

# National News

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## Lowell Wood: 'Soviets shifted on beams at Erice'

In an interview with the Pleasanton, California *Valley Times*, Dr. Lowell Wood of Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory described the turnaround at the conference of Western and Soviet nuclear scientists on "Technological Bases for Peace" in Erice, Italy Aug. 20-23. At the outset, the Soviet delegation, he confirmed, had "strongly opposed" President Reagan's proposal for parallel superpower development of strategic ABM defense. "But," said Dr. Wood, "they thought of it very differently from what the President had in mind . . . [they assumed] that his strategic defense plan meant destroying Soviet missiles in their silos. When some of these misunderstandings became clarified, the Soviet position became one of interest."

The issue of testing "third-generation nuclear weapons [beam weapons] was debated vigorously" at the conference, reported Wood, who is a collaborator of Dr. Edward Teller. The Soviet delegation had been told before the conference by the head of the Soviet START talks delegation, Israelyan, that the deadlock of those negotiations made it likely they would not attend any future Erice conference. This Soviet official showed up in person at Erice for one day to make the same chilling point.

Dr. Wood's comments on this Soviet shift in stance on Reagan's beam weapons policy parallel the accounts of the Soviet delegation's shift in three leading West European newspapers during the last week in August.

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## Cal. senator calls for beam weapons research

Senator Pete Wilson (R-Calif.), during a tour

of the Lawrence Livermore Laboratory on Aug. 26, called a press conference to support an "aggressive nuclear weapons research program," including increasing support for research on beam weapons.

Wilson called for an full-scale research program "with an emphasis on third-generation nuclear weapons," to pursue the "potential to create a pathway to peace."

Wilson was briefed on the laboratory's research on lasers and other advanced high-energy weapons during his tour. He predicted that both Livermore's budget, and its focus on advanced, rather than conventional, weapons systems, would be sustained and expanded.

Wilson's tour came as a debate was surfacing between Livermore spokesmen and "nuclear freeze" advocates in the state, over the lab's underground nuclear weapons tests.

Another test of the "Excalibur" x-ray laser is believed scheduled for Sept. 7, and opponents have begun to float the claim that the x-ray laser will have to be tested for some components in space, thus violating the Partial Nuclear Test Ban Treaty of 1963.

It is expected that this formula will be put forward in September and October defense budget debates.

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## Indian satellite launch a major breakthrough

The eighth Shuttle mission deployed the Indian National Satellite, INSAT-1B, on Aug. 31. About 45 minutes after the satellite was released from the payload bay, a Payload Assist Module was fired to raise it to geosynchronous orbit.

INSAT-1B, the second in a series of multipurpose communications and weather satellites, was built by Ford Aerospace in Michigan. Twelve channels will provide telephone, television, and other forms of telecommunications throughout India.

Two extra-powerful channels will provide direct-broadcast capability for televi-

sion transmission straight from the satellite to small home antennas.

The larger the power capacity of the satellite, the smaller the ground equipment needed. For India, this means that inexpensive televisions and radios could be provided to rural areas for widespread educational programs.

INSAT-1B will also give India improved weather forecasting capabilities. Meteorological data will be supplied from points throughout the country that are gathering data, and the satellite will carry a Very High Resolution Radiometer for additional weather data.

An important objective of this Shuttle flight is to check out another satellite that is already in orbit—the Tracking and Data Relay Satellite, or TDRS. This communications satellite was launched on the sixth Shuttle flight in April but, due to problems in its upper stage, did not attain a proper orbit until a few weeks ago.

The TDRS can relay information from objects in space to the ground at a faster data rate than older generations of satellites. The TDRS must be ready for full operation by the ninth Shuttle mission at end-of-October, when Spacelab makes its maiden flight, because the many scientific experiments aboard Spacelab will generate large amounts of data simultaneously.

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## Report challenges Agent Orange scare

Dr. Alan R. Young of the Veterans Administration has reported that, after a study of 85,000 Vietnam veterans who fear they may have been exposed to Agent Orange, the defoliant used during the Vietnam War, "Nothing stands out as related to dioxin or Agent Orange exposure." Dr. Young spoke at the national meeting of the American Chemical Society on Aug. 29.

"There were a wide variety of health problems, but they were of a sort that one

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sees in a population of males growing older," he reported.

The study found a slight increase in the form of cancer called lymphoma, but smaller than expected numbers of soft tissue sarcomas, a rare form of cancer often attributed to exposure to dioxin.

Although media response to Dr. Young's statements, as exemplified by the Aug. 30 *New York Times*, stressed the slight increase in lymphomas and stated that 10 to 15 years was not enough time for cancer to develop, the evidence does not exist to support the allegations of increased incidence of cancer and other diseases after exposure.

Groups organizing scare campaigns against chemicals are associated with scientists such as Matthew Meselson of Harvard, a participant in a wartime meeting in Hanoi who issued grossly distorted statements about chemical damage in Vietnam. These groups, including the Council For a Liveable World, have been targeting U.S. electrical power and industrial capability. Agriculture-related areas such as herbicide and pesticide production have been a prime focus of attack.

Despite anecdotal horror stories by individuals connected with these networks, numerous studies, going back 30 years or more, have failed to document any major problem for human populations besides skin rashes.

### Vail group challenges 'present world leaders'

The Gerald Ford Second World Forum, which drew Henry Kissinger, ex-President Gerald Ford, former West German Chancellor Helmut Schmidt, ex-president of France Valéry Giscard d'Estaing, and other former national leaders from the Kissinger-Nixon-Ford period, to Colorado on Aug. 27-28 for discussions on the state of the world, was summed up by Schmidt as "a beautiful experience: a conspiracy of former

world leaders against present world leaders."

Schmidt and other conference participants had repeatedly attacked President Reagan, among other things for failing to reach an arms agreement with the Soviet Union and refusing to impose strong enough measures of domestic austerity in the United States.

At the Aug. 27 round of meetings, Gerald Ford attacked Reagan on the same issues. Ford said that the budget deficit must be pared down by cutting U.S. military outlays, and increasing taxes in 1984-85. The *Washington Post* added that Ford favors a bigger U.S. push for an arms control agreement with the Soviet Union.

In an ABC-TV interview, Helmut Schmidt pointed to the "political menace" created by the high unemployment and economic stagnation throughout the world, which he accurately compared to the situation during the 1930s preceding Hitler's rise. Schmidt simply went on to complain of the "volatility" of the last four U.S. presidents—especially the last two—in this situation.

Former British Prime Minister James Callaghan called for the U.S. State Department to be built up into a more authoritative institution, with even more career professionals. "I don't think I'll become a State Department spokesman," he quipped, "but I'd like to."

Giscard d'Estaing stated, "Ten years ago, we were entering into a world crisis; now we are getting out of it, though there are more tensions." Callaghan added: "There is no more danger of war now than 10 years ago"—but then went on to list the increase of nuclear weapons and proliferation, and the debt crisis.

Gerald Ford broke the anti-Reagan profile of the Vail meeting for a moment when he commented, in response to a question by an *EIR* correspondent, that U.S.-Soviet cooperation in developing beam weapons technology could "possibly" be part of a solution to East-West tension, providing that the Soviets didn't use it as a cover for stealing U.S. secrets.

● **PAMELA HARRIMAN**, wife of Averell Harriman and former wife of Winston Churchill III, is reportedly considering running for Congress from New York. The British-born Mrs. Harriman has run "Democrats for the 80s," a PAC-cum-salon, in close association with Robert Strauss for several years.

● **HARLEY SCHLANGER**, Southwest region coordinator of the National Democratic Policy Committee, announced the last week of August that he would run for U.S. Senate from Texas.

● **AIDS** created a difficulty in attempts to merge the civil rights, gay, and freeze movements at the Aug. 28 march on Washington. Because of fear of infection by many sections of the civil rights movement, march coordinators devised a novel ID system to distinguish groups in the march. Each group carried assigned colored helium balloons: green for blacks and Hispanics, white for religious groups, orange for environmentalists. Gays and lesbians carried brown balloons.

● **BARBARA HONEGGER** who resigned from the U.S. Department of Justice in late August, charging that President Reagan did not care about women's rights, announced Aug. 22 that "voices had told her" to resign from her post. After receiving wide publicity on her claims of discrimination, Honegger revealed that she is clairvoyant, and the first person in the United States to get a masters' degree in parapsychology. Women's movement organizations which had given Honegger ardent support are reportedly dismayed by her revelations.