

# British try to rally NATO members against Reagan's beam-weapons policy

by George Gregory

Appropriately, the site of strategically sane and public responses in Europe to date to President Reagan's commitment to develop and deploy directed-energy beam weapons is Italy: the leading Catholic daily *L'Avvenire* on April 14 sent an unmistakable message to American bishops and Catholics that "there is something new in Reagan's project. It expresses an element conceptually progressive relative to the presently hegemonic strategic conception, because it moves from nuclear deterrence to anti-nuclear defense. . . . Who could possibly not see the danger of such unbalanced equilibrium of terror?"

Military spokesmen have also found their way into the press. Retired Adm. Franco di Gianbernardino wrote in *Il Giornale* April 15 that "the new system can be realized soon, within five years," and then detailed known Soviet achievements in the applications of laser technologies to weapons systems. With an insight remarkable nowadays in Europe, Admiral Gianbernardino also argued that beam weapons "will make negotiations on the Euromissiles easier," because "the concept of MAD—mutually assured destruction—would be abandoned."

In France and West Germany, however, official responses gravitate around West Germany's Defense Minister Manfred Wörner's formulation that U.S. development and deployment of beam weapons mean nothing to Europe, or will not mean anything until the year 2000. Behind official phraseology lies the fact that "the British are all over the place on a rampage against beam weapons," as one official close to the Bonn chancellery remarked in astonishment.

Especially in West Germany, political, military, and government circles generally are having a hard time making up their minds just what it is they fear most: Russian SS-20s, against which Pershing II IRBMs offer no defense, or the howlings of the British, upon whom West Germany depends so much for its semblance of a "stable" relationship with the Soviet Union—or even the fact that Reagan's beam weapon program ensures that the United States will not quit the world stage as a super power, militarily or economically.

## The Royal Institute doth protest

This confusion combines with the protest that "we have not yet been officially informed" of the new U.S. strategic doctrine to drop MAD. Five European foreign policy institutes, all modeled on the Royal Institute for International

Affairs (RIIA) in London, such as the Council on Foreign Relations in New York, jumped into the breach in mid-April with a report on "Recommendations for a European Security Policy." The study was authored by Karl Kaiser, also an adviser to former West German Chancellor Helmut Schmidt, from the German Society for Foreign Policy; Thierry de Montbrial from the Institut Français des Relations Internationales in Paris; William Wallace of the RIIA; Cesare Merlini from the Istituto Affari Internazionali in Rome; and Edmund Wellenstein from the Netherlands Instituut voor Internationale Betrekkingen. The report describes, in outline form, the "necessity of an independent European security policy," a favorite project of former British Foreign Minister Lord Carrington, in view of the United States "decoupling" from defense of Western Europe.

The authors are also quite blatant in their view that such "independence" gained by a U.S. "decoupling" is desirable for Western Europe in view of "differences of opinion" with the United States over issues of détente and economic relations with the Soviet Union. "There are voices heard today calling for a European defense structure as a kind of reassurance in case of a withdrawal of the United States from their alliance duties," the report says. While disclaiming any intent to seek an "equidistance" between the two superpowers, the report does say that a "European nuclear strike force would be required," under command of a European Defense Minister, "which would effect a minimal deterrence and which would have to consist of a strategic second strike capability of such a force that unacceptable damage could be caused upon the enemy; this strike force would have to include, furthermore, tactical nuclear weapons of medium- and short-range for deterrence in Europe"<sup>2</sup>—in other words, Europe should seek its own version of MAD.

"Recommendations for a European Security Policy" was issued on the eve of the meeting of the Trilateral Commission in Rome, where the chief subject on the agenda was defense policy, but not one word was said about the U.S. commitment to develop and deploy beam-weapons, nor about "mutually assured survival." Instead, Henry Kissinger loudly proclaimed that "developments 15 or 20 years hence" were irrelevant.

What is not irrelevant is the fact that, under continuation of the MAD strategic doctrine, the stationing of Pershing IIs in Western Europe marks what Lyndon LaRouche has called

a "countdown to nuclear war" because the very technology of the SS-20s and Pershings, both highly precise, low-flight-time weapons, signifies that the practical necessity of "launch on warning" would become policy. Christian Democratic advisers to the Bonn government have told *EIR* that the Soviets have "promised" that they would not "adopt a policy of launch on warning." With such "promises," the Soviets are feeding into British efforts to declare President Reagan's March 23 speech "irrelevant" (see article, p. 52).

However confused these advisers are about the significance of the President's speech, they admit that "this is a promise which it would be deadly to believe." Other advisers to the chancellery and foreign ministry in Bonn report that the Anglo-Soviet influence in France extends so far that some French circles are trying to convince the Germans that "the credibility of the U.S. deterrent has been so undermined by the Americans themselves that we [West Germany] will have no choice but to seek sanctuary under the French nuclear umbrella." Reportedly, confidential discussions have been offered to the West Germans on "convergence of strategic doctrine" on this matter, but so far the West Germans remain confused and cautious.

The very idea of making such an offer, however, clearly reflects the influence of Thierry de Montbrial's contribution to the "Recommendations for a European Security Policy" document.

A major problem is that the claim that the U.S. commitment to Europe is "not credible" carries considerable weight both in France and West Germany, because both countries are convinced that official NATO doctrine, and therefore U.S. policy, is represented by the so-called Rogers Plan, named for NATO Commander Bernard Rogers.

As a top CDU military adviser, who did not want to see his name in print, stated the point: "You recall the fact that Rogers worked for Maxwell Taylor for several years, and that Taylor is the military thinker of the 'Gang of Four,' " the "nuclear freeze movement" run by Robert McNamara. "It is no wonder that non-U.S. and non-British NATO staff people increasingly suspect that the purpose of demanding that we focus on an increased build-up of conventional forces in Western Europe is really the same thing that Robert McNamara is aiming for. In fact, privately, the joke is going around that our own peace movement extends all the way from our environmentalists into the top levels of the NATO command! Up to now, General Rogers had been able to cover it up, because he speaks official NATO-ese rather well, but the fact is that Robert McNamara is running NATO." In the same breath that this adviser repeated the official Bonn government assessment of beam weapons, that they mean nothing to Europe immediately, he also insisted that it was necessary for the United States and Soviets to get the "strategic context for negotiations clear," and praised Defense Secretary Caspar Weinberger's proposal for intensified redundancy in the "hot line" system to Moscow as a step in that direction.

**EIR Special**

EXECUTIVE INTELLIGENCE REVIEW

NOW AVAILABLE

## Special Technical Report

# A BEAM-WEAPONS BALLISTIC MISSILE DEFENSE SYSTEM FOR THE UNITED STATES

by Dr. Steven Bardwell, director of plasma physics for the Fusion Energy Foundation.

### This report includes:

- a scientific and technical analysis of the four major types of beam-weapons for ballistic missile defense, which also specifies the areas of the civilian economy that are crucial to their successful development;
- a detailed comparison of the U.S. and Soviet programs in this field, and an account of the differences in strategic doctrine behind the widening Soviet lead in beam weapons;
- the uses of directed energy beams to transform raw-materials development, industrial materials, and energy production over the next 20 years, and the close connection between each nation's fusion energy development program and its beam weapon potentials;
- the impact a "Manhattan Project" for beam-weapon development would have on military security and the civilian economy.

The 80-page report is available for \$250.  
For more information, contact Robert Gallagher  
or Peter Ennis (212) 247-8820.