

Theory/Practice

Star Wars from skies: Reagan's Grand Illusion

by Raya Dunayevskaya, Chairwoman, National Editorial Board of News and Letters Committees

Watch out for an abstruse announcement that "foreign participants" in the space station project have been informed about a postponement of a meeting; it is to be issued by the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA). Don't think it doesn't concern you, much less that it isn't a total reversal of space exploration for so-called peaceful purposes. The real truth is that Reagan does not consider his regression completed until he has established superiority in nuclear missiles—and that includes in outer space. Reagan has been pushing for "going it alone"; Pax Americana is now to occupy outer space, and that means excluding NATO from any joint participation in "scientific research."

The reason the whole story sounds so mysterious is that this horrific trial balloon was deliberately not attributable to a designated responsible person. The article in which it appeared was written by John Noble Wilford in the New York Times of Dec. 20, 1986. No follow-up article was scheduled, or has appeared since, though the writer held—and not as an individual's opinion only—that the "decision threatened to jeopardize delicate negotiations to arrange broad international cooperation in the project." Clearly, Western Europe, Japan and Canada had "agreed to provide financial support for the \$8 billion station. The Pentagon has now asked NASA to postpone further talks..."

THE OMINOUSNESS OF the situation cannot be exaggerated, though it is impossible to follow through because everyone is mired on the level of "who knew what, when" as they wallow in the details of the U.S.-Iran-Nicaragua contra arms scandal. As if the "presidency" were the question, rather than the specific President, Ronald Reagan, the media as well as Congress itself are looking for a way to let this specific imperial presidency—Ronald Reagan's—off with, at most, a slap on the wrist.

This is true also for the West European Allies, who said virtually nothing when Reagan abandoned the SALT II treaty last month, without consulting them,

though they had shown great opposition when abandoning SALT II was first sent out as a trial balloon. Again, they evidently plan to say nothing as the space station for "peaceful purposes" is perverted into a platform for Star Wars missiles.

Finally, don't hold your breath for the State of the Union message that Reagan gives in late January every year. No doubt he will again feature NASA's space station as the centerpiece of "technology," rather than weapons, and do the exact opposite. Indeed, one such statement was attributed recently to Col. Gerald May, director of space for the National Security Council, in Aviation Week (12/22/86): "We must keep our options open for the conduct of national security experiments on board." Anything—Khomeini/hostages/arms/North—passes as "national security."

WHAT APPEARED ON page one of the Jan. 9, 1987 New York Times was an article by John J. Cushman, Jr. about the Air Force asking Congress to reverse its law which, until October, prohibits the military from testing weapons against orbiting objects. That clearly does not stop with research but proceeds to military testing which uses a two-stage rocket to launch guided warheads that collide with the designated target. This is what the imperial presidency is trying to drag Congress into doing, without whispering a single word publicly about excluding its Western Allies and Japan from joint participation in "scientific research" in outer space. For that matter, Reagan has been acting as if even the elected representatives of Congress are the "enemy," excluding them from knowledge of his secret dealings and actions, and violating the Constitution, even when something much less ominous was involved, like the whole U.S.-Iran arms sale.

There are still two years to go in this imperial presidency. There is no place for illusions that all the scandals and crises befalling the retrogressionist Reagan will bring him down. He is the one, after all, who has unleashed a Col. North as a Rambo-on-the-loose all over the globe, from the imperialist invasion of Grenada in 1983 to the latest 1985 Iran-Contra arms scheme. Reagan is the one who called North the day he supposedly

fired him, to designate him a "national hero."

WHETHER OR NOT Gorbachev, despite the criticisms levelled against Reagan since the collapse at Iceland, decides to save Reagan from the Iran-U.S. contra scandal with an arms deal, one thing is certain. Reagan will continue with his phantasmagoria Star Wars scheme—and not just on "research" on earth, but Star Wars from the skies.

It would, of course, not be the first time that Russia saved a most hated presidency which the masses were about to shove out. Brezhnev did the very same thing for Nixon—and, again, saving Nixon meant sacrificing his comrades, the Vietnamese. Indeed, ever since Stalin transformed the first workers state into a state-capitalist society, Russia has proceeded from betrayal of the Russian masses first to collaborate with the Nazis in the infamous Hitler-Stalin Pact, and then—when Hitler turned against Russia—to become one of the Allies. World War II made it clear that, whether it is state-capitalism or private capitalism, the enemy of the rulers is always at home—the revolutionary masses.

The rulers find greater affinity with a foreign enemy than they ever find with the people whose labor and sweat they coin into profits and statification, while they aim for single world mastery of the bi-polar world.

Editor's Note: The section printed above was expanded from the introduction to Raya Dunayevskaya's report to the Jan. 3, 1987 Expanded Resident Editorial Board meeting on Marxist-Humanist Perspectives, which had four parts:

- I. Star Wars from the Skies.
 - II. A New Philosophic Moment of Development. The Marxist-Humanist Significance of Local/Local; "Not by Practice Alone."
 - III. New Perceptions of Lenin's Philosophic Ambivalence as they Developed during the Preparatory Work for the Biweekly News & Letters.
 - IV. The Single Dialectic of Philosophy (A Body of Ideas) and Organization: Marx's Humanism, and the Marxist-Humanist Tasks for 1987.
- Copies of the full report are available from N&L for \$1.40, which includes postage.