

## West Germany joins the Strategic Defense Initiative

by George Gregory

The Federal Republic of Germany has said "yes!" to the Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI). At the Wehrkunde Society's annual gathering of Western military elites in Munich Feb. 9-10, Chancellor Helmut Kohl dropped his government's long-standing skepticism about the program and made it clear that his country—with its high-technology industry—is ready to participate, in the interests of defending the Western alliance as a whole.

"We ought to counter the Eastern argument," said Kohl, "that a 'demilitarization of outer space' is necessary with reference to the shift of emphasis intended with SDI from offensive nuclear weapons to defensive conventional measures." Addressing the left Social Democrats and the "peace movement," Kohl continued, "Is it not paradoxical that those who have hitherto been the strongest opponents of the strategy of nuclear deterrence should now, by rejecting SDI, turn out indirectly, to be its champions?"

A diplomatic note will soon be delivered from Washington to Bonn, to officially request that the Federal Republic participate in joint research to develop technologies for the defense shield.

### No to the 'decouplers'

Kohl's speech has dealt a powerful blow to Soviet efforts to divide Western Europe from the United States, and thereby gain the leverage required to crush the American SDI effort. The Soviet-backed drive by Henry Kissinger, Sen. Sam Nunn, and other "decouplers" to engineer a U.S. military disengagement from Europe—and sabotage the SDI—is also now in deep trouble. For it is precisely the repeated assurances to Western Europe from President Reagan, Defense Secretary Caspar Weinberger, and other U.S. spokesmen that the SDI

does *not* signify a "Fortress America" split-off from Europe, that has convinced Kohl to give the program his government's support.

Weinberger reiterated this in his speech at the conference: "Twice in this century the United States has concluded that a fight for Europe's freedom was a fight for our own. If the concept of a Fortress America proved a dangerous and foolish illusion in 1917 and 1941, how much worse it would be in today's shrunken world. There is no fortress, and there can be no retreat. America could not survive, nor live, in a world in which Europe was overrun and conquered."

A most significant intervention at the Wehrkunde conference came from Dr. Edward Teller, a close scientific adviser to President Reagan and long-time supporter of the SDI. He described in detail the scientific, technological, and economic benefits that would derive from the industrial revolution that the SDI would create—for all the alliance countries.

West German industrialists did not need much convincing. They have long been quietly studying the SDI budget projections, and have determined potential areas for their own contributions. In government institutions, laboratories, industries, and in the military, hardly anyone is now trying to hide his exuberance. "The chancellor's speech opened the gates wide open! When we get the go-ahead, European industry is so intertwined, that all of Europe will be on board. Almost nothing can go wrong," was a typical remark.

Others displayed a hard-nosed determination to make sure that the Federal Republic gets its fair share of the action. A parliamentarian in Munich insisted that West Germany not be relegated to the status of "casting the steel plating," where American scientists do the top-of-the-technology-line work. Another expert says, "We have to make sure that our past

experience is not repeated, where the Americans put up the scientists, and we are graciously allowed to manufacture the laboratory coats for their scientists.”

U.S. Undersecretary of Defense Richard Perle stated in Munich that two lines of cooperation were unfolding: joint research programs fully open to applications in the United States and West Germany, and contracting for components for SDI systems. The United States has made it known to the Europeans that a share of SDI contracts will be open for bidding by European firms if their contributions are really at the top of the technological line.

A high-level team from the SDI organization will soon visit Bonn for the most intensive briefings and discussions on the current status of work in the United States, and to concretize research cooperation projects.

### **A new political configuration**

These deliberations are creating a new German-American “special relationship,” in which Germany is emerging as a spokesman for all of Western Europe. The French have noticed it, and so have the British. This represents the birth of a totally new era of German foreign policy, in which the German-American “axis” will no longer mean that Bonn has to follow Washington, right or wrong. Nor is it a “special relationship” on the U.S.-British model, with the “British tail wagging the American dog.”

Bavarian Minister President Franz-Josef Strauss, in his speech at the conference, underlined that Europeans have to overcome their disgruntlement toward the United States: unhappiness when the United States was practically invulnerable to Soviet nuclear weapons, and then equal unhappiness when the United States became just as vulnerable as Western Europe. Strauss insisted that Western Europe is safest when the United States is secure itself, and that, therefore, the United States must not allow Soviet moves to stall or sabotage the Geneva arms talks to have any effect upon the development of the SDI.

How will the rest of Europe respond? France represents the principal Soviet Trojan horse at present. For the first time, the Wehrkunde meeting was attended by the French defense minister, Charles Hernu, whose presentation reiterated the anti-SDI position of the French government, and explicitly formulated French policy as a defense of Mutual Assured Destruction—with one mention of the fact that Soviet ABM systems and advanced efforts in beam-weapon defenses are already degrading the deterrent value of the French nuclear forces, the *force de frappe*.

Hernu’s speech prompted German participants to demand that he explain the French conception of strategic stability, because, as the Germans explained, “We have the feeling that French strategy is to let German soldiers fight to the last man in the defense of France, and then when the threat comes home to you, you will drop nuclear bombs on our heads.” No European could be satisfied with strategic stability the way

Hernu formulated it, when he stated, “It has been said that French nuclear bombs will fall on German heads, but Russian nuclear bombs will, too.”

Yet, France most desperately needs the technological and economic benefits of cooperating in the framework of the SDI, and this will be high on the agenda in the discussions to change French opposition to the program in the coming months.

Out of the crisis of French policy, however, the West German chancellor indirectly gains internal strength from which to help solve that crisis. This is because the anti-SDI grouping in the West German Social Democracy, represented by arms-control strategist Egon Bahr at the Wehrkunde meeting, demonstrated that it has been driven into a corner by the Bonn government’s policy orientation. Bahr and the SDI rejection front no longer enjoy a hegemonic position even among the Social Democrats. Yet, Bahr attempted to agitate against the SDI with arguments which, as Dr. Edward Teller demonstrated in his own responses to Bahr’s speech, are simply incompetent. “The Soviet response,” Bahr argued, “to American endeavors, whether it be the Strategic Defense Initiative, or, more popularly, the concept of ‘Star Wars,’ could, *inter alia*, be an increase in its offensive-capable intercontinental ballistic missile potential.”

### **Resistance crumbles**

The view in West Germany is that Chancellor Kohl also has an excellent potential for overcoming British resistance to the SDI. As one German official said, “Have you seen the British reactions to the Wehrkunde meeting? They are jealous, and that means they are thinking, because they only really think when they are jealous.”

British Industry Minister Norman Tebbit certainly confirmed this assessment, remarking that “there seem to be some European arms industries that are hanging their snouts in a trough [SDI] that has yet to be filled.” Britain’s Minister of Information and Technology Geoffrey Pattie agreed that “the SDI could lead to a massive rise in military spending. . . . Some Europeans are eagerly trying to sniff out the rewards of the SDI.”

Despite such comments, which West German officials interpret to mean that resistance is crumbling fast in England, the view in England following Defense Secretary Weinberger’s recent address to the Royal College of Defense Studies and the address by Chancellor Kohl in Munich, is that the British are now “fully on board the SDI bandwagon.” Several British sources report that the impetus behind the European steamroller for the SDI is the emphasis given recently by Reagan and Weinberger to the civilian economic spin-offs of the program.

Industrial and manufacturing circles in England, Italy, Holland, Denmark, and other countries are also insisting that they have no intention of being “left out” of the coming economic boom.

## Speeches from the Wehrkunde meeting

*The following are excerpts from speeches delivered at the 22nd annual conference of the Wehrkunde Society, held Feb. 9-10 in Munich, West Germany.*

### **Kohl: Germany will join the SDI**

*Keynote speech by West German Chancellor Helmut Kohl, titled "The Federal Republic of Germany and Europe in the North Atlantic Alliance." Text abridged; official government translation.*

Mr. Reagan's Strategic Defense Initiative will be the dominating issue in the years ahead. We should be aware of the philosophical and moral considerations behind this initiative and of President Reagan's deep personal commitment, and thus take them seriously.

The basic idea is for both sides to abandon the deterrence strategy of Mutual Assured Destruction and instead adopt a position in which each is capable of reliably defending itself. Slogans, especially those coming from the East, about the militarization of space and the American aspiration to nuclear supremacy, are misleading. Outer space is already being used to a considerable extent for military purposes. Offensive strategic nuclear weapons travel through space. The Soviet Union possesses the only operable anti-satellite system. It can also carry a nuclear payload. The Soviet Union too is engaged in research on strategic defensive systems without saying much about it. This research is more advanced than is generally known.

We ought to counter the Eastern argument that a "demilitarization of outer space" is necessary, with a reference to the shift of emphasis intended with SDI from offensive nuclear weapons to defensive conventional weapons. Is it not paradoxical that those who have hitherto been the strongest opponents of the strategy of nuclear deterrence should now, by rejecting SDI, turn out, indirectly, to be its champions?

It is of crucial importance that

- the Soviet Union should explicitly recognize that SDI research does not violate the provisions of the ABM Treaty and
- the United States, as promised in Geneva, will enter

into negotiations with the Soviet Union before developing or introducing such systems.

The Federal Government will not only look into the arms control and military strategy aspects of SDI but also take into account its implications for the Alliance and its economic and technological elements. It is still too early to make a final assessment of strategic defense. Not before the end of this decade will research in the United States have reached a point where a conclusive evaluation can be made. At the present time it is possible to identify the following objectives:

- A space-based defense system must make full allowance for the strategic unity of the area embraced by the Alliance.
- Strategic instability, especially during a possible transition phase, must be avoided.
- The Strategic Defense Initiative of the United States, owing to its far-reaching consequences, especially for our security, presupposes the closest possible consultations both bilaterally and within the Alliance. We are grateful to the United States Government for keeping us up to date.
- SDI, irrespective of whether research produces the intended results, will spark a considerable technological innovation in the United States. A highly industrialized economy like the Federal Republic of Germany and the other European allies must not be technologically decoupled.
- The American space program is a powerful incentive for the Soviet Union to negotiate.

The concept of strengthening strategic stability, which was originally presented by the United States and ultimately became one of the objectives of the negotiations by mutual consent, will be crucial to the success of the Geneva negotiations. It is already apparent that, at the moment, the two superpowers give this concept different interpretations. The United States believes that by introducing SDI it can maintain and ultimately improve "strategic stability." The Soviet Union appears to take the view that the only way of ensuring strategic stability is by obstructing the space designs of the United States.

Without wishing to offer a panacea for the negotiations, the Federal Government sees the concept of "strategic stability" as containing the following elements:

- the maintenance of a high first-strike risk which in the final analysis will be untenable for both sides;
- efforts to improve war-prevention capabilities through the introduction of the defensive element into the deterrence strategy;
- the fixing of a new ratio between offensive and defensive systems, taking into account existing new technologies;
- neither side should seek supremacy. It will be necessary to ensure that technological developments on either side do not destabilize the relationship between the two superpowers;
- effective crisis management to exclude the outbreak of

war as a result of technical or human failure.

East-West politics must not be confined to arms control and security issues. Nor should they consist exclusively of a global bilateralism between the two superpowers, with European matters being treated as regional problems. We sincerely trust that the negotiating process will usher in a development that will improve the general climate between East and West and open up the ways to contacts among all concerned and at all levels. We are convinced that this will bring us to an end of a campaign in which the unfounded accusations leveled at our country have distorted its image beyond recognition.

The Federal Republic of Germany has contributed to a substantial extent to the increase in NATO infrastructure measures. It has developed a stable economic and social order at the dividing line with the Warsaw Pact. It helps weaker members of the alliance to make their defense contribution. The outlays for Berlin and the substantial amounts of Eurodollars that flow to the United States from the Federal Republic of Germany must also be counted as defense efforts in a broader sense. Many efforts which have to be made here in Europe at the front line cannot be measured in figures: They range from extended military service for conscripts to the psychological strains on the population and the multiplicity of military activities here in this densely populated region.

Allow me at this point to comment briefly on the Nunn Amendment. Any demands by Congress to the U.S. administration to withdraw some of the American troops from Europe so as to induce the Europeans to make greater defense contributions would, if effect were given to them, merely be counterproductive. They would also send the wrong signals to the East. In the Alliance, we are dependent upon each other. Whoever wishes to strengthen the Alliance must first of all exercise solidarity. The conventional defense capability, which we are all concerned about and which we want to improve to the best of our ability, would not be enhanced, but weakened if the Nunn Amendment were implemented.

### **Weinberger: We are not a 'Fortress America'**

*Speech by U.S. Defense Secretary Caspar Weinberger, titled "Seizing the Future: The Strategic Defense Initiative's Promise for NATO." Text abridged.*

Ronald Reagan may be America's youngest and *least* reactionary President. One of his boldest steps has been to propose, through his Strategic Defense Initiative, that we not simply bow to technological imperatives, but instead strive to channel technology to achieve new possibilities for peace. Strategy need not always just react to technology. Indeed, technology should be the hand-maiden of strategy. Today we have an opportunity to let strategic vision guide us in our pursuit of technological opportunity.

I must say that I was baffled by the outcry against this

initiative from what in America we ironically call opinion leaders. (I say ironically because we are convinced that a large majority of our people supports the initiative.) After all, President Reagan has proposed nothing more than that we *explore* the possibility of defending ourselves and our allies against ballistic missiles, through a research program that is entirely consistent with our treaty obligations, and certainly is only prudent given the tremendous Soviet advances in this area and the dangerous potential of a Soviet ABM treaty breakout.

Some of you, I suspect, are thinking that I have the question all wrong. The real issue in Western Europe, you might argue, is whether Europeans will become hostages to the Soviet Union as the United States retreats to an illusory fortress across the ocean.

As President Reagan strongly reaffirmed just recently, "Our vital interests and those of our allies are inextricably linked. Their safety and ours are one."

This is not just comforting rhetoric. It is historical fact. Twice in this century the United States has concluded that a fight for Europe's freedom was a fight for our own. If the concept of Fortress America proved a dangerous and foolish illusion in 1917 and 1941, how much worse would it be in today's shrunken world? There is no fortress, and there can be no retreat. America could not survive, nor live, in a world in which Europe was overrun and conquered.

Finally we should bear in mind that the strategic defense we are working on would be equally effective against the SS-20 and other intermediate-range Soviet weapons.

Let us not be enthralled by what Henry Kissinger has called "the historically amazing theory that vulnerability contributed to peace, and invulnerability contributed to the risks of war." If we look beyond the peculiar theology of MAD [Mutual Assured Destruction—ed.] to the essence of deterrence, we see that an effective defense—even if it were not a perfect defense, although we would always strive to make it perfect—could substantially raise the costs, and enhance the uncertainty, of aggression. It would provide insurance against a world in which the Soviets—and the Soviets alone—could brandish their sword from behind the protective shield *they* are continuing to develop.

It is worth pointing out that the Soviets themselves have never subscribed to the worth of mutual vulnerability. For years they have pursued a major research effort into defensive technologies. Indeed, the Soviet Union is almost certainly violating the ABM treaty by constructing a large ballistic-missile early warning radar in Siberia, which is located and oriented in a manner prohibited by the treaty.

I believe that the President's vision of nuclear peace through defense can, in the end, appeal more realistically and persuasively to expressed Soviet concerns than an approach based on mutual vulnerability. The Soviets have already cooperated with us in certain areas to reduce the risk of nuclear

war. It should not be impossible to work with the Soviets to create a new arrangement that offers far more safety to both our societies and those of our allies.

I believe that the President's Strategic Defense Initiative gives us a special, indeed unique, opportunity to pass on not just responsibility but hope to NATO's next generation: the hope that peace can be maintained, not by the threat of nuclear destruction, but by a strong defense which could not only deter, but defeat, the most awful offense of all.

### **Teller: SDI will 'revolutionize industry'**

*Dr. Edward Teller emphasized in his speech the potential of Strategic Defense Initiative technology to transform industry and agriculture, according to a report in the Boston Globe on Feb. 12 by correspondent William Beecher. Beecher describes the process underway at the Wehrkunde meeting as "beating star-wars technology into profitable plowshares." The following account is based on the Globe's summary.*

"Industry will be revolutionized," Dr. Teller declared. "Those of our allies who don't want to participate will fall behind in their peaceful economies." X-ray lasers, he explained, will make possible detailed pictures of viruses and molecules with enormous implications for agriculture and industry. Low-energy lasers can be used for observation, high-energy lasers to precisely shape the hardest materials, highly accurate lasers for electronics.

The Germans, who are worried they may be falling behind the Americans and Japanese in high technology, pleaded for an official commitment from Washington to let them participate. Assistant Secretary of Defense Richard Perle replied: "I can see no limit, in theory, to the degree to which the best minds, the best labs, the best industrial bases in Europe can contribute. One obvious way is for contracts to be made available for bidding in Europe, and I have no doubt we will find ways to do it."

### **Hernu: No to a 'space arms race'**

*Excerpt from the speech by French Defense Minister Charles Hernu. Translation by EIR.*

Today space is emerging among the challenges that Europe has to take up. The technological, scientific, and industrial perspectives opened by peaceful use of space are considerable. By virtue of the lead they have achieved, the two superpowers have begun new projects that require thorough investigation. Their feasibility is not yet certain, nor the conditions under which these systems could be deployed. France, for its part, holds firm to the peaceful use of space, for this conditions stability at the lowest level of armament. The first military use of space occurred over two decades ago. Today, totally new paths are now being struck, in which it is planned to station killer satellites or ABM systems in space.

If such systems are deployed, it is to be presumed that the old dialectic of bullet and armor will also hold true for nuclear

armament. Nuclear weapons were protected from this previously, for the reason that no defense against nuclear weapons was conceivable. This incontestable reality protected the world, and especially Europe, from a catastrophe that had destroyed the war-waging powers. The certainty of facing damages out of proportion to expected gains led to a balance of the threat and consequently promoted peace.

It is not evident that the balance that would result from stationing defensive systems and from the reduction of offensive weapons would in fact be stable. Who can really believe that the negotiating partners would not agree on a certain number of offensive weapons that would at least be sufficient to saturate the opposing defensive systems? Should such a situation occur, the question would be posed, whether the given conditions of balance had really been changed, for in the final analysis each power would retain the capability of causing the opponent unacceptable damages.

If one assumes that the extent of offensive armament could be reduced to a level beneath the threshold of saturation of the opponent's defense systems, then there would surely open new perspectives in strategic stability between the superpowers. One must assume, however, that such a situation would only be conceivable to the extent that the competition between the two superpowers had turned into a complicity that would eliminate their rivalry.

Must one *a priori* exclude such a perspective? Surely not, but it is to be assumed with the highest probability, as history teaches, that it will come to a new push in the competition of offensive armament because of stationing of defensive systems. There thus exist real risks of instability. For this reason, France has welcomed the resumption of negotiations to promote the peaceful use of space, so that no new arms race results.

### **Bahr: SDI will 'militarize' space**

*Excerpt from the speech by Egon Bahr, the leading arms-control spokesman for the West German Social Democratic Party (SPD), architect of Willy Brandt's Ostpolitik, and one of Germany's top advocates of a "New-Yalta" deal with the Soviet Union. Translation by the SPD.*

Nobody can say or decree that the SDI will become feasible. In the light of historical experience, there is nothing to be said for projecting a Maginot Line into space. But quite apart from this, it could be that only partial successes are achieved, or results which open up new offensive possibilities. Anything stationed in space in order to deter from aggression could also be used to launch an attack. And the discussion about killer satellites (ASAT) shows how little both sides are, jointly or separately, prepared to have confidence in the appeal. It would therefore be better and, incidentally, also cheaper to prevent the militarization of space, and for mankind it would be more fruitful to concentrate the ingenuity of its researchers and engineers and its money on developing a structural defensive capability on earth.