

Editorial

The SDI then and now

On Feb. 17, 1982, Lyndon LaRouche keynoted a historic two-day conference held in Washington, D.C. where he emphasized the urgent necessity for the United States to end the Kissingerian doctrine of Mutually Assured Destruction (MAD), and to substitute a program for anti-missile defense based upon the deployment of laser weapons and similar high-energy, frontier technologies. Diplomatic attendance in the audience represented 40 nations, including officials from the U.S. State and Defense Departments.

Emphasizing that the Soviet Union had a secret beam defense program, and that their military investment in general was at least 50% higher than the estimates compiled by the CIA, LaRouche also pointed to the dangers of U.S. unpreparedness. LaRouche's peace policy subsequently became known as the Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI), as it was first enunciated by President Reagan on March 23, 1983, and alternatively as a policy for Mutually Assured Survival.

LaRouche warned that Soviet war plans were based on surviving a nuclear war and that, therefore, Henry Kissinger's MAD doctrine would not be an effective deterrent against war if political and economic circumstances emerged in which the Soviet military felt that they must fight a war or be destroyed. The recent surfacing of Warsaw Pact war plans, which outline the occupation of Europe, confirm LaRouche's contention that the Soviets would contemplate a first strike under certain conditions.

At that time, LaRouche warned that economic destabilization leads inevitably to political destabilization and the threat of war. With extreme precision, *in 1982*, he identified that the United States was in the opening phase of the depression which is now destroying the U.S. economy and threatening the world economy as well. In this connection, he warned of the emergence of hot spots.

Why, LaRouche asked, was the United States refusing to gear up its then still-hegemonic scientific and technological capabilities to outpace the Soviets in an effort to deploy a high-technology weapons shield? He found the answer in the hegemony of the anti-science

mafia, linked to the same Anglo-American malthusian faction which has consistently attempted to suppress the development of technology in order to enforce a genocidal, zero-growth policy upon the peoples of the world—especially non-white populations.

LaRouche, in his speech, pointed out that spinoffs from an SDI program based upon the control of high-energy plasmas (lasers and the like), rather than off-the-shelf missile technologies, could pay for the research and development costs of the program, through stimulating higher productivity in the civilian economy as a whole. President Kennedy's Apollo moon-landing program was a model for how such an infusion of technology could boost the economy.

Subsequently, LaRouche elaborated his SDI proposal, and included the idea, then taken up by President Reagan, that the United States should offer to share SDI technology with the Soviets, so that they would not fear that the U.S. was developing a first-strike capability.

LaRouche's proposal was brutally rejected by the Soviet leadership, who stupidly labeled LaRouche, along with Edward Teller and, implicitly, Ronald Reagan, as a fascist war-monger. Failing to accept a rational policy, the Soviets instead opted to pour scant resources into a military effort which could not spin off productivity advances, and accelerated the collapse of their civilian economy.

Now the issue of the SDI has resurfaced, with Russian President Boris Yeltsin offering joint deployment of the SDI with the United States. The SDI is now being discussed, however, in the context of the destruction of the world economy through trade war, the restriction of technology transfer to the developing sector, and the collapse enforced upon the former East bloc by the International Monetary Fund under the rubric of free market ideology.

LaRouche's policy of 1982 was the only policy which could have prevented the economic and foreign policy disasters of the Reagan-Bush period. Yes, we still need an SDI, but one based upon the vision of global economic development among sovereign nations explicit in LaRouche's original proposal.