

On the afternoon before his evening TV appearance responding to the Tower Report, President Reagan made an impromptu appearance at the regular White House press briefing to announce that he was calling his Geneva negotiating team back to Washington for consultations. This move was in response to Soviet Secretary General Gorbachov's latest offer to "decouple" the IRBM talks from broader discussion of the Strategic Defense Initiative. Reagan's quick and favorable response to this Soviet offer to sign a "zero option" treaty got arms control and New Yalta enthusiasts on both sides of the Atlantic moving in high gear at the prospect of an early treaty removing intermediate and short range ballistic missiles from the European theater. It sent top European defense specialists into absolute panic over the prospect of a U.S. withdrawal of the Euromissiles that pose the only serious obstacle to a Soviet conventional waltz across Europe.

In Washington, Pentagon sources privately told *EIR* that Secretary of Defense Weinberger is hoping that the IRBM talks at Geneva can be stymied by Soviet intransigence on verification procedures and by vocal European opposition to the nuclear arms removal. This is a risky and potentially fatal gamble. At best, it sends yet another message to the European allies that the policy see-saw is still swinging wildly in the nation's capital, and the United States remains an unpredictable and fickle ally. Hardly a reassuring perspective given Gorbachov's hard-sell approach to Europe.

At worst, if the United States does go ahead with an

IRBM pact, Europe will make its peace—first an economic accord in depth—with Moscow before the year is out. In other words, Europe becomes an economic colony of the Russian Empire.

Secretary Weinberger's recent efforts to draw the Congress into a bipartisan commitment to the Reagan SDI program—through the ostensible push for "early deployment"—still remains unresolved.

### Silence on monetary crisis

Even more unresolved is Washington's response to the imminent collapse of the international monetary system, a matter driven home by the recent indefinite moratorium declared by Brazil, the world's second-largest debtor nation. Apart from tentative moves by National Security Adviser Frank Carlucci to convince President Reagan to impose an oil import tax to save America's dying oil industry, no murmur has emerged from the White House even acknowledging the global monetary and economic crisis.

Ronald Reagan may be back swinging. But he is now faced with the urgent necessity to adopt the programmatic course spelled out by Lyndon H. LaRouche, Jr. on such issues as the collapse of the world economy, the SDI, and AIDS. Unless he seizes upon the renewed mandate to act like a President and move in this direction, Ronald Reagan will still go down in history as Herbert Hoover and Neville Chamberlain all rolled into one.

## White House admits INF draft puts Soviets ahead

On March 3, two senior officials gave a background briefing at the White House, after President Reagan's surprise press conference that day, in which he welcomed the Intermediate Nuclear Forces (INF) draft treaty proposal of the Soviets. They described the Russian offer as flowing out of "substantial changes in Soviet society" and the Soviet "peace offensive." One official said that "all agencies of the U.S. government have come to an agreement on the terms for verification" of an accord.

Picking up on a line of questioning opened by *EIR* the day before, ABC correspondent Sam Donaldson's first question was: "Is it possible to come to an INF agreement without some kind of limits on conventional forces and the shorter-range missile, the SS-21?" When the briefers said, "No," adding, "We are, however, interested in some

kind of future commitment by the Soviets on the SS-21," *EIR*'s Nick Benton interjected, "What do you mean by that? Be more specific." The briefer only repeated that the short-range Soviet mobile SS-21 would not be included in the zero-option treaty.

"Why not?" shot back Benton. "Well, because it is very complicated, and you have to box [i.e., package] the situation at some point." This provoked the *New York Times* to then ask how many SS-21s there are, after all. The briefer said he guessed the Soviets "have a significant advantage" with the missile, having "about 1,500 SS-21s, Frogs and Scuds, combined" (none of which is covered under the INF proposal).

The SS-21 and Frog cover both Soviet short-range missiles, the Frog being the SS-21's predecessor, while the mention of the Scud (regarding its *range* capabilities, as the predecessor to the SS-23) betrays the fact that both the SS-21 and SS-23 are *exempt* from Gorbachov's "offer" regarding pulling missiles out of East Germany and Czechoslovakia. In short, only the SS-22 would leave, and as stated in the article on page 42, could be back in forward-based location within 48 hours.