

## The SDI: President Reagan reasserts basic doctrine

by Vin Berg

In his nationally televised press conference at the White House on Sept. 17, President Ronald Reagan reasserted the doctrinal approach to the Strategic Defense Initiative he had originally adopted on March 23, 1983, when he first stunned the world by announcing the program. The perspective on the SDI of his administration, the President made absolutely clear, is not restricted to acquiring a new weapons system, but one of instituting an altogether new military doctrine.

SDI policy is not simply to develop a directed-energy weapon to knock missiles out of the sky; rather, given those prospects, the SDI is the leading feature of a new military policy-aim governing such weapons development, deployment, etc. This new doctrine, replacing the 40-year-old Mutually Assured Destruction (MAD) doctrine, might best be termed Mutually Assured Survival.

Emphasizing repeatedly, in the face of press questioning largely hostile to his doctrine, that the SDI's purpose is to protect people, to destroy (not protect) missiles, and to render nuclear weapons "impotent and obsolete"—his words of 1983—the President rejected any interpretation, limitation, or policy-approach to SDI still consistent with the MAD doctrine.

The President was only most emphatic in rejecting the linked notions that the program was a "bargaining chip" in talks with the Russians, and might be limited to "point defense" of missile silos—the notions associated with the recent propaganda utterances of Henry Kissinger, Zbigniew Brzezinski, and George Shultz's State Department.

In rejecting Kissinger, the President was also rejecting Mikhail Gorbachov. The latter has submitted an "offer" through the courteous pages of *Time* magazine to reduce Soviet offensive weapons in exchange for cuts or delays in SDI. But as White House officials subsequently confirmed, the President on Sept. 17 effectively announced that not weapons-systems "trade-offs," but the strategic doctrine

governing weapons decisions, would be the premiere item on the agenda in his November summit with the Soviet party leader.

As far as President Reagan is concerned, MAD is dead, in favor of the "new hope" offered to the world by SDI's elimination of the nuclear threat.

"I think at this summit meeting," said the President, "what we should take up is the matter of turning toward defensive weapons as an alternative to this just-plain-naked nuclear threat of each side saying we can blow up each other."

Earlier, the *Washington Post* had reported that, even though Defense Secretary Weinberger and the Pentagon opposed bargaining away any part of SDI, its use as a "bargaining chip" was being "seriously considered" under the influence of Shultz's State Department.

No, the President stressed. "With regard to whether that would be a bargaining chip, I don't see it as that at all. This is too important to the world, to have us be willing to trade that off for a different number of nuclear missiles, when there are already enough to blow both countries out of the world." This technology is being developed because it "can realistically eliminate these horrible offensive weapons, nuclear weapons, entirely."

### Setting the tone for the summit

According to the *Washington Post*, which had quickly to backtrack on its earlier report, on Sept. 19, an "authoritative administration official" followed up the President's remarks by telling reporters that the "massive Soviet arms buildup puts very much in question" the 1972 Anti-Ballistic Missile (ABM) Treaty devised by Kissinger and the Kremlin. Although it did not ban development of defensive weapons based on "new physical principles," precisely the focus of SDI, their deployment requires new negotiations under the treaty.

But "it might be wise," said the official, to modify the treaty. The President, he said, will tell Gorbachov that America has fallen so far behind Moscow in offensive strategic weapons that reliance on MAD and offensive deterrence "may not work in the years ahead," and the superpowers should thus turn to defensive weapons.

The unnamed official stated that the Soviet Union clearly has its own "Star Wars" program under way on a much larger scale than the United States, and, on a crash basis; the Soviets are otherwise known to have violated the ABM Treaty massively.

The question of doctrine will come first at Geneva. "The senior official said Reagan will be making a series of public statements on superpower relations before the summit begins. The official . . . said Reagan intends to use the summit for a 'thorough exchange' with Gorbachov on the doctrine of deterrence which the superpowers have relied on for the last 40 years." Both nations have reached a "joint conclusion" that they believe in strategic defense, but the Soviets "want to circumscribe ours," he told the reporters.

### Weinberger vs. Kissinger-Brzezinski

On the same day that the "authoritative administration source" was briefing the press, Secretary of Defense Weinberger used his formal Pentagon press briefing to reject the Kissinger-Brzezinski "point defense" tactic. In this approach, SDI would be limited to deployment around U.S. missile silos, thus remaining wholly within the MAD framework—but worse, intensifying superpower tensions and nullifying European benefit or participation in the program.

The administration's commitment is to the full, three-tiered (forward, intermediate, and point) SDI defense, said Weinberger, thus clearing the water.

### Back to the 'LaRouche Doctrine'

As citizens may recall, President Reagan's March 23, 1983 speech announcing "Star Wars" (as the press quickly slandered it), made no mention of any specific weapons system or technology. Rather, he spoke of gradually reorienting the military resources of the United States, away from more offensive nuclear firepower, and increasingly toward creation of defenses to "render nuclear weapons impotent and obsolete." It is this bedrock conception that President Reagan has now reaffirmed as doctrine for military policy and superpower relations.

Prior to March 23, 1983, among strategic policy thinkers, weapons scientists, and other relevant specialists, the President's policy was known by another name: the "LaRouche Doctrine."

In a February 1982 seminar before government, military, and diplomatic officials in Washington, *EIR* founder Lyndon LaRouche gave the first comprehensive outline of what would become the President's policy.

"It is now approximately 30 years since the Soviet Union and United States, respectively, developed a deployable form

of thermonuclear bomb," LaRouche told his audience. "It is now approximately a quarter-century since the likes of John Foster Dulles and then-youthful Henry A. Kissinger introduced to the United States a thermonuclear strategic policy appropriately known by the acronym MAD—Mutually Assured Destruction. . . .

"This has proceeded under the influence of a delusion . . . that the destructive force of the U.S. strategic thermonuclear arsenal affords our nation adequate protection, such that the other elements of our national military capability can be permitted to drift in the direction of the Stone Age.

"The worst feature of the Kissingerian MADness doctrine is the false assumption that the foreknown consequences of thermonuclear warfare are sufficient to prevent any superpower from actually launching a general thermonuclear assault. . . .

"... No mere reduction in the size of thermonuclear arsenals will accomplish anything of more than cosmetic importance. In any case, disarmament and peace negotiations were the diplomatic swindles preceding the last World War, together with those worse-than-usual "peace movements". . . .

"There is no solution to the continued balance of thermonuclear terror which is not premised on the ability of at least one of the superpowers to destroy a proverbial 'ninety-nine and forty-four one-hundredths percent' of the incoming missiles and thermonuclear-armed aircraft deployed against its national homeland.

"In principle, such an anti-missile capability now exists, in the form of what are properly termed relativistic-beam anti-missile weapons systems. We propose, we insist, that the reformed military policy of the United States be premised upon a commitment to a 'crash program' for developing and deploying such anti-missile beam-weapon systems . . . that this become the central reference-point for a comprehensive reform of the United States military doctrine. . . .

"This new U.S. military policy can be the basis for a new approach to armaments negotiations with the Soviet leadership. . . .

"To the degree we create conditions of assured destruction for intercontinental thermonuclear weapons systems, the value of such weapons is reduced, and then, and only under such conditions, both superpowers can agree to demobilize such components of their respective arsenals.

"With such agreements, the age of mutual thermonuclear terror is brought toward its conclusion."

President Reagan, after waiting more than two years and giving great leeway to the MAD strategists to sow confusion with talk of "point defense," "bargaining chips," and the like, has re-evoked the principles of the "LaRouche Doctrine" as enunciated above. It remains that he appreciate the nature and scope of the current Soviet buildup, that Moscow's pre-war mobilization now is governed by a cold determination to fight and win a thermonuclear war if necessary, to embrace the "crash program" methods LaRouche insists are required.