

U.S. scientists push beams at Erice meet

by Mary McCourt

The delegation of U.S. scientists at the annual meeting of the Conference of the Ettore Majorana Center for Scientific Culture in Erice, Sicily, Aug. 20-25 called for a "serious" program to develop beam-weapon defense systems within 10 years, and emphasized that beam-weapons development would cement, not weaken, the Western Alliance. Led by Dr. Lowell Wood, the scientists from Dr. Edward Teller's Lawrence Livermore Laboratory reported that the focus of U.S. technological research—striking missiles in the boost phase—will guarantee equal defense of all the Western allies.

All problems with beam-weapon development are political, not technical, Dr. Wood told the conference.

One year ago, at the Erice conference on "The Technological Bases for Peace," the United States' Dr. Teller and E. P. Velikhov, vice-president of the Soviet Academy of Scientists and head of the beam development program, signed an unprecedented accord to form an international group of scientists to study the potential of a "new type of defense system against nuclear destruction." This year, the Soviet delegation did not even confirm their participation in the annual conference until the last moment. The group which finally arrived was led by Vladimir Aleksandrov, a high-level operative in Soviet Pugwash circles who has spent much of the past year denouncing beam weapon development.

Other delegation members included Juri Izrael, head of the Environment Council of the U.S.S.R., and Professor Vasilyev of the USA-Canada Institute, the Soviet think-tank dedicated to sabotage operations against the West. Their purpose was to use Erice for psychological warfare, to spread the myth of a "nuclear winter" that would destroy all life after a nuclear war.

Equal partnership for beams

Dr. Wood opened his speech to the conference Aug. 21 by calling for U.S.-European cooperation on beam weapons and for equal partnership in this project. Both superpowers, he said, have compelling reasons to protect their allies. The United States could not survive in a "Fortress America" posture: A new isolationist tendency would cause its alliances to fall apart.

The European allies, Wood continued, are not only strategically located, their technological capabilities make them critical to the beam-weapons effort. We have to concentrate

on the boost phase, Wood added, to destroy the Soviets' incoming missiles, which creates a strategic common interest between Europe and the United States. The missiles have to be destroyed, whatever their targets—New York, Bonn, or Rome—he stressed.

Wood reported that the U.S. beam-weapon program could, in a few years, protect command, control, and communications centers; in 10 years, it could create a global defense system, and in 10 to 15 years could be a fool-proof system. This would be a serious approach, but not yet a crash program, said Wood.

Dr. John Nuckolls, also of Livermore Laboratory, blamed both Henry Kissinger and Jimmy Carter for calling into question the U.S. commitment to defend Europe from Soviet attack. If the Soviets attacked Europe conventionally, Nuckolls stated, Europeans realize that it would now be suicidal for the United States to intervene, and a decision to respond with nuclear weapons would simply make Europe a nuclear battlefield.

The only way to overcome this strategic problem, Nuckolls stated, was the program laid out by Wood, and he invited the "young geniuses" of Livermore Lab to develop a system beyond the tactical nuclear weapons in Europe. Dr. Nuckolls invited the European participants to make a strong call for the joint development of beam weapons and to support Wood's analysis.

Dr. Robert Budwejn, also of Lawrence Livermore, outlined the U.S. program for a missile defense "capable of protecting against 99% of the enemy's missiles." After stating that the Soviet Union is determined to develop these weapons, Budwejn said it is unthinkable that only one of the two superpowers should develop such a system. He proposed there be a "decrease in secrecy," such that when defense systems become effective, both superpowers will have the capacity to defend themselves against missile attack.

Antonino Zichichi, the Italian scientist who organized and chaired the Erice conference, responded to Nuckolls' call Aug. 23. "It's time for the old continent to wake up," he said. "Let's study together with the Americans, the Soviets, and the Chinese the interception systems against deadly weapons. . . . If it will be possible to develop these shields [with these nations], they cannot be destabilizing."

Soviets denounce beams

The Soviet response to the U.S. scientists' proposals was to repeat the hysterical lies put forth by the forces—on both sides of the Atlantic—determined to halt Western development of beam defense systems. The USA-Canada Institute's Vasilyev said that even the discussion of beam weapons increases world tensions, and called the systems "expensive, impossible, and first-strike weapons." Europe would not be protected by the American Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI), he said, but the Europeans would have to pay for them.

Citing Mutually Assured Destruction (MAD) guru Henry Kissinger, leading opponent of Western beam defense and

proponent of decoupling the U.S. and Europe, Vasilyev said: "I remember that at the SALT I negotiations, Kissinger refused to ban the MIRVs, but later he agreed that this was the biggest mistake of his career." He said Europe is now the hottest spot on the planet.

As the Italian daily *La Repubblica* pointed out, all the objections to beam development posed by Vasilyev and his associates are the same used by those scientists in the United States who oppose beam weapons.

Following the opening speech by Professor Zichichi, *EIR* contributing editor Webster Tarpley addressed the audience from the floor, denouncing the Soviet refusal to accept the U.S. offer to collaborate on the beam-weapons policy, and exposing the Soviet war buildup since they shot down a Korean Airlines jetliner last year, killing 269 civilians. Tarpley attended the meeting with Giuseppe Filipponi, president of the Italian branch of the Fusion Energy Foundation. The Italian daily *Il Secolo XIX* on Aug. 23 called the Foundation's *Fusion* magazine the one which "most clearly expresses" the thoughts of the pro-beam-weapons scientists of Lawrence Livermore.

Tarpley stressed that in the past year the Soviets have destroyed all channels for dialogue with the West, burying the resolution signed last August in Erice.

Debate broke out again on Aug. 22 as Vasilyev laid out a series of what he called "unsolvable problems" preventing beam defense, including the weight of the platforms needed to support the lasers and the number needed to destroy missiles within 100 seconds of launch.

West German Ambassador Henning Wegener, head of the German delegation to the Geneva disarmament conference, leaped into the fray. How could any nation, he asked, be sure that the Soviets were not themselves building the weapons, given the absolute secrecy of all military activity in the U.S.S.R.? "Our secrecy," Vasilyev responded, "is the result of our history."

Lowell Wood jumped up to say that the systems developed in the United States have shown that the missiles can be hit in the boost phase much more easily than in the final phase and that all problems are political, not technical. "I do not believe," he told the Soviet delegation, "that you are not doing anything in this regard, since you are investing twice what the U.S. does in research, and we know this." Wood invited the Soviet delegation to sit at the same table and discuss the issues; the Soviets refused.

In a later exclusive interview for *EIR* with Tarpley and Filipponi, Wood stressed that beam-weapons development would be critical in "coupling" the Atlantic Alliance. He called for a crash program along the lines of the Manhattan Project during World War II.

Tarpley also questioned Professor Vasilyev on the Soviets' refusal to continue cooperation for peace? Vasilyev answered: "This is not an honest question. We speak to U.S. scientists all the time, with the [anti-beam weapons] Union of Concerned Scientists.

Who's giving away Morocco—and why?

by Thierry Lalevée

By Sept. 1, Libya and the Kingdom of Morocco will become a single country. If a physical merger of both countries is impossible, thanks to thousands of kilometres of Algerian territory in between, the so-called merger of Libya and Morocco will encompass all other levels.

The merger will be concretized on Aug. 31, by a national referendum in Morocco and a vote of Libya's Popular Committees. This represents very rapid follow-through on the agreement, as the treaty was only signed on Aug. 13. The speed of the merger's realization was imposed by Libya, which on Sept. 1 will celebrate the 15th anniversary of Qaddafi's bloody dictatorship: What better trophy to display at the military parade than either King Hassan himself or his Crown Prince as newly found allies! After years of ostracism, and despite his record of international criminality, he has not been overthrown or forced to change; others have been forced to bow to him! On Aug. 17, he announced that he wanted Algeria's Chadli and Tunisia's Bourguiba to attend to sign a "treaty of Maghreb unity."

There is little chance that such a diktat will be fulfilled. Far from fostering "Maghreb unity," the merger of Morocco and Libya has tremendously increased tension. It could not be otherwise. It is no secret that the newly created Rabat-Tripoli axis was built to counter the "friendship treaty" between Tunisia, Algeria and Mauritania, from which Tripoli felt excluded—and rightly, as Tripoli has been busy financing Islamic fundamentalist terrorists against these countries. In addition, there are growing ties between Algiers and Cairo, in opposition to Rabat-Tripoli.

The two Maghreb blocs are effectively arrayed against each other as military alliances, with each nation at least implicitly pledged to the defense of its treaty partners. And in fact, when Morocco recently threatened to attack Mauritania over its Polisario support activities, Algeria threatened to attack Morocco. The merger of Morocco and Libya has thus brought regional warfare a step closer.

Two capitals, one country

What the merger between Rabat and Tripoli actually means is a union at the top. While a Libyan with the title of Minister-Resident will be allowed to join Morocco's ministerial coun-