

Call for \$200 billion ABM defense program

by Paul Gallagher

Pressure is mounting from the Defense Department, Joint Chiefs of Staff, and presidential science and national security advisers for President Reagan to announce an all-out effort to develop beam-weapon anti-missile defenses.

The only things which could stop the United States from reaching the 1988 target of a relatively primitive but effective ABM system, *EIR* founder Lyndon LaRouche said on Oct. 20, would be either a U.S. capitulation to the present Soviet escalation toward an early thermonuclear confrontation, or an actual thermonuclear war. "Unless President Reagan backs down to Soviet confrontation—which I do not think is his temperament,"

have to reshape his timetables very soon on the basis of developments which I believe he does not presently expect will actually occur during 1984. After the first of the year some time, the Soviets are going to hit the United States very hard with threats of first strike against the United States itself, and by major geopolitical operations in various parts of the world. . . . The President will be forced to choose between capitulation and accelerating U.S. defenses. My reading of the President's character is that he will choose the latter, no matter how big a shake-up that may mean inside the administration or in his election-campaign policy."

The Fletcher Report

On Oct. 17, following low-keyed leaks in daily newspapers around the country, the aerospace journal *Aviation Week*, with the aid of Pentagon sources, published the first full outline of the reports by the Fletcher Commission on science and strategy of anti-missile defenses.

According to *Aviation Week*, the President is advised to set up a centralized ABM program under the coordination of the Joint Chiefs and Secretary of Defense. He is told that the United States can proceed immediately to *demonstration* of the key ABM technologies: neutral particle beam by 1985; ground-based free electron laser, whose beam would be refocused by mirrors in space, by 1985; ground-based "excimer"

power chemical laser with low-frequency (infrared) radiation by 1987; full-power, focused x-ray laser beam by 1988; and

the technologies to see, point at, and track missiles as targets, with great accuracy at long ranges, by 1988.

Furthermore, the reports present the President with "early deployment options" using these technologies throughout the 1990s. The cost of "early deployment" beginning with fiscal 1985, and another \$150-\$160 billion during the 1990s.

Much more could be spent, if a true crash program is mounted to conquer the most revolutionary technologies in human history—directed energy and particle beams and fusion power processes—and end the reign of terror of the nuclear ICBM. LaRouche and other leading advocates of such a crash program estimate that up to \$500 billion could be spent at no net cost to the economy, because technological breakthroughs would "spin off" to revolutionize the entire U.S. industrial economy.

According to *Aviation Week's* sources, the Presidential commission reports confirm Dr. Edward Teller's judgment: "Current technology levels can provide an effective counter to current Soviet ICBMs in some important contingencies, [but] the effectiveness of near term deployment of systems based on present technologies alone could be eroded by Soviet technology advances. "The long-term technology. . . holds particular promise for highly effective and robust counters to Soviet countermeasures"

At his Oct. 19 press conference, the President responded to a reporter who asked, "Wouldn't this lead to a new defensive arms race, instead of an offensive arms race?" "that be so bad?" said Reagan. "If both sides had these defensive weapons, no one would start any wars, would they? I think that's the idea."

When White House spokesman Larry Speakes was questioned two days earlier about the *Aviation Week* account, he referred to the March 23 speech, reiterating that Reagan "expressed his long-range goal to decrease our reliance on the threat of nuclear retaliation. . . . The studies now being completed identify steps that could be taken to prepare for such a shift in emphasis."

"We have not yet shifted to a defensive orientation."

This reflects the tremendous blackmail directed at the White House by Henry Kissinger and the Andropov Democrats (see article, page 48). The White House is still publicly stating that the next five years of beam-weapons development will not involve any *deployment* of defenses.

Speakes concluded, however: "We would hope that the U.S. and the Soviet Union could find that defensive capabilities can enhance our mutual security, and could then enter into a more comprehensive arms-control regime."

was referring to the fact that Kissinger's 1972 ABM treaty, as both Kissinger and the Soviets know, does not forbid development of ABM systems based on "fundamentally new physical principles"—directed

House has thus again offered the Soviets an agreement to mutually deploy anti-missile defenses.

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