

II. Alternative to MAD

LaRouche and Teller's Alternative to MAD Nuclear Bluffing

by John Sigerson

Jan. 18—Exactly 42 years ago today, Dr. Edward Teller, known as the “father of the H-bomb,” went before the public at Georgetown University to reinforce what he had been advocating since late 1976: that the insane “balance of nuclear terror” regime put into place most famously by former U.S. Defense Secretary Robert Strange McNamara, must be replaced with cooperation between the United States and Soviet Union on joint development of *defensive* weapons, as the only way to open up a road to stability, and massive economic development of the impoverished nations of the Global South.

Two days later, U.S. Democratic Presidential candidate Lyndon H. LaRouche, Jr. recorded a video message to the American people, urging that same approach—an approach which Teller had taken up largely thanks to the efforts of LaRouche and his associates in the Fusion Energy Foundation.

During his January 18, 1983 address, Teller pointed out that he was being prevented from speaking openly about beam-weapons defense: “Here is my first difficulty,” he said. “It has been printed that I shall talk about beam weapons; I am *not allowed* to talk about beam weapons. Trouble!” But later, he said something, the world-shaking significance of which



EIRNS/Stuart Lewis

Dr. Edward Teller, shown here in 1983, called for cooperation between the United States and Soviet Union on joint development of defensive weapons.

few recognized at the time:

“I told you that there are examples of truly remarkable and ingenious defense systems. These I am not allowed to mention, although I am certain that it has nothing to do with security. *I hope that in a few weeks this difficulty will be cleared away.*” (Emphasis added.)

Eight weeks later, on March 23, 1983, President Ronald Reagan did clear away “this difficulty” by [announcing](#) his intention to implement the LaRouche-Teller policy of mutual

assured survival, which came to be called the Strategic Defense Initiative.

Below we include: (a) an article appearing in *New Solidarity*, the LaRouche movement’s newspaper, in



Ronald Reagan Presidential Library

President Ronald Reagan, on March 23, 1983, announced his intention to implement the LaRouche-Teller policy of mutual assured survival, latter called the Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI).

its January 28, 1983 issue, covering Teller's January 18 address; and (b) the full text of Lyndon LaRouche's 15-minute January 20, 1983 video address.

Both LaRouche and Teller viewed beam-weapons defense as not an end in itself, but rather as a crucial *strategic flank* in order to enable the advanced-sector nations to finally bring economic stability and prosperity to their own nations, and to the nations of the Global South. That *intention* is therefore identical to the urgent need today to implement the "Oasis Plan" for reconstruction of the

war-torn nations of Western Asia, and to end genocidal regional warfare, and to avert the very real threat of thermonuclear war. As Teller argued on October 25, 1982 before the National Press Club in Washington, D.C.:

"If we behave reasonably ... we would have a good chance to postpone a confrontation ... and do much more than avoid war. We can improve the horrible way of life in the Third World, by using technology, and create a situation where the causes of war can be eliminated."

January 18, 1983

Teller on Beam Weapons: 'Secrecy Is Not Security'

Special to *New Solidarity*

Jan. 18, 1983—Speaking at a forum on the topic of anti-missile beam weapons at Georgetown University in Washington, D.C. today, world-renowned nuclear physicist Dr. Edward Teller blasted government secrecy regulations for keeping from the American people knowledge which the Soviet leadership already has.

In a speech which itself was constrained by government classification, the man widely known as the "father of the H-bomb" said that new developments in science and technology have made an end to the policy of Mutual Assured Destruction (MAD) possible. Defense from nuclear attack "is not impossible," Dr. Teller said. In answer to a question, the scientist estimated that a rudimentary beam-weapon ballistic missile defense could be developed within five years, and a more complete system could be built within ten years.

This was one of several speeches Dr. Teller has made over recent months in which he has urged the crash development of defensive weapons systems capable of knocking down or disarming intercontinental ballistic missiles in flight.

Secrecy vs. Security

When the moderator introduced Dr. Teller, he said that the scientist would answer all questions at the end

Editor's Note: This article was first published in the weekly LaRouche movement newspaper, *New Solidarity*, Vol. 13, No. 90, January 28, 1983.

of his speech. "Indeed, I will answer any question provided I am permitted to do so by the rules of secrecy often and wrongly called security," Dr. Teller said.

"Here is my first difficulty. It has been printed that I shall talk about beam weapons; I am not allowed to talk about beam weapons. Trouble! The President has said—and very rightly—that the American people are certainly entitled to know whatever the Soviet leadership knows, in general terms. What I could possibly tell you in a semi-technical manner about one topic or the other is certainly known to the Soviet leadership. I therefore should not be restricted in what I can talk about. I am—because the bureaucrats who still exist have not completely understood or implemented the President's correct and general statement. This is an exceedingly serious matter; how serious it is will become clear while I am talking...."

Defense Is Not Impossible

Remarking that his speech is well-timed, Dr. Teller praised the vigorous leadership of the new head of the U.S. Department of Energy, Don Hodel, and expressed the hope that there would be a shift in the policy of exaggerated secrecy.

Attacking the notion that nuclear weapons can only be used for offensive purposes, he said: "Defense is not impossible. We know—and part of the evidence is even publicly available—that the Soviets have made great strides towards civil defense, an area where we

do much too little, to our greatest danger. There are indications that the Soviets are also deeply involved in active defense....

“So, behind the idea of nuclear weapons being just offensive weapons, there are good, thoroughly worked-out, generally accepted arguments. These arguments have culminated in the MAD doctrine, in the doctrine of Mutual Assured Destruction. There is no help except the possibility to prevent war by deterrent. And once you begin to think in that direction, you are apt further to exaggerate the consequences of nuclear war, considering the end of mankind, call it unthinkable, and lose touch with reality. That Mutual Assured Destruction—the idea that the people of the opposing nations should be mutually held hostage and thereby give assurance that war won’t occur—I don’t think this is an idea that anybody can be happy about, and nobody less than when we talk about a balance of terror. The terror is certain; the balance is not. Because one clear point about the developing, evolving technology is that it is full of surprises, and the next step can hardly ever be predicted, even by the best people....”

Admitting that the initiative rests with the offense, and that effective defense must be prepared for any eventuality, Dr. Teller reiterated that defense is still the best deterrence to war. He apologized because he was prevented from discussing the work of his colleagues at Livermore weapons laboratory in California, even though the Soviets have written about it in their journals, and have even offered criticisms about mistakes made by Livermore researchers.

He went on to give more examples of defense weaponry. “I told you that there are examples of truly remarkable and ingenious defense systems. These I am not allowed to mention, although I am certain that it has nothing to do with security. I hope that in a few weeks this difficulty will be cleared away; unless it is cleared away, I don’t see any way to stop the nuclear freeze movement. If the nuclear freeze movement succeeds, it will succeed here, not in Moscow, and the lack of balance will become complete, and I believe our very existence will have exceedingly poor chances. This is how important the

question of exaggerated security happens to be.”

Soviets Ahead on EMP

“I would like to mention one more topic, seemingly unrelated, and this is a topic which at least I can mention,” Dr. Teller continued. “It is called EMP, which stands for electromagnetic pulse. I am not going to explain it, except for saying that connected with some nuclear explosions, very strong electric fields appear, electric fields in a very general way, and only in a general way, similar to the electric fields which accompany and precede lightning strikes. There are a couple of stories about EMP that I can tell you. We performed a test in the Pacific, a few hundred miles from Hawaii.



Soviet MiG-25 flown to Japan by a defector.

As a result, the electricity in Honolulu failed. We were all surprised about it, and then we found out that the explanation had already been published in the Soviet open literature. So EMP is one of the topics where we have good evidence that the Soviets are ahead of us. We pretend that there are secrets, but they are only secrets from the American people.

“Another story. Do you remember the Soviet plane that was flown by a deserter to Japan? You may have seen [news items](#) about it—how primitive the Soviet electronics system is, that it still consists of tubes in the electronics age where every reasonable person works with transistors. Later, it was found, and less conspicuously published, that that MiG did have transistors—deep inside the plane in a well-protected place. On the outside there were these antiquated tubes. It so happens that the tubes are not sensitive to EMP; the transistors

are. So, not only were the Soviet planes not less developed; they took into account an effect which we are just beginning to realize.

“These are some of the questions that make me uneasy, and should make, I believe, all of us uneasy. To publish facts about EMP is extremely important. We begin to realize—and this is public knowledge—that communications command and control, the cooperation of the whole military establishment in case of war, is not only important; it is also vulnerable, and should be defended. And one of the elements which endangers this command and control are these electromagnetic pulses; and we are beginning to do something about it. That is well-known.

“What is less well-known is that very big sectors of our civilian economy are likewise vulnerable, and in some cases more vulnerable. Even in war, our military structure is supported by our whole civilian economy, and if the latter collapses, the military will not function either.... On the other hand, private enterprise is help-

less to defend itself against possible EMP effects unless they know something about it. So here again, the question of whether we can defend ourselves, depends on the availability of information.”

Dr. Teller concluded his speech by arguing that development of defensive weapons systems could provide a basis for peace, while the MAD doctrine never could.

“I have told you everything that I wanted to tell except two things,” the scientist continued. [The first is] “what if we developed defense and it failed completely? Even a few nuclear weapons could do a lot of damage....

“If we had a defense system about which the Kremlin is not sure whether or not it will work, they will not attack, because unlike Hitler, they are very cautious.... Even an incomplete system may at least postpone a nuclear holocaust.

“The other point is: ‘if we put up more defense, the Soviets will just put up more offense’—[this idea is] wrong. We must try to put up such kinds of defenses that the offsetting offense will be more expensive. This is the critical point, and I believe it can be done in such a way that the defense will win. Then there will be no more trouble.

“If we put up more defense, the only way the Soviets can go is that they, in turn, put up more defense. If both sides become defense-minded, not offense-minded, but real defense-minded, that is the stable situation. Out of that stable situation even peace may come. I don’t believe that peace is just the absence of war. To my mind peace is cooperation and understanding and lots more. But in order to have a chance for cooperation and understanding, one should have a minimum of security. Mutual Assured Destruction does not provide it. Defense weapons could.

“There was no time when I did not wish for defensive weapons. They did not come. But now, after a lot of labor, there is a real prospect—on which incidentally, only a very small fraction of our scientific community is working—that we should understand this possibility, that scientists and technical people should realize that peace can be stabilized by defense, that the public should realize that the ideas are the common ideas, which are surely known throughout the world but which take a bit of explaining, a bit of intellectual labor. If we understand, if we work, we may yet succeed in preventing the horrible eventuality of a third world war. Thank you very much.”



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January 1983

An Anti-Imperialist Military Policy

by Lyndon H. LaRouche, Jr.

I want to talk to you about a very painful subject: the growing danger of a nuclear war between the United States and the Soviet Union.

That danger is very real, and the fact that it's growing is very real.

I want to talk to you about what that problem is, and I want to talk to you about a possible solution to that problem.

Some years ago, about 20 years ago, there were two events which terrified the people of the United States and other nations.

These were, first, the 1962 Cuba Missile Crisis, in which most people believed at the time, and rightly so, that we were minutes away from the possibility of a thermonuclear exchange between the United States and the Soviet government under Khrushchev.

Then, a year later approximately, President John Kennedy was assassinated, and the fact of that assassination, and the fact of the cover-up terrified Americans, and terrified people in Europe as well.

Under the impact of these two frightening events, we of the United States shifted into a policy which was then associated with Defense Secretary Robert S. McNamara—or, the “S” stands for “Strange,” and I think it's quite appropriate. This doctrine is called Mutually Assured Destruction, or, appropriately, MAD.

The doctrine essentially is this: that thermonuclear ballistic missiles are the ultimate weapon—a weapon so terrible that neither the United States nor the Soviet Union would ever actually launch a nuclear war. Therefore, the argument is, that we can eliminate war, first of all by maintaining static garrisons of this type—static forces of this type—and by setting up arrangements which are generally called crisis management: red telephones, special conferences, special arms negotiations, and all this sort of thing, to make sure that

Editor's Note: This is the transcript of a video address recorded on or about January 20, 1983, provided to *EIR* by the LaRouche Legacy Foundation.



EIRNS/Stuart Lewis

Lyndon LaRouche announces his beam weapons policy in Washington, DC, in April 1983.

nothing goes out of control, and the two governments do not find themselves wandering by miscalculation into a situation in which they might actually set off some thermonuclear missiles.

So, this MAD doctrine has dominated us.

Now, this led—by the time the Soviets began to overtake us in the early '70s—this led to a process called *détente*, which was begun by the former Mayor of West Berlin, Willy Brandt, and Willy's close advisor, Egon Bahr. This resulted in the so-called SALT I and other agreements negotiated between President Nixon and Soviet Secretary Brezhnev. So, *détente* was on.

But no sooner was détente on, than we began to move toward the actual possibility of a thermonuclear war. This surfaced in 1974, and has been increasing ever since. In 1974 we had what was called the Schlesinger Doctrine—the doctrine that a limited nuclear war within such areas as the European theater, could occur without that leading to an actual nuclear war between the homelands of the Soviet Union and the United States.

After the Schlesinger Doctrine, we had other things moving in the same direction, generally called “forward nuclear defense.” What these meant, was that as the United States became weaker in its military capabilities, that certain kinds of capabilities, particularly nuclear capabilities, should be pressed forward closer and closer to an assault position versus the Soviet adversary—in other words, that we should increase our bluffing as we became weaker.

Then, at the end of the Carter administration, a policy directive, Presidential Directive 59, PD-59, was issued¹—the most insane policy in the series to date, and the policy which, in effect, is controlling the United States government today. This is really aggressive defense, involving the Euro-missiles and things of that sort.

Now, in the meantime, partly because we are going into a depression, and partly because of the effects of the so-called environmentalist or Malthusian movement—the idea of trying to push us into a post-industrial society—our basic in-depth strategic capabilities are collapsing, both in the United States and in Western Europe. At the same time, the Soviets are expanding an extraordinary amount of their total product in developing not only the kinds of systems we’re looking at in the charts of comparison, but some absolutely new fundamental revolutions in military technology. They’re spending much more than even the CIA’s “Team B” some years ago estimated they were spending.

So, there is, in fact, a very rapidly-growing strategic imbalance between the two superpowers, in which we of the United States are becoming progressively weaker, and the Soviet Union is becoming progressively stronger. If this trend continues, possibly by 1988 or 1990, the Soviet Union will have a qualitative rather

than merely a quantitative net edge on us in strategic balance. That is, they will reach the point at which they can virtually dictate to the world the shaping of general international policy.

Now, the danger is that sometime during the interval between now and, say, 1988 or 1990, that the President of the United States will be advised that this condition is developing, and may also be advised that it’s too late for the United States to do anything to correct it. Under that condition, the President has two choices: kiss the foot of whoever is boss in Moscow, or resort, perhaps, to using our thermonuclear arsenal for bluffing, and trying to bluff the Soviets out of reaching the state of military development in which they would have a qualitative, rather than merely a quantitative strategic superiority.

This danger is increased by a policy advocated by the so-called “nuclear freeze” movement.

Now, some of you think the nuclear freeze movement is an anti-war movement. It is not an anti-war movement! The nuclear freeze movement specifies three things: Number one, that the United States should cease all advanced technological development in military and other technology. Number two, that the United States should reduce its total military budget. But, three, that the United States must increase its conventional war-fighting capability for wars which shall occur below the Tropic of Cancer—i.e., Central America, South America, Africa, parts of the Middle East, and so forth and so on.

So, we are committing ourselves to fighting Vietnam wars, but not thermonuclear wars—at least so the doctrine goes.

However, if we get into that kind of geometry, which the backers of nuclear freeze advocates, such as Robert McNamara, Max Taylor, and so forth (rather familiar to those of us who remember the Vietnam War) —that if this policy prevails, we will be facing strategic inferiority relative to the Soviet Union, at the same time that we are massively engaged in Vietnam-style wars or something approximating that, shooting our former friends in Ibero-America, Africa, and elsewhere.

And this madness creates a general probability for war—thermonuclear war—during the second half of the 1980s. And if we continue on the present policies, then we shall lock ourselves into that geometry, and we shall have war. It’ll be so probable, we dare not say it’s not certain.

1. A redacted version of Presidential Directive/NSC-59 was later declassified and released. It is available [here](#).

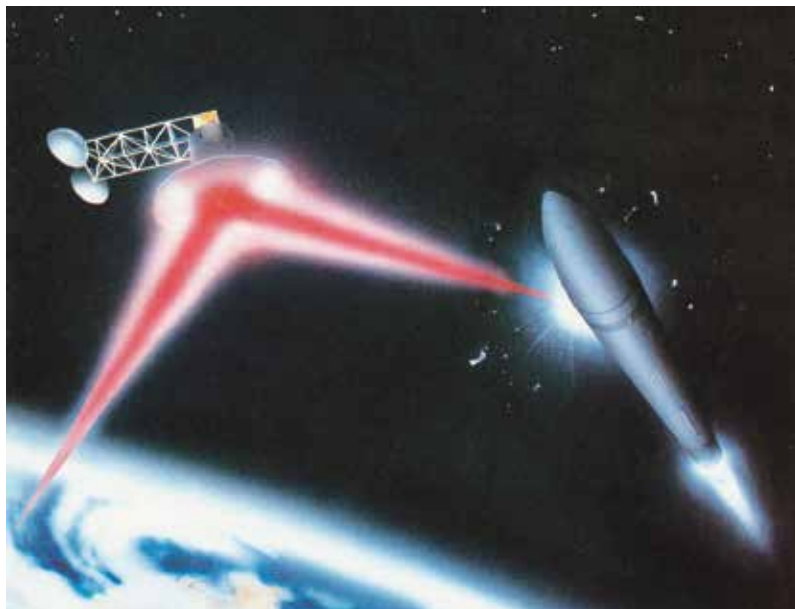
The Solution

Now, what I've proposed is a solution to the military side of this problem. My proposal is: eliminate the superiority of thermonuclear weapons as the final weapon, or an absolute weapon. They are not an absolute weapon: We have had, over the same 20 years, actual weapons systems, and potential weapon systems, which can destroy thermonuclear missiles, ballistic missiles, in the stratosphere. We have had systems which could provide point-defense, to defend cities, or to defend missile sites or other targets, from an incoming warhead.

Most recently, the Soviet Union, in the past six years or so at least, has been developing a set of weapons systems which could do this by means of laser-like beams, beam weapons. There are many kinds of beam weapons. I won't go into the technicalities of it, but these are quite feasible now. If we developed a crash program, for example, we could, probably within ten years or less, guarantee that 99.44% of a full flight of missiles thrown against the United States would not strike the homeland of the United States. That is, we have the imminent technological capability to do that.

The Soviets have it, too. The Soviets are well ahead of us in developing such a capability. And some of the things you see them putting up peacefully into space are relevant to that. They've been on an accelerated program to develop this for some years, while we've been lagging.

Furthermore, not only can we eliminate that kind of missile, the land-based or air-based missile—that is, the missile fired from a plane or the missile fired from land—we can also potentially kill missile-carrying submarines. Now, some people say that submarines are undetectable. That's a lot of bunk! We now know the technological means to pinpoint missile-carrying strategic nuclear subs. There are several kinds of technology involved; again, that's a technical matter, but it exists. So, if somebody tells you that sea-based or submarine missiles are invulnerable, they don't know what they're talking about, or they're lying, because I know at least enough of the technology to know that subs are intrinsi-



Chris Sloan

An artist's rendition of a laser-beam weapon.

cally detectable. So, therefore, it is possible to do this.

Now, if one side—we or the Soviet Union—were ever to emplace such a strategic system first, we would have won World War III by default. It now looks as though, with current trends from the Heritage Foundation and other lobbies in Washington, that the Soviets, perhaps by the end of this decade or perhaps earlier, will have such a strategic capability, and we will have lost World War III; or, perhaps we will go to World War III during the middle of the 1980s in order to head them off at the pass, as the boys say.

So, therefore, I have proposed that we change our negotiations on arms with Moscow in the following way.

One, we agree to independently, but in parallel, develop and deploy anti-missile defensive beam-weapon and supplementary systems.

We agree, two, to manage the progress in such deployment, to such effect that we do not create a strategic imbalance of critical significance during the process of deployment.

Three, that we then proceed on the basis of that agreement to a program of eliminating thermonuclear weapons.

Four, that we agree that as we put this in place, that if any third nation attempts to launch one or any number of thermonuclear weapons, we will jointly destroy

those launched weapons at that time—that we agree, in short, to free the world from more than 20 years of thermonuclear terror. There is no other way to go.

It will be impossible in any negotiation to go so far with reducing the number of warheads, that either the United States or the Soviet Union would actually give up what it considers the capability to obliterate the other by nuclear means. So, therefore, disarmament leads nowhere. It accomplishes nothing, because we cannot eliminate thermonuclear missiles except by going to a weapons-system deployment that makes them relatively obsolete.

Granted, there's the possibility of an arms race starting from such a development as I've proposed. That's true. We could go beyond defensive systems, to developing offensive systems of great and terrible power. I know a little bit about this; I've been involved in it for some time. It's awful.

But, let us hope that by avoiding, and averting the immediate danger of nuclear war before us, that in that process we might grow up a little bit. And then, having grown up a little bit, we might, the next time around, find ourselves acting like mature people, to take actions to remove the causes of war, rather than simply trying to stop the weapons.

I think the answer to that—removing the causes of war—lies, as Dr. Edward Teller said in Washington this past October²—and I agree fully with him on

2. On Oct. 25, 1982, Dr. Edward Teller, speaking at the National Press Club in Washington, D.C., declared that “Eighty percent of Americans are not for or against the [nuclear] ‘freeze,’ but are extremely frightened, justifiably.... The 25-year mutual balance of terror is no longer balanced, only terror. The particular person responsible for this

this—that if we commit ourselves to this technological revolution—and it is a technological revolution in modes of production as well as it is in military science—and we use this technology to assist the development of developing countries, to increase the general welfare of mankind on this planet—to make ourselves more rational, more scientific, more inclined to think scientifically about the connection between policies and practices, and the results of those policies and practices down the road—that if we commit ourselves to these things which are properly the common aims of mankind, perhaps in that great effort we can find a solution.

And, therefore, I propose that we adopt this policy, a beam-weapon development policy, a crash program to do this, to negotiate with the Soviets on this question, as I've indicated, and to couple this to a plan, an effort to restore technologically progressive economic growth, and to finally remove the hideous effects of centuries of British and other imperialism that blight the conditions of life of people in the developing sector. I think that is the way to peace, and I think that is the proper military policy for the United States.

Thank you.

policy of mutual terror was a Defense Secretary, Robert Strange McNamara.... If the freeze people prevail ... then war would be likely.... If we behave more reasonably ... we would have a good chance to postpone a confrontation ... and do much more than avoid war. We can improve the horrible way of life in the Third World, by using technology, and create a situation where the causes of war can be eliminated.” Teller's Jan. 18, 1983 address at Georgetown University, “Teller on Beam Weapons: ‘Secrecy Is Not Security,’” *New Solidarity*, Vol. 13, No. 90, Jan. 28, 1983, is reprinted in this issue of *EIR*.