

American scientists uphold LaRouche ideas at Erice

by Giuseppe Filipponi

At the "VI Seminary on Nuclear Warfare," which occurred in Erice, Italy, Aug. 18-21, organized by Dr. Antonino Zichichi, the American scientific delegation, from Livermore National Laboratory, officially proposed to the Soviets what U.S. presidential candidate for 1988 Lyndon LaRouche has proposed since 1982, that the Soviet scientists collaborate with the Americans to develop the "SDI," the Strategic Defense Initiative.

This proposal, which recently was taken up again by President Ronald Reagan in his well-known letter to Gorbachov, was formulated explicitly in Erice by the head of the U.S. delegation, Dr. Robert Budwine of Livermore.

"We are de facto already cooperating in trading information on inertial and magnetic-confinement nuclear fusion. Why can't we collaborate also on the SDI?" said Budwine. "Gorbachov is trying hard to propagandize new initiatives, but the only real novelty can come from an effective pursuit of an exchange of new aspects of military technology. Just the mere fact of working together in such a project will create and deepen the necessary political conditions for an East-West dialogue. Both I and Professor Teller are available to share and inform the Soviets on all of our researches."

The Soviet response to such a proposal was immediately given by Alexei Arbatov, the 35-year-old exponent of the Academy of Sciences in Moscow, and it was a decisive "nyet."

"This proposal is pure propaganda," Arbatov said. "A joint SDI cannot be done, and above all it cannot be done with regard to x-ray lasers. We are against Star Wars, we are against carrying the arms race into space."

Budwine answered: "We built the x-ray laser on the basis of the Soviet scientific literature. I cannot imagine that you are more behind than we are. If you don't accept, it means you already have the space shield."

Then Andrei Kokoshin, chief of the Soviet delegation in Erice, intervened. "In reality the restrictions in the passage of technology between West and East and the contacts between scientists are becoming more severe and difficult. This is a sign that Washington does not want a technology exchange in a delicate sector such as the military one, and besides, we have decided to not develop the space shield.

"We are working to develop systems against enemy missiles, but ours are simple, cheap systems," Kokoshin went on. "We are working on anti-missile missiles, space mines, and Earth-based lasers directed against space stations whose orbits cannot be easily changed, and therefore will be known. We will then use the sophisticated systems of electronic warfare to disrupt and dislocate the enemy's command and communications system. We will spend something, but in any case less than for implementing the SDI, which would have costs too high for our economy. We will not do more than I have laid out. The theoretical basis for building an x-ray laser we have, but we have not developed these lasers."

Arbatov continued ironically: "Are you perhaps offering to share with us the civilian aspects of the space shield?" Budwine: "Both civilian and military. Teller sent a message of confirmation to Zichichi on this."

Arbatov: "But what good is it? Against whom should we jointly develop the anti-missile shield?" Budwine: "Against whoever wants to make nuclear war." Arbatov: "I don't understand anything anymore."

So, a tart Soviet "no" to the American proposal.

A major Soviet admission

Meanwhile, in Moscow, an adviser to former President Arbatov and current Soviet strongman Mikhail Gorbachov admitted publicly, for the first time, what the Soviets have refused to ever admit about President Reagan's offers—that

what is at stake is *joint* development of weapons of the SDI, i.e., "the LaRouche doctrine." On a Moscow radio program on Aug. 10, Aleksandr Bovin, top Soviet foreign-policy "insider," stated that Reagan is proposing a five-year delay in deployment of the new defensive systems, "and then we will hold talks with you for two years. Talks about what? Talks about how to gradually move into a new era, an era oriented toward defense systems. In other words, talks about how to deploy these systems in space. And if we fail to reach any agreement during these two years, then either of the two sides will have the right to begin deploying these systems after giving the other side six-months' notice."

Reversing the Soviets' claim, since 1983, that Reagan's new military doctrine was just a "cover for a first-strike policy," Bovin *admitted* that Reagan is demanding "that we sign an agreement with him permitting U.S. deployment of these systems . . . he proposes that we change our position 180 degrees, and . . . recognize the necessity of these systems."

Biological challenge in Africa

Ironically, this year the Erice conference was pivoted on the theme, "Cooperation and Its Prospects," and despite the Soviet refusal to collaborate in the SDI, the scientists present pledged to support the 10 great scientific research projects which are being studied within the so-called World Laboratory, an idea developed in Erice last year and whose founding document was signed a few months back in Lausanne. Ten thousand scientists from all over the world are already involved.

From the discussion around these 10 scientific projects, it became clear that the world scientific community today is tremendously challenged by the implementation of the SDI, by the even vaster project of colonizing the Moon and Mars proposed by LaRouche and by President Reagan, and in general by the proposals of the Schiller Institute and the Fusion Energy Foundation, in particular, in regard to the idea of a "Biological SDI" which would include optical biophysics and a massive sanitation and economic intervention into Africa, in order to block the eruption of dangerous pandemics.

Two of the 10 projects presented at Erice regard, in fact, the preparation of medical personnel and the prevention and cure of diseases in Africa, in particular tuberculosis, Burkitt's lymphoma, and T-cell leukemia, all diseases which we know to be closely linked to the spread of AIDS. In the reports presented it was made explicit that such epidemics are expanding rapidly from Africa toward Europe and North America and we have to intervene at once.

Also discussed was flood control on the Yellow River in China, where floods yearly cause massive damage to agriculture, and a project to develop agricultural systems in the Sahel region and to prevent drought and desertification of Africa.

Other projects regard prevention of cardiovascular dis-

ease in the Mediterranean countries; a study on the older population in the same area; the application of seismological researches in high-risk countries; and the application of fluidized-bed technologies for coal.

The Soviet Rodinov then spoke about space exploration, and another Soviet, Vladislav, presented the state of fusion research. He said that in the Soviet laboratories, the maximum temperature reached up to now has been 35 million degrees (perhaps a bit too low to be believed), and that only at the end of the century could they reach the conditions for fusion.

The 'Big Bang'?

During all the presentations and the debate, the Soviet scientists and various Western scientists influenced by the appeasement-oriented Pugwash group tried in every way to present peaceful scientific cooperation between East and West as the antithesis of both the American SDI project and, explicitly, the Moon-Mars colonization project.

Such a conflict in fact does not exist. But the polemics were nasty, above all in the final session where American Nobel Laureate Lee and Zichichi presented the 10th "World Lab" project, that of building in Italy a mega-particle accelerator to be called Eloisatron.

This would be a circular accelerator 250 kilometers in circumference. To build it, the governments of all the world would have to contribute \$10 billion. The idea, as put forward by Zichichi, would be to "build a machine in which one could search for the conditions in which the universe found itself 15 billion years ago, a fraction of a second before the Big Bang."

Although a financial commitment of these dimensions would have to be supported with more convincing arguments, the Chinese-American Nobel prize winner Tsung D. Lee immediately defined it as a much more worthwhile project than that of colonizing Mars. Irwin Pless of Massachusetts Institute of Technology then stressed that instead of spending money on the SDI, the U.S. government should pitch in to finance the Eloisatron.

As could be expected, Professor Oleg Krokin, of Moscow's Academy of Sciences, pronounced the Eloisatron excellent, and the U.S.S.R. will certainly take part. But . . . the funds it can give will be very limited.

So, no money; but attempts to get the American SDI and Mars colonization projects into hot water, and at the same time to cut a fine figure, at all costs, in international scientific collaboration—this is what the Soviets did at Erice.

In the end, Arbatov went so far as to give a little press conference on the Chernobyl nuclear accident, where he said that the accident was due to human error by two irresponsible technicians. When he was asked, however, if the U.S.S.R. was now willing to pay reparations to neighboring countries, he seraphically replied: "I can only guarantee that those responsible for the accident will be severely punished."