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WORLD WAR III: THE COUNTDOWN HAS BEGUN

by Gary North

But if the watchman see the sword come, and blow not the trumpet, and the people be not warned; if the sword come, and take any person from among them, he is taken a way in his iniquity: but his blood will I require at the watchman's hand (Ezekiel 33:6).

The time of sounding the alarm has really already come and gone. Since 1969, the balance of power has shifted to the U.S.S.R. That power has relentlessly been pursued by the Soviets, for theirs, more than any religion in man's history, is a power religion.

Today, men slumber in front of their T.V. screens. They do not understand that World War III is drawing to a close. Because it is not primarily a shooting war yet, and because men in the West are not trained to recognize ideological wars as religious wars, they do not see the danger. A few men do, most notably Solzhenitsyn. But who listens? Who in government changes policy as a result of his understanding of Solzhenitsyn's warnings? Nobody.

What Are the Facts?

As most of you know, I am not an apologist for the Pentagon. My general assessment of all bureaucracies is that they live for their own sake, mainly to get fatter, and to feather the career nests of their employees, especially senior managers. A peacetime military establishment is one of the least reliable of all bureaucracies precisely because the general public really doesn't want to have its military prowess tested in the only meaningful way possible: a war. So of all bureaucracies, the military bureaucracies get fat. They also get slow.

Are we more secure than we were four years ago? Categorically, we are less secure, if we are to judge by measurable evidence. This is why the President is not about to present the evidence. This is why his staff isn't about to show him the charts.

The U.S.S.R. is "bogged down" in Afghanistan. But this may not be very significant. Afghanistan may be the Soviet Union's Vietnam, but if you remember, the Communists beat us in Vietnam. The U.S.S.R. doesn't fight a war the way we do. The CBS evening news teams aren't on every battlefield, nor are there news teams that go over every published statistic concerning the war. There are no public statistics concerning the war. What there is is a training ground, and two of the most sophisticated military air fields in the world (Baghran and Shindan), very close to the Persian Gulf.

What I am about to present in this report is not a promotion for the military budget. Nevertheless, we are seeing the erosion of our defense system on a scale undreamed of a decade ago. Before I offer my conclusions, I want You to see the magnitude of the problem.

Let me also say that I don't believe that human history hinges exclusively on the number of chariots on two sides of

a border. But the decisions of policy-makers are highly influenced by the statistics of chariots. This is why we need to be familiar with the numbers. The numbers will eventually have their effect on policy-makers. When this happens, You had better be ready.

Counting Chariots

In August of 1979, I published the essay by my anonymous Washington analyst, "The Danger Is Defeat, Not Destruction." By pulling the copyright, I helped get about half a million copies into print. It was widely reprinted.

Since that time, the whole question has been put on hold. The "survival" industry is terminally ill. Nobody wants to talk about the military imbalance. Everyone assumes that the President has things under control. So let's look at the statistics.

First, the strategy of the West is based on a demonic philosophy called Mutually Assured Destruction (MAD), which asserts that if each side holds the other side's civilians as captives to nuclear weaponry, neither side will launch a first strike. Instead of targeting the Soviets' military targets, we have targeted cities. They haven't. They've targeted our weapons, first and foremost. Thus, if they can build up sufficient firepower to knock out our ability to retaliate after their first strike, then they have won the strategic nuclear contest. They have thereby defeated MAD. They don't actually have to launch that first strike; they only have to persuade our decision-makers that they can and that they are willing to.

As Rev. (and Gen.) Al Knight has said, we have adopted a strategy based on vengeance rather than defense. This is what the High Frontier's supporters claim is the heart of our weakness. We cannot defend our civilian population. Even the Anti-Ballistic Missile system of the early 1970's, which has been completely dismantled except for a minor outpost in Alaska, was going to be used primarily to defend our own offensive (retaliatory) missiles, not civilian populations.

The Soviets have just about completed a phased-array radar system. They also have at least 7,000 operational radar units. According to reports which were given to me only two weeks ago, they now have a new anti-missile defense system in actual production which can hit any of our missiles or planes as they approach Soviet targets with half a dozen or more missiles.

On June 10, 1984, we demonstrated a spectacular new anti-missile defense system called the Homing Overlay Experiment (HOE) vehicle. It has been described as the technological equivalent of hitting a bullet in flight with another bullet. As soon as it was demonstrated technically feasible, the program was cancelled.

Gen. Knight reported to me a month ago that he has personally seen an air strip in Cuba aimed at Miami and capable of launching nuclear bomb-carrying bombers. He

says there are at least seven other such strips in Cuba. When he warned one of his active duty general friends of his concern, he was told that we don't even have an AWACS plane to monitor Cuba—we've sold them to the Saudis. He told Knight he would dearly love to have an AWACS for just this purpose. At present, there is no U.S. air defense system whatsoever. This is why the Soviets have been running trial flights over Florida and the East Coast for five years. Johnny Johnson's *Daily News Digest* has been reporting these flights since at least 1980.

Though the Senate refused to ratify SALT II, Reagan's policy-makers have honored its terms. Since 1979, the number of Soviet strategic nuclear warheads targeted against the United States has risen from 5,000 to over 9,000. Our launchers have been reduced to 1,030, with some of them MIRVed (up to three warheads), and all of the Minuteman III's in the 350 kiloton range—probably not enough to crack their hardened targets that the Soviets have created for their missiles. This is our lowest total since 1966. The Soviets now have a 4 to one advantage over the U.S.A. in deployed ICBM throwweight. They can hit our silos with five missiles per silo. The U.S. shut down its last remaining ICBM production line in 1977.

We are totally dependent on our satellites for information and command. The Soviets have conducted at least 20 anti-satellite tests involving the destruction of actual targets. The first test was in 1968. We have no operational anti-satellite weapon.

What about NATO? Currently, the Soviets deploy about 380 SS-20 intercontinental (Europe, Asia, Africa) ballistic missile launchers, with about 240 aimed at Europe. This means about 2,000 warheads. In 1980, as a good will gesture, Jimmy Carter's team unilaterally withdrew 1,000 warheads from Europe. About 1,400 more will be withdrawn by 1989. The 572 Pershing II missiles (range: about 1100 miles) and ground launched cruise missiles (range: 1550 miles) are not yet deployed. The "fearful" Pershing II cannot even hit Moscow.

What was the Soviet Union's response to our unilateral generosity? Each week it has deployed a modern, mobile, SS-20 MIRVed (multiple independently targeted re-entry vehicle) missile targeted against NATO and Asia. For every older nuclear warhead the U.S. has withdrawn, the Soviets have deployed two new ones.

Gen. Knight (a former NATO strategist) told me that it has been NATO's strategy to stockpile only 30 days of equipment, on the assumption that the U.S. would resupply Europe. Unfortunately, according to Gen. Bernard Rogers, the Supreme Allied Commander in Europe, in 1984 NATO reserve stocks were severely below this 30-day minimum. The U.S. is pledged to reinforce Europe with ten army divisions within ten days after the start of war; only six could actually be transported.

In the following areas, NATO is outgunned by the Warsaw pact by two-to-one or more: main battle tanks (46,000 to 18,000), artillery mortars (38,800 to 14,700), armored personnel carriers and infantry (94,800 to 39,600). NATO is at least seriously outnumbered in total military forces (6 million to 4.5 million), division equivalents (192 to 115), and attack helicopters (1175 to 900), and anti-tank guided weapons (35,400 to 19,000). Only in one area is NATO far ahead: transport and support helicopters (6,000 to 1375).

How about the U.S. Navy? Here is the one area since 1980 where there has been considerable improvement. We used to have 1,000 ships. They were mostly put into mothballs. Here is the grim reality today, after three years of improvement: they have over 2,000 ships, and we have under 550.

The U.S. has built 27 attack submarines in the last ten years; the Soviets have built 61. From 1976 to 1983, the Soviets built 86 submarines, three times the U.S. production level. At the beginning of this year, we had 36 major nuclear subs on duty, but only half of which (18) are at sea at one time. The Soviets have over 100 nuclear attack subs, and over 150 diesel subs (less of a threat). They have over 250 attack submarines total with which to trail our 18 that are at sea at any time.

Then there is the so-called Rapid Deployment Force, now referred to as CENTCOM. So far, it lacks equipment. If it had six weeks, it could transport one Army division to the Middle East. The Soviets, according to strategy specialist Dr. Angelo Codevilla, can send 20 divisions into Iran, if necessary. Lt. Gen. Robert Kingston, the Commander-in-Chief of CENTCOM, said in 1984 that "the forces assigned are not as sustainable as they should be, nor will they be adequately sustained in the foreseeable future."

Could we support a full-scale effort in the Middle East? One estimate concludes that 80% of the U. S. sealift fleet would be absorbed by such a continuous operation in the Persian Gulf.

We have virtually no specialized forces in guerilla warfare, which is the key form of combat in modern times. Here is where we are really losing—within walking distance of El Paso.

But we've got the cruise missile, and they don't, right? Wrong. They've got a lot of them, and we don't. We have ordered 1400 for the Navy, but these are short-range, non-nuclear units.

Need I mention civil defense? We don't have any. The Soviets have a major program. (So do the Swiss, by the way.) Most of our economic production takes place in coastal cities. Most of the Soviet Union's production is far inland. A lot of their military production is underground.

The last area—potentially the most devastating—is chemical and biological warfare. That we are behind here doesn't bother me. Except for research on developing anti-toxins, this demonic avenue of war should be avoided. But the Soviets have a major production program here.

Quality of Weaponry

What about our much-vaunted "smart weapons"? They are smart, and they are few in number. The Soviets do produce second-rate equipment, but they produce lots and lots of it. Furthermore, they steal our ideas. As much as 60% of their military technology is stolen. But here is the important fact: in the U. S., it takes up to 15 years to design, test, and put into production a new weapons system. The Soviets can implement our technology much faster. Thus, our supposed technological lead over them is largely mythical, and our military leaders repeatedly testify to this effect. (By "our," I mean the U.S. and NATO; I am not speaking of the Israeli military, who do not labor under 15-year Defense Department testing methods, and whose technological miracles are not easily stolen by the U. S. S. R.) Official testimony indicates that the Soviets have narrowed the technological gap in some areas from 8-10 years to 2-3 years. (Testimony of Admiral James Watkins, Chief of Naval Operations, 1984.) Lt. Gen. James Merryman, the Army's Deputy Chief of Staff for Research, Development & Acquisition says: "The only area we rate ourselves as close to parity to the Soviets is field artillery. . . . If we went to war tomorrow, they not only outnumber us, but most of what they have as equipment is better." (*Defense Daily*, 22 Nov. 1983, p. 113.)

Conclusions

Start praying public prayers. The commitment of Christians in the west is just about all we have left. But if God will hear our prayers, this will be sufficient.