

EIR Special Report

Beam weapons: the science to prevent thermonuclear war

by Marjorie Hecht, Managing Editor, *Fusion* magazine

For years the threat of nuclear war has hung over the heads of Americans, the fear that by accident or design someone would press a red button and send a nuclear-armed intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) to turn U.S. cities into infernos. Now, after 30 years of living with this horrible possibility, there is a definite means to ensure that nuclear war will never happen: the technology of directed energy beam weapons.

If the effort now being directed by *EIR* founder Lyndon LaRouche is successful, directed energy beam weapons will soon become a familiar topic of conversation in American households as the scientific means to prevent nuclear war. Even more important, Americans will understand how a crash program to develop beam technologies could lift the U.S. economy out of its depression and accelerate the development of nuclear fusion: cheap, clean, and virtually unlimited energy.

It is this latter point—the capability of a beam-weapons research program to rejuvenate U.S. industries and spur productivity as the NASA Apollo program did in the 1960s—that has created a furious wave of opposition to the beam-weapon campaign of LaRouche, the Fusion Energy Foundation, and White House Science Council member Dr. Edward Teller. As LaRouche wrote in an open letter to the *Boston Globe* Nov. 16, the neo-Malthusians are afraid that the Reagan administration might reverse gears and go with a beam-weapons development program that will once again put the United States at the forefront of science and technology.

LaRouche was replying to a Nov. 13 editorial in the *Boston Globe*, "Pentagon Atari," which attacked space-based beam weapons as a high-tech gimmick that would not work, and called for national debate on the issue—an invitation that LaRouche said he would be "delighted" to take up.

This special report is intended to provide readers with the basic information they need to fully participate in such a national debate. LaRouche first proposed that beam-weapons development become the keystone of changes in U.S. strategic policy and in U.S.-Soviet strategic arms negotiations at an *EIR* seminar for military and diplomatic representatives in Washington, D.C. in February 1982. The National Democratic Policy Committee (NDPC) published LaRouche's policy state-



NSIPS



National Democratic Policy Committee leader Lyndon H. LaRouche (l), whose proposal for a crash U.S. beam-weapons development effort was recently echoed by physicist Edward Teller (r).

ment in March, and shortly after that, *EIR* commissioned and published a detailed technical paper on beam weapons by Fusion Energy Foundation spokesman Steven Bardwell.

In the weeks before the November elections, the issue gained media prominence as organizers for the NDPC and the Foundation confronted the “nuclear freeze” gatherings on campuses with the beam-weapon alternative to ending nuclear war. In particular, Bardwell’s two-week tour of California campuses disarmed the anti-nuclear, anti-technology freeze proponents by exposing the movement as a front for promoting conventional wars to depopulate the Third World.

During this same time period, Dr. Teller made public his support for a beam weapons campaign in a press conference at Washington’s National Press Club, and announced that he had met personally with President Reagan to tell him of the necessity and feasibility of such a program.

Now a full-scale fight is breaking into the open, with the neo-Malthusians in public taking the line that beam weapons are impossible—although in private they will admit that such weapons systems are scientifically and technologically possible. The NDPC, in addition to its legislative campaign to get a beam weapons development bill through Congress, is working with the FEF to sponsor campus forums and other meetings on beam weapons nationwide and will be printing large posters on beam weapons as the way to end the threat of nuclear war, as part of its public education campaign.

As LaRouche has posed the battle, beam weapons development must become the centerpiece of a *real* peace movement that includes as its goals the colonization of the Moon and the transfer of U.S. technology to the Third World.

Bardwell estimates that we could have the first generation of hybrid beam weapons within five years—if the United States puts a priority on beam research. Such beam weapons would be able to find, track, and destroy a nuclear-armed ICBM in mid flight, preventing its explosion. This would be an on-ground laser and a mirror in space, which would offer complete protection against an accidental ICBM launch or an attack by a runaway third power. In another ten years, a second-generation beam system could give us substantial protection, and in 15 years, more advanced and much more attractive possibilities, like the X-ray laser, could provide us with defense against all-out nuclear attacks.

What is a beam weapon?

Such beam weapons would make nuclear war obsolete. Beam weapons do not simply hit a missile silo or prevent a nuclear missile from being launched; they ensure that the nuclear warhead is destroyed in the stratosphere. There is no nuclear explosion, no nuclear holocaust.

At this point, the Soviet Union has a beam weapons research program that is between three and five times the size of the U.S. program, and they will have a space-based beam weapon deployed during the mid-1980s for use against other satellites as well as various air and ground targets.

As LaRouche, Bardwell, and Teller have each emphasized, the scientific and technological problems in developing a beam-weapons system are solvable; the only real problem is political. Will the American people let the White House know that it backs a full-scale effort to develop beam weapons as the only real peace program?