

military superiority over the Soviet Union. The US's refusal to continue to abide by SALT-II, its production of the B-52 bomber, its intransigent position at the Reykjavik meetings and violation of the ABM (Anti-Ballistic Missiles) treaty, all point to complete unwillingness to contribute to the «balancing process.» The restrictions imposed by the ABM treaty had kept under leash the development and deployment of space-based defenses, so that neither the US nor USSR needed to plan to overcome the other's defenses. The ABM treaty has functioned to restrain the arms race for the past 14 years. The US administration has now exchanged this treaty for the SDI project which will escalate the arms race. Despite this fact, the Reagan Administration has been forging ahead with the SDI, totally unprepared to make any concessions. US Defense Secretary Weinberger stated the US position clearly: «Extending the ABM treaty or doing anything that would prevent our doing all the things we need to do to develop a SDI is something obviously we would be very much opposed to» (*International Herald Tribune*, June 3, 1986). Even the science consultant for the Pentagon was chosen on the basis of his support for the SDI prior to any other consideration, even scientific merit.

It is evident that the SDI is a central element in US imperialism's strategic military planning to allow it to project its influence anywhere imperialist interests are threatened or intended to be expanded. Having existed in military parity with the Soviet Union over the past 15 years, US imperialism has reached a point where it must leap out of this parity, not simply by stockpiling more warheads, but by destroying every arms control accord. The SDI is organically tied to imperialism's underlying drive to expand or perish. It is therefore not surprising that the Reagan Administration has stonewalled all accords to control the arms race, for these would favor the spread of socialism strategically.

HIGH—TECH FOR AGGRESSION

The general impression is that the SDI is still at the planning stage. However, testing for this project has been underway for more than a year and a half, and close to \$3 billion have already been spent. Despite the Reagan Administration's preaching frugality, the SDI has remained untouched by all budget cuts. Not only does the SDI top all military projects to date; funding for the US armed forces in 1987 is the largest sum ever allocated to defense in peacetime (\$292.2 billion).

Since «every major technological breakthrough for monopoly capitalist industry has been made under military auspices, the military is an appropriate vehicle for SDI investments because it has the organization and system of internal security required» (*Frontline*, March 3, 1986). It is not surprising that all previous arms programs have been brought under the wing of the SDI office of the Pentagon. So imperative is the SDI to US imperialist plans that Reagan is using the last years of his term to «...lock future administrations into the SDI as the underpinning of all US military strategy.»

Another factor which makes the SDI a project different from the rest is that the US is using it to draw its allies more directly into the arms race, by inviting other imperialist industrial giants to join it. The US strives for a gigantic technological-military-political alliance, revolving around the SDI, in order to confront the so-called communist 'threat'.

ISRAELI TASKS

The Zionist entity is cut out to play no small role amidst these giants. The fact that it is the first non-NATO state to join

the SDI is significant in itself. It is elementary knowledge that 'Israel', through imperialist military and economic support, has been able to construct a formidable military apparatus over the years. The 1980s are of particular importance since evidence of the unique US-Israeli relationship has manifested itself on various levels. Some of the most prominent measures taken to reinforce this alliance are: the conversion of US loans to 'Israel' into grants; the signing of a strategic cooperation agreement, of which the SDI cooperation is an extension; the implementation of a Free Trade Area agreement; and joint military maneuvers in 1985, along with increased sharing of intelligence information.

The main areas in which SDI research and development will be carried out in conjunction with 'Israel' are the following:

- a. at least three different kinds of lasers;
- b. kinetic energy weapons, nicknamed 'smart rock', which are able to seek out a target in the air and destroy it on impact;
- c. particle beam technology, a new high-tech field for directing energy at targets;
- d. sophisticated computer technology. The SDI will depend heavily on computers which require software more complex than any other system ever attempted. These envisioned 'super-computers' would be used to process data, detect missile firings, determine the source of attack, compute trajectories, discriminate between real warheads and decoys, and aim and fire weapons.

It is in this field that 'Israel' has a major role to play, with more than just interesting ideas and unique proposals to offer. Israeli military industries, universities and private companies have already presented the SDI Organization with more than 150 project proposals which are expected to produce subcontracts valued at \$50-100 million a year. The fields of specialty include: (a) electronics; (b) electronic countermeasures; (c) lasers and holography (a photographic method using laser light to produce three-dimensional images); (d) hypervelocity weapons, e.g. an improved rail gun with tank-mounted capabilities; and (e) optics. Israeli contractors will be working on computer switches which operate optically rather than electronically. Research will be geared to speeding up such microscopic switches which operate logic gates - the components of semiconducting chips that enable computers to calculate.

Despite all skepticism, experts estimate that this research could yield results in a matter of years.

With their record for producing high-quality products at relatively low costs (due to lower-paid labor), Israeli companies will be able to compete in bidding for specific SDI contracts, separately or in joint ventures with US companies. The US is interested in coordination with 'Israel' to reverse its own deficit in high-technology trade. This will proceed by converting 'Israel' into a high-technology base from which the US can harvest gains for both sides. The US thereby aims at reducing its dependence on Japanese-made components. The most sophisticated weapons in the US have become increasingly dependent on components imported from Japan. This fact has triggered many a debate in the Pentagon and arms industry. Japan is the world's leading supplier of computer memory chips which are key elements in many electronics-based weapons systems. Not only does the US depend on Japan for this high-tech product; it also buys advanced technology that is not yet available from US suppliers.

The feasibility of the SDI project, envisioned as the ultimate space weapon 'to end all weapons', is not the question. For