reagan's decision to authorize unpublicized talks with Iranian officials and send them some weapons and spare parts has touched off a major dispute involving United States foreign policy and has prompted a heated debate that has transcended the usual partisan divisions in Washington. Mr. Reagan has angrily denied reports that he traded arms for American hostages held in Lebanon by pro-Iranian militants. Many of his critics challenge this assertion. Some experts who have followed the United States-Iran relationship, ranging from former Directors of Central Intelligence to scholars, were asked these questions: Is it good or bad to trade military supplies for hostages? What are the pros and cons of making such overtures to the Iranians? And what are the prospects for the United States to restore and improve its ruptured relations with Iran? Here are excerpts from their replies:



The New York Times/Stan Barouh

Shaul Bakhash
Professor of Government
George Mason University

For the U.S. Government that has made the foundation of its policy not to bargain with hostage-takers, trading arms for hostages is not a very wise policy. It encourages further hostage-taking; it sends the wrong signals to America's allies, and it suggests that the U.S. Government has not been straightforward with its own people.

The policy of slow pressure, denial of arms and technology, attempting to give the specific country a bad name abroad has worked. The evidence is the small signs of moderation in Iran's foreign policy, including recent attempts to secure for itself a better reputation abroad.

The U.S. has always posed a special problem for Iran because of the history of relations and because the current domestic strains working against the normalization of relations are very considerable.

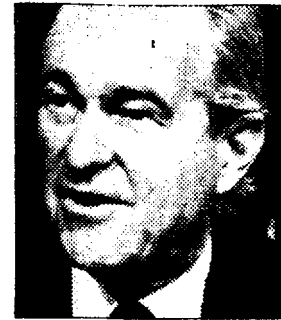


William Quandt
Acting Director
Foreign Policy Program
Brookings Institution

I would make a distinction between a one-time exception where you might get all the hostages for one dirty deal of spare parts to Iran and say that's it. What is particularly dangerous is to get into a more open-ended thing where, one by one, we get hostages out. It provides a perverse incentive to Iran to keep some hostages.

The dangers are that, in setting up this pattern, it sends some signals to countries with whom you have been pursuing a different policy. You appear two-faced.

The potential benefits are, I suppose, if you get the hostages out, it is worth something. It's harder for me to buy on to the argument that you gain serious entree to political circles in Iran that will benefit you in the future. In today's Iran, any Iranian will take arms where he can get them. I doubt he will feel any warm sentiments of gratitude.



Associated Press

Richard Helms
Former C.I.A. Director
Ex-Ambassador to Iran

It depends a bit on the extent to which we have been sending spare parts. If it is, as I expect, a few spare parts, I would think this was not an unfair exchange.

The danger in such a practice is that if one is prepared to pay for hostages, there may be no end to the number of hostages taken.

On the other hand, it is reasonable to say that if this policy of trying to get back the hostages does not work, one can always jettison it.

The benefits are simple. It gets back American citizens who have been taken by individuals or groups who have their own agenda.

In this case, we're dealing with a Lebanese splinter group which wants to get back from Kuwait some of its members arrested in that country, but it is a splinter group not directed by any foreign state, be it Iran, Syria, or Lebanon.

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The New York Times/Doug Steele

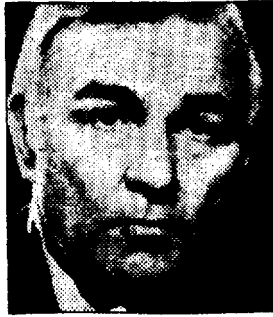
R. K. Ramazani
Professor of Government
University of Virginia

The greatest concern I have is that this is going to prejudice our chances of an improving relationship in Iran in nonstrategic areas, because it has put egg on the face of the moderates, and now the moderates will go out of their way to distance themselves from us.

The possible benefits one could think about are establishing some modicum of contact with the so-called pragmatists, and therefore pre-positioning ourselves for the postwar and post-Khomeini period.

If indeed it is not in the United States interest for either of two belligerents in the Iran-Iraq war to win, then to the extent this maintains the balance of power, it is consistent with American policies to give arms.

From Iran, we have perhaps seen exaggerated statements that this kind of deal might reduce our credibility with friends in the gulf region. These countries have their own reasons to maintain the dialogue with Iran.



United Press International

Stansfield Turner
Former C.I.A. Director

It undermines our ability to lead the rest of the world in an anti-terrorist crusade, which we badly need to do. We had been telling other people not to deal with Iran. What the rest of the world has to perceive this as is a selfish, contradictory, hypocritical move on our part to do what we told others not to do.

I am persuaded that this was primarily a swap of arms for hostages. It is asking people to be gullible to believe otherwise.

Nobody in the Khomeini Government is going to cozy up to the United States. I think it is a very slim chance as long as Khomeini is in power, or even when Khomeini is gone. We would be well advised to stay in the background and let other free-world nations, such as Britain, Japan and France, be the point people for bringing Iran back into the community of nations.



Jupp Darchinger

Zbigniew Brzezinski
National Security Adviser
To President Carter

If we had been able to obtain the release of all of the hostages for a single, self-contained shipment of arms, the arrangement would have been distasteful but palatable. Unfortunately we were drawn into a situation in which armed shipments were apparently traded for hostages almost on a one-by-one basis.

That creates two negative consequences: The Iranians can string us along and even take more hostages in order to keep the arms flow going. It creates the impression that the United States is siding with Iran against Iraq in the war.

The effort to establish some links with some potential successors to Khomeini is justified by the geostrategic importance of Iran. I do not believe, however, that this need entail a continuing arms-supplying relationship. There are other ways in which such subtle relationships could have been cultivated.



United Press International

William Colby
Former C.I.A. Director

I have no objection to secret diplomacy and communication with anyone. It is particularly important to communicate with those who are opposed to us. On the other hand, this does not include providing weaponry.

The danger is a strengthening of Iran in the gulf region. This could lead to pressure on Saudi Arabia and the gulf states in the short term. It could result in a surge of Islamic fundamentalism in countries such as Egypt, Pakistan, obviously Libya, Jordan, and nations all the way from Morocco to Indonesia.

With the present Government, I have strong doubts. They have indicated total hostility. Their cause is fundamentally an ideological cause against the "great Satan" — the United States — and against modern culture and society.

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Soviet veto over SDI: it's called the 'shootdown'

By Stansfield Turner

PRESIDENT Reagan says that at Reykjavik, Mikhail Gorbachev demanded too much as a price for an agreement on reductions in armaments — a veto over the development and deployment of the Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI, or "star wars"). That may sound like an unrealistic demand, but is it really, when Mr. Gorbachev already has a veto? He has it by virtue of the fact that he could, and would, physically obstruct us from building a space-based defense against ballistic missiles.

To understand that, let's put the shoe on the other foot. What if United States intelligence told us that the Soviets were on the verge of constructing an SDI of their own invention? We would have to be very concerned that our ballistic missile force might not be able to retaliate if we were attacked. If the Soviets also began multiplying air defenses to the point that we would not be certain that our bombers and cruise missiles could get through, we might conclude that we were about to lose our ability to retaliate at all to a Soviet nuclear attack. The doctrine of mutual assured destruction (MAD), which has restrained both us and the Soviets from initiating nuclear war for more than 30 years, would have broken down.

That could mean the Soviets might initiate a nuclear war on the presumption we could not strike back. Or, more likely, they might blackmail us by threatening a nuclear attack including, perhaps, a demonstrative explosion in some remote area of the US. In the first case, our existence would be at stake. In the other, our free way of life would be in jeopardy.

We'd be close to desperate.

What would we do? There is no question in my mind. We would attack. We'd not attack the Soviet Union, for it would almost certainly respond with a devastating nuclear attack on the US. Rather, we'd attack its SDI the moment it began to construct it. When the first building blocks went up into space, we'd shoot them down, using either our antisatellite systems or simply a nuclear explosion in the vicinity of the Soviets' space stations. We'd have to do it before they had sufficient components in place to defend themselves.

How would the Soviets respond? They might knock down some of our space activities, like photographic satellites. Or they might complain in the United Nations. Or they might break relations with us, but they would not attack our soil with nuclear weapons. They would still be deterred by our assured retaliatory capabilities. MAD would prevail.

What, then, if the shoe were on the Soviet foot instead? It is almost certain they would do the same, that is knock out our SDI. Our scientists estimate that it will take some 600 launches into space over two years to build an SDI. Even though we might be able to build an increment that could defend itself in less time, there will be a period of nearly total vulnerability.

So the Soviets have a veto over our deploying an SDI even now. What does that mean in terms of how we negotiate in the wake of Reykjavik? The President has staked out his position that after 10 years of further observance of the ABM Treaty, we would be free to proceed to SDI. Gorbachev has staked out his position that we could not proceed without Soviet concurrence — a veto. Clearly he would prefer a negotiated veto to one he'd have to enforce by shooting. Here, though, is where our negotiators need to recognize that Gorbachev can fall back on his shooting veto if he cannot get a written one.

Our negotiators should also understand there are real advantages for us in acknowledging the Soviet veto. We have lived for more than 30 years in a world of only offensive nuclear forces and strate-

gies. The balance that has kept each side from using offensive forces has been delicate, so delicate that it would be very risky for either to shift the rules of the game unilaterally to a strategy of defense. Such a dramatic move can be made only in tandem without a real danger of misunderstanding and overreaction.

Ironically also, the best hope for the President's dream of a nuclear world in which defenses predominate is to reduce the size of both nuclear arsenals substantially. Building a strategic defense for our entire country against the size of the nuclear arsenal the Soviets now have, let alone could build, is clearly a formidable undertaking. It's probably not feasible. There may, though, be hope for building a defense if the threat is much smaller.

We will get such reductions in the Soviets' threat only through negotiated agreements. To induce them in that direction, we would have to agree we would not deploy an SDI without their concurrence. Otherwise, their natural inclination would be to proliferate weapons to give them a hope of being able to overwhelm our SDI if, for any reason, they did not, or could not, shoot it down.

The fact that SDI became a *cause célèbre* at Reykjavik has opened the door to much-needed discussion of the interrelationships between offense and defense in the world of nuclear weaponry. The heart of that relationship is that today's offensive weapons will permit either side to prevent the other from building a space-based defensive system. That's very good in the search for nuclear stability.

Stansfield Turner, author of "Secrecy and Democracy," is a former director of central intelligence.