
Italian Military Policy

Beam weapons defense or conventional buildup

by Leonardo Servadio

In his address to the Aug. 20-23 conference on the "Technological Bases for Peace" in Erice, Italy, while the American scientists' delegation laid the basis for a policy of Mutual Assured Survival based on active defense systems, Gen. Umberto Cappuzzo, the Chief of Staff of the Italian Army, restated his full commitment to the policy of Mutually Assured Destruction (MAD) and of conventional regional warfare. Cappuzzo, in a speech remarkably out-of-tune with the rest of the conference, praised the policy of NATO Supreme Commander Bernard Rogers advocating a conventional arms build-up to overtake the Soviet Union's strategic lead.

The policy Cappuzzo restated at Erice is the exact opposite of the strategic doctrine implied by the proposal for joint East-West development of anti-missile directed energy systems: it asserts that MAD must continue to be the basis of strategic thinking, because the nuclear bomb is the highest possible achievement of military technology. The conclusion is that the only way to confront the enemy is conventional warfare. This assumes that the Soviets will agree to fight a series of conventional and proxy wars throughout the world in the context of a new, broader Yalta-like accord. This "New Yalta" implies the destruction of all existing nation states: Ibero-America would become a colony of the United States; Europe a satrapy of the Soviet Union. This is exactly the policy Henry Kissinger has been working for, increasingly since his recent return to a leading role in U.S. foreign policy.

The content of this policy was made explicit in an editorial in the Turin daily *La Stampa* by Arrigo Levi, one of the few Italian members of Kissinger's Trilateral Commission. Levi called on President Reagan to use the proposed development of the active defense systems, officially issued by Reagan's scientific adviser Edward Teller at Erice, as nothing more than a bargaining chip at the Geneva negotiating table, since such defensive weapons would have a "destabilizing effect for nuclear equilibrium and nuclear peace"—a point usually uttered in exactly those terms by Soviet spokesmen.

That Levi and Cappuzzo pursue that line is no surprise. Cappuzzo is primarily a sociologist, who worked as military attaché at the Italian embassy in Moscow for four years and succeeded in appealing to the Soviets. Since he became Army Chief of Staff, his policy has been slowly but steadily demoralizing the Italian army leadership.

The reason for an army's existence is to defend national sovereignty, not to fight proxy wars. Countries like Italy

which do not have nuclear weapons, but on whose territory nuclear weapons are stationed, have already virtually abandoned their sovereignty. But a defense system like the one Teller proposes will give back sovereignty to those countries, since such systems, being purely defensive, do not upset the equilibrium of forces. Therefore they could and should be deployed by each single nation threatened by nuclear attack.

Cappuzzo's policy is entirely consistent with that of Premier Bettino Craxi, who, after meeting Kissinger's protégé and special envoy to the Middle East, Robert McFarlane, announced that Italy intends to play the role of the "mediator" in the Mediterranean—mediating the Libya-Chad conflict, the Somalia-Ethiopia conflict, and perhaps also the Middle East conflict.

Soviet chief Yuri Andropov was so impressed by Craxi's desire to mediate that he immediately sent Craxi a letter demanding that he mediate the Euromissile question by helping to indefinitely postpone NATO's deployment of the Pershings and cruises.

Translated from Trilateral double talk, such "mediation" means conflict-creation in the context of the New Yalta. Part and parcel of this policy is naturally that while the army is engaged in out-of-area deployments, internally the national economy will be increasingly taken over by the Soviet Union.

If Craxi and Cappuzzo's programs were to succeed, the Italian Army would be soon split in two: a broad-based popular army, devoid of any real defense capacity and deployed solely for dealing with "natural catastrophes," like earthquakes, within Italy; and a highly select elite army for out-of-area deployments, in the perspective of an expanded conflict in North Africa.

General Giulio Macri of the Italian Army (ret.), a former lecturer at the U.S. Command and Staff College, Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, holds a very different view of strategic military policy from that of Umberto Cappuzzo. What follows is the text in translation of an open letter General Macri wrote to U.S. military personnel on July 25 from Rome:

Dear American friends:

With much regret I have been informed that the Reagan administration is considering shifting the present "first in Europe" strategy to a "first in the Pacific" strategy. I speak to you as a general of the Italian army, who fought part of the Second World War on your side, albeit as a mere lieutenant. Then, for three years I served with you under NATO in Naples when the Chief Command of Allied Forces in Southern Europe was first created, and next, from 1963 to 1966 I served as a high officer in the Supreme Headquarters of the Allied Powers in Europe (SHAPE) in Paris.

Between those two posts, for 10 years I was in charge of Italian relations with the NATO allies, and in particular with you Americans. So I was able to appreciate the indispensable role of the American bulwark, of this ideal bridge which still unites Europe and the U.S.A., as well as the unique role of the American armed forces and American influence in pre-

servicing stability and peace in the Middle East and throughout the Mediterranean. I saw the role of the United States from both Naples and Paris.

I think it would be a serious mistake to alter the present strategy, following the advice of those who do not want to comprehend the grave implications and the absurdity involved in such a radical change at this crucial juncture for both Europe and the Middle East. Those who argue for this shift are probably the same people who, under another administration, initiated one-way détente in the Warsaw Pact's favor. It is not difficult to realize that it was precisely from this one-way détente that the present peace movements, neutralism, and unilateral disarmament emerged and developed. Needless to say, all these movements benefit the Soviet Union, which on the one hand supports the peace movement, and on the other continues its arms buildup and secretly betrays all the signed agreements.

A change in U.S. strategy away from Europe can only be to the advantage of the Soviet Union, not only from a political standpoint but, most important to us military men, from the strategic standpoint. It is clear that in the Pacific, the United States can count on a solid ring of states and bases such as Japan, South Korea, Taiwan, the Philippines, and Australia, whereas in Europe the Western line [of defense] extends for thousands of kilometers from the north point in Norway to the eastern border of Turkey, without the necessary depth to permit serious defense. Secondly, the Pacific theatre is predominantly an air and naval sphere, where the U.S. and allied forces in the region can still decisively counter the potential enemy, without taking into account the attitude of immense China; while the European theatre as a whole is prevalently of an air-land character. There the Soviets manifest a superiority of at least three to one, according to the latest statistics in specialist journals.

As some of you know, I committed all my modest abilities to push the project for the development of laser and particle-beam weapons during the just-concluded election campaign as a candidate for the Partito Operaio Europeo in Italy. I made this commitment in the conviction that at this time Europe must be defended as a first priority and maintain closely its links to its U.S. ally.

I believed, and still believe, that I made the best decision. Lyndon H. LaRouche, Jr., who created the National Democratic Policy Committee within the U.S. Democratic Party and who has always pressed in the United States the idea of a Europe linked to the U.S. and the development of beam weapons as a defensive shield against Soviet ballistic missiles, must, in my opinion, be supported in the same way by you. Given the international economic crisis and given the relations of strength between NATO and the Warsaw Pact, which with the installation of the Euromissiles may get us into a new Cuban missile crisis, and above all since so many politicians have meddled in military problems, I think it is crucial that American military officers also begin to concern themselves with politics.

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