

# "Star Wars" Research Sparks Conflict Of Interest Issues

**Special To The Post**  
Washington, D.C. - The Reagan Administration's "Star Wars" program is already "rife with potential conflict of interest," concludes the Council on Economic Priorities (CEP) in a first-ever study detailing Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI) research contract awards, to be released by former arms control negotiator Paul Warnke and scientist Richard Garwin.

Those military contractors which have the most to gain from deployment of a strategic defense system, e.g., Lockheed, TRW, McDonnell Douglas, and Rockwell International, etc., are the same as those responsible for assessing the technical feasibility and strategic advisability of proceeding beyond the research stage, CEP says.

"What we see happening today is the rapid conversion of the President's 'Star Wars' proposal from stardust and moonbeams to that great pork barrel in the sky," said Paul Warnke.

CEP's analysis of space weapons contracts by con-

gressional district shows "the program is already well-targeted to influence key members of Congress who will have the greatest sway over future funding." Approximately 77 percent of prime SDI contracts since FY '83 were awarded to areas represented by congressional members on the House Armed Services Committee, and the Subcommittee on Defense of the House Appropriations Committee, CEP concludes.

Because of economic benefits to key contractors and constituencies, pressure to build a "Star Wars" defense system could develop, "whether or not it is proven worthwhile on national security grounds," according to CEP.

The five-year, \$24.2 billion cost of the SDI research program alone rivals the total research and production costs of programs for major weapons systems such as the MX missile and B-1 bomber.

CEP's study reveals that nearly 90 percent of space weapons prime contracts in FY '83 and FY '84 were

awarded to four states: California (45 percent); Washington (22 percent); Texas (13 percent); and Alabama (10 percent).

These contract awards are also highly concentrated: the top 10 space weapons contractors identified by CEP received 87 percent of the awards in FY '83 and FY '84. Eight of those 10 were among the Pentagon's top 20 private contractors in FY '83.

Further, CEP's study shows that most contracts awarded in past years "are more applicable to terminal and mid-course defense than to the much more problematic task of defending the entire U.S. population.

Finally, the CEP study notes that accelerated research and testing of strategic defense components could undermine the ABM Treaty, a treaty that President Reagan's own Commission on Strategic Forces described as "one of the most successful arms control agreements." Gerard Smith, Nixon Administration AMB Treaty negotiator, has said that even the SDI R&D program is currently outlined will undermine the treaty.

CEP recommends allocations for FY '83 be held at \$1.4 to \$1.6 billion, and that there be "continued scrutiny of SDI funding requests now, before it develops an economic and institutional life of its own," and a congressionally-appointed, independent review board of technical and strategic experts with no financial stake in SDI research.

The Council on Economic Priorities is a non-profit service research organization dedicated to accurate and impartial analysis of vital issues facing our country today. It specializes in issues of hazardous waste, national defense and corporate social responsibility. Membership is \$25 per year. The study can be ordered from CEP for \$10.



**BALLOON VENDORS** - Colorful helium-filled balloons were a hit with young, old, and in-between SpringFest revelers. (Photo By Peeler's Portrait Studio)

revelers. (Photo By Peeler's Portrait Studio)

## WDAV To Air Oratorio Singers' Concert

WDAV (89.9 FM) will air "Bach to Stravinsky," a program of music by the Oratorio Singers of Charlotte, on Sunday, May 5, at 6 p.m. The program was

recorded in February of this year, and includes Bach's "Magnificent," the "Symphony of Psalms" by Stravinsky, and Buckner's Psalm 150.

Dr. Mary Nell Saunders conducts the singers, with featured soloists soprano Kristen Knight, mezzo-soprano Deborah Ferrand, tenor Dale Jareet, and bass Carl Samet. The Charlotte Symphony Orchestra performs.

WDAV production director Julie Rogier recorded the concert in Ovens Auditorium, and is pleased to be able to present it so soon after its performance. "It is great to have such con-

certs on tape to air in the coming year," said Rogier, "but it's fun when you can play one while the performers and audiences still

have the concert in recent memory.

*Read The Post*



Looking like a little valentine in red and white, nine month old Shakira Williams seems to enjoy a life of ease in her stroller. The little miss was out on the town with her mother, Tawanda Williams, of 1621 S. Tryon St., and her uncle, Kenny Brown. Here, her mom bends down to coax a smile out of her daughter. If you look carefully, you see a twinkle in Shakira's eyes. (Photo By A. Lodato)

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