

Administration's offensive for beam weapons

by Lonnie Wolfe

The White House dispatched several prominent spokesman during the third week in May to deliver a message: The President and his administration intend to reverse the doctrine of Mutually Assured Destruction (MAD) through the development of beam weapons, and will not be deterred by either the Soviet leadership or treacherous Americans like Henry Kissinger, Averell Harriman, and the congressional supporters of their untenable doctrine of MAD.

The most remarkable of these interventions came at a May 17 conference of the world's leading bankers in Brussels, where National Security Council senior economist Norman Bailey stated that a brute force program of investment and technological innovation like that carried out by the United States during World War II was required to free the world from depression. He said that the President's beam weapon proposal was just such a program. (See excerpts, page 6.)

Bailey's statements reflect ongoing discussions in the White House on the implementation of the President's March 23 speech overturning the MAD doctrine. These discussions informed the other policy interventions as well:

- On May 17, Undersecretary of Defense Richard DeLauer called a special press briefing to reaffirm the President's commitment to his anti-missile defense program. DeLauer said the President would back this commitment with additional funding proposals.

- On May 18, Undersecretary of Defense Fred Iklé, with arms control chief Kenneth Adelman at his side, told the arms control subcommittee of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee that the President's speech of March 23 overturning the MAD doctrine now defined the relationship between the superpowers and would govern how the administration considered arms control treaties. He strongly implied that the President would enter into no treaties that prevented his program from being carried out.

- Also on May 18, Adm. James Watkins, Chief of Naval Operations, called an extraordinary press conference to announce that the United States was prepared to seek and destroy Soviet missile-bearing submarines wherever they might hide, including under the polar ice cap. Such statements were the U.S. answer to recent Soviet submarine provocations in the Baltic, sources confirm.

- On May 19, Major Gen. Richard Lamberston, the head of the Office of Directed Energy Research of the Defense Department's Advanced Research Projects Agency, served

notice to 2,500 laser scientists gathered at a conference in Baltimore that the President would rely on them to solve all the engineering problems relating to his missile defense program. Gear up, get ready, the scientists were told, major funding is on the way.

Confusion in opposition ranks

The depth of this offensive and its open character had many of the opponents of the President's program scratching their heads. After the Iklé hearings, an aide to a Democratic beam weapon opponent admitted that the opposition to the President was losing the debate on the Hill. They are also getting no help from their plants inside the administration. "I just don't understand it," the aide complained. "No one is behaving according to profile."

What the aide and his Kissinger/Harriman allies fail to understand is the nature of the March 23 speech. The President, with the backing of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, gave an order to develop a defense against ballistic missiles that cannot be reversed by bureaucrats, no matter what their proclivities. The military command of the United States, under the guidance of the Joint Chiefs, is now carrying out that order, which overturns the MAD doctrine. Civilian personnel in relevant agencies are bound by that order, as they would be bound within a military command in wartime. They will be told what strategy is, not invited to make strategy.

That is what was indirectly stated in Admiral Watkins's press conference. After warning the Soviets about U.S. anti-submarine capabilities, Watkins discussed his differences with Navy Secretary John Lehman on deployment strategies for U.S. carrier battlegroups. Admiral Watkins stressed that Lehman is only an "administrative" official, and that the Joint Chiefs of Staff, set military strategy. The Secretary of Navy "does not set strategy or deployment for forces in the field."

Kissinger, Gov. Averell Harriman (currently in Moscow meeting with Yuri Andropov), and their allies on Capitol Hill console themselves that they still have time to stop the beam weapons program because the "big bucks" have not yet been announced. But as Bailey strongly implies, the "big bucks" are going to come; it is only a matter of time. The decision to go ahead was made before the President spoke on March 23 or he would not have spoken at all. That is how all competent strategic decisions are made, something Kissinger, Harriman, et al. know nothing about.