

British lead full-scale assault on beam defense

by Vivian Freyre Zoakos

In one of many commentaries on the May 22 NATO Defense Ministers meeting, defense ministers

sible to work out a common approach to President Reagan's Strategic Defense Initiative plans. U.S. Defense Secretary Weinberger's pressure has not yielded good results." Soviet television added: "No European country wants to participate in the Strategic Defense Initiative plans."

Well might the Soviets gloat. The May 22 NATO defense ministers meeting was a watershed for the West: The United States was thoroughly trounced.

The secretary-general of NATO, British Lord Peter Carrington, ruled out discussion of President Reagan's strategic defense program, which was to have been the principal topic, from the conference agenda. With Caspar Weinberger thus muzzled, the shortest defense ministers conference in the history of NATO confined itself to agreeing to an initiative prepared by the same Lord Carrington's staff. The Carrington program, for limited conventional defense improvements, was hastily approved by the 14 NATO defense ministers, and Carrington's staff given a mandate to work out a detailed list of areas of conventional defense requiring such improvements. Discussion of the SDI was deferred to the June 6 NATO Foreign Ministers meeting in Lisbon, Portugal.

Some days earlier, on May 16-19, Soviet Foreign Minister Gromyko had met with his British, American, Italian, French and West German counterparts in Vienna. After three days of meetings, the Western ministers—including George Shultz of the United States, Hans-Dietrich Genscher of Germany, and Giulio Andreotti of Italy—announced in so many words their determination to kill the SDI.

This was not the first time the foreign ministries of the Western nations had shown themselves to be traitors, in the name of appeasing the Soviet Union. It was to *these* gentle-

men, then, Carrington's ideological allies, that the defense ministers deferred discussion of the Strategic Defense Initiative. No wonder Moscow crowed.

A series of interlocking developments made possible the Carrington victory. Primary among these was the "coup d'état"—as columnists Evans and Novak termed it—in Washington during and after President Reagan's visit to Europe the first ten days of May. As Weinberger put it to the *Financial Times* of London after arriving in Brussels, Belgium, for the NATO meeting: Where, he asked, will I get the authority to convince the Europeans to increase their defense spending, when the U.S. Congress is forcing the administration to back down on its promises and accept a freeze on our own defense allocations?

Not only had the appeasement faction inside the U.S. flexed its muscles prior to the NATO meeting, by starting to slash the Reagan defense budget—isolating Caspar Weinberger—but Shultz's State Department was weakening the already precarious situation of the chief pro-SDI, American ally in Western Europe, the government of Chancellor Helmut Kohl of the Federal Republic of Germany.

Right after Kohl's Christian Democrats lost an important regional election in North Rhine-Westphalia on May 12, the State Department obliged Soviet interests by putting out the line that Washington considered Kohl a "lame duck." This became a scandal when the German press leaked the story. Later, on May 24, the Swiss *Neue Zürcher Zeitung* newspaper revealed that Richard Burt, slated as likely replacement for the retiring U.S. ambassador to Bonn, was disadvising the Europeans *on behalf of the State Department* to take any decisions on the SDI, since these might "interfere" with the ongoing U.S.-Soviet disarmament talks in Geneva.

Meanwhile, Kohl was also faced with the public blackmail of his foreign minister and coalition partner, Hans-

Dietrich Genscher, whose new leverage came from the victory of his Free Democratic Party in the North Rhine-Westphalia polling. The Genscher blackmail, as per his promise to Gromyko in Vienna, was of course focused on demanding German retreat from support of the SDI.

Political expediency convinced Kohl to fence-straddle between his domestic troubles, which Washington circles were making worse, and his policy of continued support for the SDI. The results were graphically shown when the Chancellor addressed the North Atlantic Assembly meeting in Stuttgart, on May 18—four days before the NATO defense ministers meeting. Kohl's speech, while still endorsing the SDI, contained two "conditions" for continued such support. The conditions were that, first, "The MAD doctrine must be reaffirmed and maintained" even if the SDI goes ahead and, secondly, that "The SDI must not lead to decoupling" of Western Europe from the United States.

The core of the SDI project is the replacement of MAD (Mutual Assured Destruction) with a new doctrine of Mutually Assured Survival. By developing the technologies to provide the Western Alliance with an umbrella of strategic defense, the SDI would obviate MAD. Instead of threatening the Warsaw Pact with a massive retaliation of ICBMs in the aftermath of a Soviet first strike—MAD—such "revenge" would be replaced by defensive weapons that could prevent a successful first strike in the first place.

Kohl's atypical insistence on keeping MAD was a pure echo of Genscher's statements to the press following meetings with Gromyko and George Shultz two days earlier, when Genscher announced that "the MAD doctrine must be reaffirmed and maintained." Similarly, Kohl's caution that the SDI "must not lead to decoupling" was a page taken from the book of Genscher, Carrington, et al., who from the time of Reagan's announcement of the program had tried to torpedo European support for it by lying that it would decouple Europe from the United States. The fact of the matter, however, as Kohl also knows, is that informed European circles, particularly in the military, have supported the SDI because they are rightly terrified that the MAD doctrine was leading Europe toward appeasement of Moscow, and hence decoupling from America.

The NATO defense ministers conference was not the only forum in which the SDI was handed a defeat the week of May 20. While the ministers were meeting in Brussels, the Western European Union (WEU) convened a three-day conference in Paris, chaired by the ever-present Herr Genscher. Genscher and Lord Carrington have played leading roles in reviving the WEU, until recently nearly defunct, as a weapon against the American SDI. Before the meeting convened, both had stated it would be used to replace European-American cooperation with a concept of exclusive intra-European economic and military cooperation, that would omit the SDI.

They were helped in this endeavor, once again, by Shultz's State Department. According to the Swiss *Neue Zürcher Zeitung*, Assistant Secretary of State Richard Burt's admo-

nation to the Europeans to lay off the SDI topic was particularly addressed to the WEU gathering.

Genscher, presiding over the meeting, not only ruled the SDI off the WEU agenda, but counterposed it to the so-called Eureka proposal of French President François Mitterrand, giving out the line that "both the European (French) and the American proposals have to be examined more thoroughly before an opinion can be formulated."

'Eureka' waxes as SDI wanes

"The SDI is just an episode. Eureka is a real project," French Foreign Minister Roland Dumas told the press May 23, following two days of talks with Genscher. Genscher, who stood by as Dumas spoke, added later that. "We fear once there is massive European participation in the SDI program, the Eureka project will be dead." The Americans, he concluded, are "just out to travel to Europe with a big purse . . . to buy off our scientific brains. We will make sure there is no such brain-drain to the United States."

The Eureka program was authored by the Analysis and Prediction Center, a think tank attached to the French foreign affairs ministry, solely as a foil to the SDI. First generating little interest when aired by President Mitterrand in March, Eureka's fortunes have climbed as counterorganizing to the SDI met with increasing and dangerous success. Eureka presents an empty, non-threatening, alternative to the SDI's strongest selling point in Europe: the fact that it would generate technological breakthroughs with dramatic civilian applications, such that non-participants risked finding themselves with obsolete, non-competitive industries.

Eureka proposes trans-European cooperation on a series of "frontier" technologies. The giveaway on the program's political content is that, 1) it is strictly "civilian," and promises to stay away from any military applications, and 2) as drafted by the Analysis and Prediction Center, it will mostly shun technologies based on "new physical principles" (the core of the SDI) to concentrate on the post-industrial society laundry list of what the French call generically "telematique," i.e., computer- and artificial intelligence-related fields. Eureka is thus tailored to the swindle of the post-industrial society, to a West incapable of producing its own defense requirements.

Besides Genscher's endorsement of the Eureka hoax, the British have now also given it their blessing—the same British who used to give lip service to supporting the SDI. British Foreign Secretary, Sir Geoffrey Howe, met in Paris May 21 with Dumas and declared himself "highly interested" in Eureka. This was a turnabout for the British, who had at first greeted Eureka with a lukewarm reception. According to the French newspaper *Le Monde*, following the Howe-Dumas meeting, London wants to set up a multilateral group of experts charged with hashing out the details of the French proposal.

Moscow, which is viscerally opposed to the SDI, has shown absolutely no objections to "Eureka."