

Soviet Union Accused Of Treaty Violations

The Administration has repeated earlier charges but declined to accuse the Soviets of preparing a national ABM defense

IN a report that has been held up for several weeks by interagency squabbling, the Reagan Administration has reiterated accusations that the Soviet Union has violated several arms control agreements. The report seems to have few fans, however.

Officials in the U.S. Department of Defense are unhappy because they failed to persuade the White House to include new charges. The private Arms Control Associa-

tion is upset because it says the report contains accusations that rest on "old and largely discredited or irrelevant assertions." And the Soviet newspaper *Izvestia* has, perhaps predictably, called the document "irresponsible."

The report, an annual compilation of Administration concerns about Soviet treaty compliance, complains of a "continuing pattern" of violations and says that the Soviets have "made no real progress toward meeting

our concerns." All the allegations were made in previous years' reports; for the first time, this edition contains no new charges.

The Defense Department wanted a serious new charge included, however. For several weeks, DOD officials have been trying to persuade the White House to accuse the Soviets of violating the 1972 Antiballistic Missile (ABM) Treaty by preparing a nationwide ABM defense (*Science*, 30 January, p. 524). But the State Department and the Central Intelligence Agency fought this move, arguing that intelligence data do not support such an accusation. They prevailed. The report stops short of an outright charge, suggesting instead that the Soviet Union "may be preparing an ABM defense of its national territory" (emphasis added). This was the language used in previous reports.

Some arms control experts argue that even this goes well beyond the evidence, however. In an analysis of the report, the Arms Control Association says that the allegations of noncompliance with the ABM Treaty are, with one exception, "old issues of marginal military significance, based on contentious interpretations of the treaty language and the available data."

The one exception is the infamous Krasnoyarsk radar, which is situated in central Siberia rather than on the Soviet coast, where the treaty says such facilities should be built. There is near unanimity in the West that the radar is a clear-cut violation and on 17 February, the U.S. Senate passed a resolution calling on the Soviets to dismantle it.

The Defense Department has argued that the Krasnoyarsk radar, along with eight similar large radars around the periphery of the Soviet Union—three of which were detected by American spy satellites for the first time last year—form part of a potential ballistic missile tracking network. DOD officials have also raised concerns, which are echoed in the Administration's report, that the Soviet Union has tested smaller ABM radars that could be assembled in a matter of months. This could violate a ban on mobile ABM systems, DOD says. Moreover, the report notes that the Soviets have tested antiaircraft systems in conjunction with ABM defenses, a move that could be designed to give them some capability to intercept incoming warheads. The report acknowledges that there is insufficient evidence to judge whether these activities violate the ABM Treaty, but says they are further evidence that the Soviet Union may be preparing a nationwide ABM defense.

The State Department is said to have argued that these developments do not lead to that conclusion. Aside from the Krasnoyarsk radar, all the large phased-array radars around the Soviet Union are early-warning

Denmark OK's Radar

The Danish Parliament has decided not to oppose the current upgrading of the U.S. early-warning radar system at Thule in Greenland, a move the Soviet Union has claimed would be in violation of the Antiballistic Missile (ABM) Treaty of 1972 (*Science*, 30 January, p. 525). However, the Parliament has stipulated that the radar should not be used as part of an ABM system or in connection with the Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI).

The United States is replacing an old mechanically steered radar at Thule with a large phased-array radar. The Soviet Union and some U.S. arms control experts have argued that this would violate a provision in the ABM Treaty that seeks to limit construction of new early-warning large phased-array radars to the periphery of the United States and the Soviet Union.

The Danish decision, which is binding on the government, took the form of a resolution passed on 5 March by 103 votes to 2 in the Folketing, the Parliament in Copenhagen. The resolution stated that the radar system should not be used offensively, and that the authorities of both Denmark and Greenland—for whose foreign policy Denmark is responsible—should be "informed" about any developments at Thule.

"We are probably ready to accept the upgrading to a phased-array system, but we want to make sure that one day we are not suddenly told that now it is to be used for an ABM system or for SDI," Lasse Budtz, a leading defense spokesman of the opposition Social Democratic Party, said in a telephone interview last week.

The Parliamentary resolution also urged the United States and the Soviet Union to come to a common understanding on the status of the Thule station under the ABM Treaty, while requiring the Danish government to keep to a "strict interpretation" of the treaty in its negotiations with the United States and within the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. Danish Foreign Minister Uffe Elleman-Jensen said during the Parliamentary debate that the government currently believes that the upgrading of the radar facility at Thule was not in conflict with the ABM Treaty.

"We are insisting that the superpowers come to an agreement on which are the stations that are violating the ABM," says Budtz, pointing out that the government had supported the resolution even though the conservative majority had abstained in a vote last year rejecting Danish participation in the SDI research program.

"Since the treaty was signed by the two superpowers, it is they who must decide on its interpretation." ■ **DAVID DICKSON**