

# The History of the America's Space Program

By Matthew Behrens, the co-founder of Homes not Bombs and Toronto Action for Social Change is an organizer of the Campaign to Stop Secret Trials in Canada.

The proposal for National Missile Defence (and the various space warfare programs into which it is designed to evolve), has a long, murky history that involves everyone from Nazi war criminals and power-crazed U.S. generals (who inspired the film *Dr. Strangelove*) to weak-kneed liberals who gave in to fears and myths rather than oppose the frightening plans of the literally mad scientists running the show.

It is a history of experiments which have threatened the magnetic belts surrounding the earth, upper atmospheric nuclear weapons explosions, and new and ever more inventive forms of propaganda trying to convince us that things like the Space Shuttle and Canada's RADARSAT are the innocent creations of a scientific community whose interest in space is as benign as a child with a home-made telescope.

## Acceptable Losses in Nuclear War

But the roots of Star Wars reveal much of post WWII foreign policy which, to be blunt, is rooted in the genocidal idea that nuclear wars can and should be fought, with "acceptable losses" at 20-30 million people in the U.S. Throughout the Cold War, the U.S. policy of first strike nuclear warfare was based on the idea that preventing the USSR from becoming a military peer was of paramount concern. But just as *Vision 2020* is based

on the premise that the U.S. currently faces no major military competitor, the rapid U.S. build-up of nuclear arms following WWII was based on a similar understanding: the master of the globe wanted to remain so forever.

In a secret plan drafted two months after the atomic bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, the U.S. administration of Harry Truman explored the idea of launching 20 or 30 nuclear weapons against the USSR, even though:

"The Soviet Union cannot attack the continental U.S. within the near future. It has no navy of importance and with a second-rate merchant marine, Soviet overseas operations generally would be out of the question."

At the same time, the U.S. was contemplating an all-out attack on the Soviets, who had lost more than 10% of their population during the war, it was also recruiting thousands of former Nazi war criminals to work on its military and space warfare programs.

## U.S. Recruitment of Nazi Scientists

As Christopher Simpson points out, when the U.S. occupied Germany, they recruited more than 1,000 of Hitler's prized rocket experts:

"The U.S. began to integrate scores of top German scientists into American military research projects only weeks after Hitler's final collapse. Before two years were out, hundreds of German scientists, including some suspected of crimes against humanity, were on the American payroll."

(*Blowback, America's recruitment of Nazis, and its disastrous effect on our domestic and foreign policy*, 1988.)

Perhaps the most notorious of these was Wernher von Braun, who oversaw development of V-2 buzz bombs – Hitler's vengeance weapons, precursors to the cruise missile, which late in the war were used to murder thousands of civilians in London. [Editor's note: The V-2s killed 2,770 Britons and wounded 21,000.] Von Braun later helped develop U.S. atomic weapons and led NASA's Apollo program to the moon.

Also infamous was Nazi Major General Walter Dornberger, who became a senior Vice President in Bell Aerosystems of Bell Aircraft, and a recipient of the American Rocket Society's Astronautics



Walter Dornberger and Wernher Von Braun oversaw the Nazi's V-2 rocket program during WWII. The photo above shows them at a 1944 Christmas banquet, gleefully reading a telegram congratulating them for being awarded the Knight's Cross of the War Merit Cross with Swords.



V-2 rocket attacks killed about 2,800 Britons. However, some 20,000 slave labourers died in concentration camps where the V-2 rockets were produced. Immediately after the war, Von Braun and Dornberger – along with hundreds of German scientists – were reunited in the U.S. where they continued their work on the V-2 and other weapons.

Award in 1959. He was one of the first to explore the idea that rockets could be used to propel explosives. Writes Simpson in *Blowback*:

“He labored hard from 1932 on to make missiles an integral part of the arsenal of the Third Reich.”

Dornberger convinced Hitler to open a massive underground slave-labour factory at Nordhausen to produce V-2 missiles. At least 20,000 were killed there through a combination of the starvation diet, executions and disease. During the war, Dornberger was promoted to the highest rank, a commissioner of the Third Reich, and spent time detained as a war criminal after 1945. One of Dornberger’s employees at Nordhausen, Arthur Rudolph, went on to become a major player in the development of America’s Saturn V rockets that were used in the moon launches.

According to Jack Manno’s history of space warfare, *Arming the Heavens*, Dornberger even

“approached Hitler with the idea of an aerospace glide bomber [capable of] a quick surprise attack against New York.”

Among other famous Nazis who went on to glory in the U.S.:

- ✘ **Kurt Debus**, head of Nazi V-2 launch operations who later became NASA’s Chief of Operations at Cape Canaveral;
- ✘ **Krafft Ehricke**, a German atomic bomb consultant, who became an executive at the U.S. weapons firm General Dynamics and lecturer at the Air University Command and Staff School;
- ✘ **Walter Scweidetsky**, head of V-2 guidance group, who later worked on guidance systems for intercontinental ballistic missiles at General Dynamics;
- ✘ **Hans Maus**, engineer for the V-2, later became chief of executive staff at NASA’s Marshall Space-flight Centre;
- ✘ **Martin Schilling**, chief of the testing lab for the V-2 propulsion division, became Vice President of research at Raytheon, which is now one of the top contractors for so-called “Missile Defense”;
- ✘ **Hans Hosenthein**, designer, V-2 launch and guidance antennae, later chief of flightdynamics at NASA’s

Marshall Spaceflight Centre;

- ✘ **Erich Neubert**, production manager for V-2 guidance and telemetry labs, who later worked on the U.S. Army missile program;
- ✘ **Adolph Thiel**, V-2 engineer, later Vice President at TRW, which is now a leading contractor for so-called “Missile Defense”;
- ✘ **Hubertus Strughold**, America’s so-called “Father of Space Medicine,” directed diabolic medical research experiments for the Nazi’s. He used prisoners in concentration camps as guinea pigs, and then became the chief scientist at U.S. Aerospace Medical Division at Brooks Air Force Base, in Texas.

While it is disturbing to think that members of the Nazi apparatus became integrated into the U.S. military

following the war, it is certainly in keeping with the vision of American war planners who, essentially, shared many Nazi goals (such as global domination), but may have differed over the delicate issues of tactics and tact.

Indeed, a refugee from Nazi-occupied Europe, Edward Teller, became one the most influential scientists in America. Father of the hydrogen bomb, he is also widely credited with promoting the idea of winnable nuclear wars with “minimal” losses in the tens of millions, and of putting the star wars idea into the head of Ronald Reagan.

### NASA: Civilian Cover for Space Warfare

The development of space warfare dovetailed with a convenient cover: the peaceful exploration of space, a mirage



Schriever

*“Space for peaceful purposes - what a bunch of god-damned bullshit that was!”*

U.S. General Bernard Schriever, “Father” of the U.S. Air Force’s space and missile program.

*“The highest priority should go to space research with a military application, but because national morale, and to some extent national prestige, could be affected by the results of peaceful space research, this should likewise be pushed.”*

Pres. General Dwight Eisenhower (1953-1961)



Eisenhower

### 1946: Project RAND Report

The U.S. Army Air Forces (soon to become the Air Force) commissioned a Project RAND study into the feasibility of launching space vehicles. The report, “Preliminary Design of an Experimental World-Circling Spaceship” (May 2, 1946) said the U.S. military could “design and construct craft which can penetrate the atmosphere and achieve sufficient velocity to become satellites of the earth” and “such a vehicle will undoubtedly prove to be of great military value.” Project RAND, later became the

RAND Corporation. It originally functioning under the auspices of Douglas Aircraft. It was acquired by J.S.McDonnell to become McDonnell Douglas, which was bought by Boeing, now a top recipient of “Missile Defense” handouts and the Pentagon’s No. 2 contractor. The RAND Corp., a right-wing “think tank” has been promoting U.S. military and corporate interests for almost 60 years. For more information, see: <<https://www.peterson.af.mil/hqafspc/history/collboh.htm>>

which mirrored the “atoms for peace” program, designed ostensibly to develop nuclear energy but in reality a mask to develop the uranium and plutonium required for nuclear weapons.

Because a war-weary public was unlikely to openly embrace an aggressive new policy of massive nuclear attacks against countries the U.S. had problems with, much of its work had to be undertaken in secrecy and with civilian cover. NASA was one such cover. General Bernard A. Schriever put it bluntly when he stated the NASA Act

“completely misled the American people as to the potential use of space for national security.”

A straight-shooting military man, Schriever complained:

“This arbitrary division between space for peaceful purposes and space for national security has an inhibiting influence. It already has had the effect of holding back military space development.”

In 1959, he foresaw that:

“Space is a medium in which many military missions can be performed

better than on land, sea or in the atmosphere. It promises to be the arena in which freedom to operate will have decisive military significance in the 1960s and thereafter.”

When NASA was created, it was clearly a civilian agency answerable to the military. While the Act that created NASA in 1958 declared U.S. policy to be that “space should be devoted to peaceful purposes for the benefit of all mankind,” it also said:

“activities peculiar to or primarily associated with the development of

## Nazi V-2 Weapons Team Reassembled in the U.S.



As part of America's top secret "Operation Paperclip," Wernher Von Braun and 120 other leading Nazi rocket scientists were brought to Fort Bliss, Texas, where they continued their work on the V-2 missile.

By Karl Grossman, investigative journalist for 30 years, author of *The Wrong Stuff: The Space Program's Nuclear Threat to Our Planet* (1997) and journalism professor, State University of New York.

In his 1984 book, *Arming the Heavens: The Hidden Military Agenda for Space, 1945-1995*, Jack Manno, a professor at the State University of New York, said:

“The space program of today has its roots deep in the strategy of world domination through global terror pursued by the Nazis in WWII... Many of the early space-war schemes were dreamt up by scientists working for the German military, scientists who brought their rockets and their ideas to America after the war.”

During WWII, Nazi Germany developed the V-1 and V-2 rockets. At war's end, the U.S. sought to grab as many of the German rocket scientists

as possible: “It was like a professional sports draft,” Manno writes. And corporate America was deeply involved. Scientists from the Nazi Peenemuende Rocket Center:

“were turned over for interrogation to Richard Porter, who was in Germany representing the General Electric Corporation, which held the Army contract for the first long-range ballistic missile under development in the U.S....[The U.S.] “adopted nearly one thousand Germany military scientists, many of whom later rose to positions of power in the U.S. military, NASA and the aerospace industry.”

Manno goes on to relate that: “Wernher Von Braun and his V-2 colleagues...began working on rockets for the U.S. Army. They soon launched in New Mexico the world's first two-stage rocket, using a salvaged V-2 as the first stage and a smaller booster rocket that fired when the first rocket burned out....

In 1949, with the beginning of the Korean War, the Army ordered Von Braun and his rocket team to the Redstone Army Arsenal at Huntsville, Alabama. They were given the task of producing an intermediate-range ballistic missile to carry battlefield atomic weapons up to two hundred miles. The Germans produced a modified V-2 [for the U.S. Army] renamed the Redstone.”

Huntsville began to become a major center of U.S. space military activities – which it continues to be – and soon “Von Braun began to emerge as the most dynamic spokesman for America's budding space program.”

The U.S. military, on its Redstone Arsenal website, provides this narrative on Von Braun:

“He became technical director of the Peenemuende Rocket Center in 1937, where the V-2 rocket was developed. Near the end of World War II, he led more than 100 of his rocket team members to surrender to the



weapons systems, military operations, or the defence of the U.S. shall be the responsibility of and...directed by the Department of Defence.”

As Jack Manno points out: “As long as the military could provide the guiding hand to make certain that NASA didn’t stray too far off into militarily useless areas, the military would support the agency.”

President Eisenhower, a former U.S. general, knew that the militarization of space had to be done delicately, under the guise of a civilian program.

In 1965, he wrote that:

“nonmilitary research in outer space could best be conducted by a new civilian agency. But military research would naturally demand secrecy. The highest priority should go to space research with a military application, but because national morale, and to some extent national prestige, could be affected by the results of peaceful space research, this should likewise be pushed, but through a separate agency.”

Throughout the 1950s, as the

Democrats and Republicans tried to out red-bait one another in the race to show who was most patriotic, various statements came out of both parties with respect to space. Senator Lyndon Johnson, also a future president, remarked in the late 1950s:

“Control of space means control of the world, far more certainly, far more totally than any control that has been achieved by weapons or by troops of occupation. Space is the ultimate position, the position of total control over Earth.”



**July 24, 1950:**  
Thanks to Von Braun's team, the "Bumper" V-2 was the first missile launched at NASA's Cape Canaveral, Florida.

Allied Powers. Von Braun came to the U.S. in September 1945 under contract with the U.S. Army Ordnance Corps as part of Operation Paperclip. He worked on high-altitude firings of captured V-2 rockets at White Sands Proving Ground.”

Von Braun and his “group” were then sent to the Redstone Arsenal in 1949 where he became director of development operations. After the creation of NASA, “Von Braun and his team were transferred” to it “and became the nucleus of the George C. Marshall Space Flight Center at Redstone Arsenal.” For ten years Von Braun was Marshall’s director, leaving in 1970 to go “to NASA Headquarters to serve as Deputy Associate Administrator.”

Former German Maj. Gen. Walter Dornberger – who was in charge of the entire Nazi rocket program – also becoming a powerful figure in the U.S. space program. Manno relates that:

“In 1947, as a consultant to the U.S. Air Force and adviser to the Department of Defense, Dornberger wrote

a planning paper for his new employees.... He projected a system of hundreds of nuclear-armed satellites all orbiting at different altitudes and angles, each capable of reentering the atmosphere on command from Earth to proceed to its target. The Air Force began early work on Dornberger’s idea under the acronym

NABS [Nuclear Armed Bombardment Satellites]. As a variation on NABS, Dornberger also proposed an antiballistic-missile system in space in the form of hundreds of satellites, each armed with many small missiles. The missiles would be equipped with infrared homing devices and could be launched automatically from orbit. This concept was also taken under study by the Air Force in the 1950s. Labeled BAMBI (Ballistic Missile Boost Intercept), it was an idea that would reappear in the space-war dreams of the Reagan administration in 1983.”

Manno continues:

“The real tragedy of an arms race in space will not be so much the weapons that evolve – they can hardly be worse than what we already have – but that by extending and accelerating the arms race into the twenty-first

century the chance will have been lost to move toward a secure and peaceful world.

Even if militarists succeed in arming the heavens and gaining superiority over potential enemies, by the 21st century the technology of terrorism – chemical, bacteriological, genetic, and psychological weapons and portable nuclear bombs – will prolong the anxiety of constant insecurity. Only by eliminating the sources of international tension through cooperation and common development can any kind of national security be achieved in the next century. Space, an intrinsically international environment, could provide the opportunity for the beginnings of such development.”

It is now the 21st century and Manno was saying from his home in Syracuse that in the past as today “control over the earth” is what those who want to weaponize space chiefly want.



The Nazi scientists are an important “historical and technical link, and also an ideological link,” he said. As for the claims that space warfare is defensive – from how Reagan characterized his Star Wars plan as a “shield” to the appellation “missile defense” today, Manno says:

“it’s all a smokescreen. The aim is to put all the pieces together and have the capacity to carry out global warfare including weapons systems that reside in space.”

**Source:** Excerpts from *Weapons in Space*, Seven Stories Press, 2001.

Numerous “liberal” Democrats of the period, including Hubert Humphrey and Adlai Stevenson, also signed a public statement that declared: “Let us not fail to understand that control of outer space would be a military fact of the highest importance.”

Indeed, Jack Manno points out that the development of rockets for intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBMs) was a major purpose of early space activity. An article in *Missiles and Rockets* magazine by General Hollingsworth Gregory noted that the

“Air Force, when the ICBMs become operational, will want to train their launching crews and test their vehicles under realistic conditions; and a good way to do it might well be to send modified versions of these vehicles into orbit around the moon.” The early interest in space flight was often spurred by a desire to maintain a testing regimen for ICBM rockets.

The late 1950s and early 1960s were a time of great anxiety, again fuelled by politicians intent on riding unrealistic fears of Russian world domination to public office. Hence, a whole history of “bomber gaps” and “missile gaps” was developed to try and convince people that the U.S., far ahead in all aspects of the global arms race, had to constantly build newer and more frightening weapons systems to maintain par with the Soviets.

Like their descendants in *Vision 2020*, generals in the early 1960s saw space as a military zone. Strategic Air Command General Curtis Lemay said we “will need...forces that can control each stratum of space.” In 1962, General Thomas Powers stated “absolute superiority in space is essential.”

The language used back then is still used to justify space warfare. Although the U.S. has no global peer, it nonetheless feels “vulnerable” to those who would possibly, maybe, somehow, challenge this superiority, and as such, the U.S. is almost at a disadvantage despite its total control of space.

### Racing to the Moon... or Armageddon

Just as George W. Bush began the first decade of the 21st century with a vision for putting a manned space probe

Cape Canaveral, Nov. 16, 1963.

NASA Deputy Administrator Robert Seamans, Wernher von Braun and President John Kennedy with model of the Saturn IV rocket.



on Mars (a fanciful cover for developing the tools of space warfare), John F. Kennedy began the 1960s with his own fanciful vision of putting a man on the moon (again, an amazing vision to cover the real purpose for investing in all this space technology).

General Homer Boushey of the Air Force Office of Advanced Technology saw the moon as an ideal missile base, with the dark side perfect for space weaponry tests. It could also serve as a great weapons launch site, as it is easier to hit earth from the moon than vice versa. He, and people like

Teller, pushed for a military base on the moon. In 1959, General Dwight Black, Director of Guided Missiles and Special Weapons for the Air Force, told Congress:

“I would hate to think that the Russians got to the moon first. The first nation that does will probably have a tremendous military advantage over any potential enemy.”

Under President Kennedy, a number of programs were developed to militarily control the heavens. Among them were the SAINT (Satellite Interceptor) an orbiting kill vehicle to first analyze and then blow up the Soviet Sputnik. SAINT was scrapped in favour of War

Secretary Robert McNamara’s proposal to blast “hostile” satellites with hydrogen bombs.

McNamara developed an anti-satellite (ASAT) program designed to detonate a one megaton warhead within the kill radius of a Soviet satellite. This plan gave rise to another ASAT, Squanto Terror, which would involve the launch of a Mark 49 hydrogen bomb 600 miles into space.

In total secrecy, following three successful tests, the U.S. Air Force launched the world’s first operational ASAT system in 1964. President

Lyndon Johnson declared:

“we have...developed systems to intercept and destroy... satellites circling the earth in space. I can tell you today that these systems are in place. They are operationally ready and they are on alert.”

There were two nuclear-armed missiles placed on 24 hour alert. The program fell into disrepair because of technical glitches and fears that an explosion of a nuclear weapon in space would disrupt military communications on earth (and not because such an insane idea would spread radiation everywhere!)

Nonetheless, both sides in the arms race contin-



Boushey



McNamara



Johnson

1957: "If, out in space, there is the ultimate position - from which total control of the earth may be exercised - then our national goal... must be to win and hold that position." President Lyndon B. Johnson

ued to push the boundaries, exploring, for example, the idea of orbiting kill vehicles which are again in vogue with the Bush administration. While the Soviets had a FOBS (Fractional Orbiting Bombardment Satellites) which would use hydrogen bombs 1,000 times more powerful than the bomb at Hiroshima, the U.S. envisioned similar programs under the more reassuring name of NABS (Nuclear Armed Bombardment Satellites) and BAMBI (Ballistic Missile Booster Interceptors), both of which have been revived by current space warfare plans.

Throughout the history of the space age, military planners have fretted that the physical forces of nature as they occur in the upper atmosphere - things like gravity, magnetic pull, radiation - would greatly interfere with their desire to explode weapons.

For example, the utility of blowing up nuclear weapons in space was reconsidered following a series of upper atmosphere, nuclear explosions in the late-1950s. One nuclear weapon that was detonated almost 50 miles above the South Pacific in 1958 triggered a huge magnetic storm that shut down radio transmissions across the Pacific. Identified as an EMP (electro-

magnetic pulse), scientists discovered that such a disturbance would interrupt the ability to continue waging nuclear war on the planet.

Concern over this potential disadvantage prompted the U.S. Air Force to launch, in the early 1960s, billions of tiny cooper cables to see if this belt could provide a communications system in the event that normal military systems were interrupted in the course of a nuclear war.

With each new civilian discovery in space came concerns that the phenomena of nature would interfere with war plans here on earth. One of the most significant of those discoveries was the Van Allen Belts, a magnetic shield whose namesake figured out that these were radiation belts of atomic particles trapped by the earth's magnetic field. They worked as a shield to prevent cosmic radiation from hitting the earth.

Despite knowing these belts existed, the military proceeded with upper atmospheric nuclear testing, more concerned with establishing total control of the heavens than with the health effects of such testing.

But concerns about the natural balance of life on earth were superceded by concerns for military hardware. When a Mark 49 hydrogen bomb was detonated 248 miles above the earth, it damaged satellites tens of thousands of miles away. This caused concerned military planners, but also gave them new ideas, turning the EMP from something to fear into a potential weapon. Indeed, exploding a bomb 250 miles above the USSR would create an EMP to scramble all Soviet communications systems. The U.S. has moved in that direction ever since, and, as Rosalie Bertell points out, is hoping to wage war by harnessing the forces of nature that are used to protect life on earth.

Throughout the 1960s, the ever-energetic General Schriever called for a manned orbiting laboratory to be used as a military command station as well as a reusable re-entry shuttle. Former Nazi Walter Dornberger dismissed a

trip to the moon as a "stunt" and urged: "next time we must create an environment in space that will be used by men, not only for research but for military purposes. For this we require a logistics system, a recoverable, reusable space transporter to carry people and supplies back and forth to space."

And so, work began on the space shuttle, which from the very beginning was slated to host a good percentage of military experiments.

By the late 1960s, satellites were being used to direct the bombing of Vietnam, and remote sensing devices and experiments with computerized command and electronic battlefields were also being tested in that tiny country which General Maxwell Taylor described as a laboratory for warfare. U.S.



Westmoreland

General Westmoreland at the time envisioned "battlefields on which we can destroy anything we locate through instant communications and almost instantaneous application of highly lethal firepower."

The U.S. meanwhile developed a limited antiballistic missile defence system (Safeguard) which was deployed around nuclear missile silos in North Dakota, but the program was cancelled weeks after going into operation.

### Ronald Reagan's Star Wars

Interest in space warfare continued, in somewhat muted form, until 1983, when Ronald Reagan stunned the world with his infamous Star Wars speech. In an effort to snuff out the power of the anti-war movement, which had raised demonstrations in the millions to oppose a new generation of nuclear weapons in Europe, Reagan envisioned a space shield which he said would render nuclear stockpiles "impotent and obsolete." His vision also included things like "Brilliant Pebbles," tiny computerized bomblets with a killer instinct that would zoom about the heavens, zapping any enemy objects that needed to be disposed of. The program was officially launched in 1985



as the Strategic Defence Initiative (SDI).

As Frances Fitzgerald points out in *Way Out There in the Blue*, on Reagan and Star Wars:

“From the beginning it had been clear to many experts that Star Wars technologies were much better suited to the offense than to the defense, and among SDI enthusiasts there were a number who had always thought that the goal of the program should be to establish U.S. control over space.”

Indeed, Brilliant Pebbles could be reconfigured to hit earth as well as space targets.

One of Reagan’s advisers was the omnipresent Schriever, who mused: “What I want is a radar surveillance system which allows you to spot everything that’s moving, either on the



surface or above the surface of the earth. And if we had a number of companion systems, a high-energy laser, or particle beam weapon, or something else along with the pointing and tracking ability to knock down airplanes and missiles, then you wouldn’t even need to knock out cities; you could knock out forces. You could pin your enemy down on earth. What would they do? If I control the high ground and you can’t move, what are you going to do? You’re going to negotiate a surrender. That’s what it’s all about.”

Another close Reagan adviser was Edward Teller, who pushed the idea of an X-ray laser to produce a beam a million times brighter than a hydrogen bomb. To produce this effect in space, one could simply blow up a nuclear

weapon to propel the beam to earth. Among his plans was the idea of a pop-up mini-nuke which could be launched when needed, as opposed to being stationed in space awaiting battle.

Teller told Reagan in 1981 that: “by converting hydrogen bombs into hitherto unprecedented forms and then directing these in highly effective fashions against enemy targets would end the MAD [Mutually Assured Destruction] era and commence a period of assured survival on terms favorable to the Western alliance.”

An X-ray laser, as envisioned by Teller, was most effective when shooting straight down from orbit.

A 1996 U.S. Air Force report, *New World Vistas: Air and Space Power for the 21st Century*, called for nuclear power to be used for propulsion of space vehicles.

## From Reagan to Global Imperialism

By Fred H. Knelman, Ph.D., author of *America, God and the Bomb: The Legacy of Ronald Reagan* (Vancouver: New Star Books) 1987.

With a cabinet of ultra-conservatives and some key neoconservative advisers, President Ronald Reagan abandoned the policy of Mutual Assured Deterrence in favour of planning to fight and win a nuclear war. Reagan’s advisors on this policy understood that the dynamics of winning a major nuclear war involved both sword and shield. Not only would the U.S. have to have a more powerful nuclear sword than the Soviets, it would also have to build a powerful shield against a counter-attack.

To justify the former, Reagan’s advisers created “the world according to Gap.” The Soviets were alleged to have superiority in offensive nuclear weaponry. This allowed the U.S. into a major build-up far exceeding Soviet power. Meanwhile, the U.S. occupied the high ground by developing space weapons, both defensive and offensive. This was Reagan’s dream of Star Wars.

Several right-wing organizations, such as the Committee on the Present Danger (CPD), the Coalition of



Peace Through Strength (CPTS) and the American Security Council emerged. Among their key members were many current neocon advisers to George W. Bush. Army Lieutenant-General Daniel Graham, a member of CPD and the CPTS, formed a company called High Frontiers. He became a close adviser to Reagan and promoted the Star Wars program.

The Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA) had been created in 1958 and reemerged

under Reagan. Colonel Charles Heimach, a key member of DARPA, wrote *Space Survivability: A Philosophy/Policy Argument*. It became the bible for “high ground” advocates. More sophisticated space war advocates used the term Strategic Defense Initiative. By using the word “defense,” they tried to hide their policy of fighting and winning nuclear wars, including their plans to put weapons in space. By this time, Soviet President Gorbachev was making all the concessions but the U.S. was

Dr. Rosalie Bertell documents in her book *Planet Earth: The Newest Weapon of War*, that the origins of the Strategic Defense Initiative became the inspiration for Reagan's Star Wars vision. The purpose of the Solar Power Satellite Project (SPSP) was to collect solar energy in space and transmit it to earth. (Who could argue with a benign sounding project like that?) Investigators like Bertell wondered why it wouldn't make more sense (and cost a lot less money) just to collect solar energy on earth.

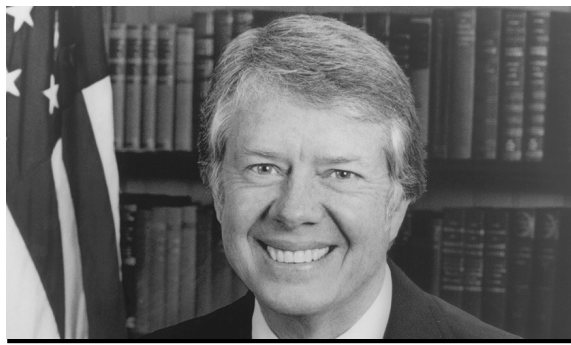
This was another "civilian" plan to militarize space. Bertell points out one potential military use of the SPSP was the development of a beam weapon which could be based in orbiting satellites. SPSP could be used as both an anti-personnel weapon and as a psycho-

not taking "yes" for an answer.

Meanwhile, High Frontiers Inc. realized that "Star Wars" was the most lucrative new opportunity for war industries. Space was annexed as the newest and deadliest battlefield in history.

On November 1, 1989, the UN General Assembly voted to urge the 66-nation Geneva Conference on Disarmament to create a committee on the Prevention of an Arms Race in Space. The vote was 138 to 0, with two abstentions – the U.S. and Israel, a consistent voting pair. (Canada voted in favour. It was a rare case of Canada voting *against* the U.S. on arms control resolutions!)

A key figure promoting space imperialism, from the Reagan era to the present, is Donald Rumsfeld, the U.S. Defense Secretary. Under President Bush Sr., Rumsfeld chaired The Commission to Assess U.S. National Security Space Management Organization. Its final report (January 11, 2001), recommended creating a U.S. Space Corps to defend America's space-based "military capability." It was more subdued than the earlier *Vision for 2020*, which called for "dominating the space dimension of military operations to protect U.S. interests and investments," and "deploying space weaponry [so] the United States would have the ability to control space and from this higher ground dominate the Earth below."



**President Jimmy Carter approved the "Solar Power Satellite Project" which critics, like Dr. Rosalie Bertell, exposed as a potential space-based beam weapon for use against ballistic missiles and earth targets.**

logical weapon. Functioning like a super microwave oven, it could be used to kill people while leaving buildings untouched, like the much-touted neutron bomb of the Carter years. (Carter did approve SPSP, but it was vetoed due to its high costs.) Bertell approached the UN disarmament committee with

Rumsfeld's appointment as Secretary of Defense was part of a deliberate plan to pursue space domination. The Air Force Space Command then issued a progress report, *Strategic Master Plan FY04 and Beyond*. In its introduction, General Lance Lord says:

"As guardian of the High Frontier, Air Force Space Command has the vision and people to ensure the U.S. achieves space superiority today and in the future. A new space corps will fight from and in space."

Lord goes on to say:

"Our vision calls for prompt global-strike systems with the capability to directly apply force through space against terrestrial targets. Space superiority is essential to our vision of controlling and fully exploiting space to provide our military with an asymmetric advantage over our adversaries."

The goal is nothing less than the complete domination of the planet. There is only one country that stands in the way – Russia. The U.S. has set out to match its perfect sword with a perfect shield, but now that sword will have a space component. The ultimate goal is to prevent any obstacle to America's global policy of domination. This means preempting any country that could challenge its global dominion.

concerns about the military use of SPSP but was told "as long as it was called solar energy, it could not be considered a weapons project."

The fall of the Soviet Union was a temporary setback for Star Wars and the weapons industry. Iraq's invasion of Kuwait (encouraged by the U.S.) was a godsend for the military industry, and while George Bush Senior envisioned the need for a "limited" star wars system to deal with "rogue states" and "narco-gangsters," it

was really President Bill Clinton who picked up where Reagan left off. In 1996, Clinton approved a six-year National Missile Defense (NMD) program: three years for research and three years to build the system.



## From Clinton to Bush and Beyond

On July 22, 1999, Clinton signed the NMD Act, which committed the U.S. to deploying NMD "as soon as technologically possible." Like Bush after him, Clinton made pronouncements about nonexistent threats from rogue states and terrorists.

Ultimately, U.S. military planners wish to harness outer space to maintain their policy of pre-emptive first strike. As U.S. physicist Michio Kaku points out:

"the control of outer space would serve no purpose if mutual deterrence was the Pentagon's nuclear strategy. For deterrence, all one needs is to have an invulnerable force of relatively inaccurate submarine-launched missiles. However, the control of space becomes pivotal if one's aim is nuclear war-fighting: to fight, survive and win a nuclear war. Escalation Dominance requires that one be able to dominate every rung of the escalation ladder, including space war. The war-fighters realized that anyone controlling the 'high ground' of outer space could, at the very least, blind the enemy's early warning system, a practical requirement for a first strike."