

## Editorial

### *The next step for defense*

The original proponent of a comprehensive beam-weapons strategic defense for the United States, *EIR* founder Lyndon H. LaRouche, Jr., predicts that the U.S. will have a relatively primitive but effective ballistic-missile defense system in place before 1988. "The present talk of longer-range stretch-out of a \$200 billion program," LaRouche said on Oct. 20, "is a matter of the administration's stating what it believes to be politically wise to propose at the present stage of the election campaign."

The only things which could stop the U.S. from reaching the 1988 target, LaRouche says, would be a capitulation to the present Soviet escalation toward an early thermonuclear confrontation, or an actual thermonuclear war. "Unless President Reagan backs down—which I do not think is his temperament," LaRouche stated, "the President is going to have to reshape his timetables very soon on the basis of developments which I believe he does not expect will actually occur during 1984. Some time after the first of the year, the Soviets are going to hit the United States very hard with threats of a first strike against the United States itself, and by major geopolitical operations in various parts of the world. . . . The President will be forced to choose between capitulation and accelerating U.S. defenses. My reading of the President's character is that he will choose the latter, no matter how big a shakeup that may mean inside the administration or in his election-campaign policy."

LaRouche warns against a wrong interpretation of recent major breakthroughs in beam-weapons and related defensive technologies. "I have observed Dr. Teller closely enough over years to know that he is fanatically honest, even when he has been mistaken, and he does not claim to have made a breakthrough unless the breakthrough has actually been made; therefore, we should take Dr. Teller's remarks in Texas as a straight matter of fact" (see National). LaRouche's argument is that we must not assume that a 1988 target date has "suddenly become possible because of these or other major breakthroughs which will occur during the coming months. I fully anticipated a fast pace of such breakthroughs when I first designed such a strategic policy

back at the end of 1981."

LaRouche states that he is assuming that events will push the U.S. government toward a crash program like the economic mobilization of 1939-43. Somewhere between \$25 and \$35 billion should be spent on strategic ABM defense systems' development during fiscal year 1985, and probably as high as \$40 billion annually after that. "The best estimate of cost of development of a primitive but effective defense-system is about \$200 billion. How soon we have a first-generation system depends upon how rapidly we can invest \$200 billion in designing and deploying such a system."

LaRouche, who has recently declared his candidacy for the Democratic Party's 1984 presidential nomination, also argues that the U.S. and Western Europe should launch an immediate crash program in an overlapping area of technology. "We now have," he stated, "proven prototypes for chemical-laser anti-missile weapons to be placed in aircraft and on naval vessels. I don't care how primitive such weapons seem to be, compared with what we could develop two or three years from now; I wish those systems available to our Air Force and Navy right now. Since Lazare Carnot's reforms of 1793 and 1794, warfare has always been a game of technological attrition—get a new design into use in some half-baked but workable form as fast as possible, and produce the improved version as soon as possible afterward."

LaRouche argues that "the general problem is building up a very broad and rapidly advanced logistical base for the new technology. . . . Start developing laboratory and production facilities for both tactical and strategic systems now, and give our military arms the broadest possible range of opportunities to become familiar with these technologies right now. We have a lot of unemployed people and a lot of idle capacity; put some of these idle productive powers to work quickly—it will do wonders for the federal, state, and local tax-revenue base and help move budgets back toward balance again. A crash program on tactical applications now will build up the production capacities and skills we need for accelerating the development of strategic systems."