

## Report from Rome by Liliana Celani

### U.S.-Soviet minuet at Erice

*The SDI is a plot to "bankrupt the U.S.S.R.," in the eyes of Gorbachov's top science adviser.*

**P**rof. Antonino Zichichi, the Italian physicist who each August hosts in Erice, Sicily, the international conference on "nuclear war" of the Ettore Majorana Institute, was beaming this time: The same conference hall which last year witnessed a clash between American and Soviet scientists on the SDI, the disappearance of Soviet scientist Alexandrov, accused of "speaking too much with Western journalists," and scary reports on "nuclear winter," saw on Aug. 19-23 a five-day "minuet" between the American and Soviet delegations.

*EIR* observers on hand noted the artificially friendly atmosphere, apparently in honor of the ongoing Soviet-American negotiations on disarmament. Edward Teller, one of the main scientific spokesmen for the SDI in the United States, was often seen in amiable conversation with Yevgenii Velikhov, vice president of the Soviet Academy of Sciences and Gorbachov's scientific adviser.

When Teller asked him why the Soviets don't release information on their secret scientific work, Velikhov demonstratively gave him a stack of documents, certainly not the ones which refer to the Soviet secret deployment of an anti-missile system, or their research on radio frequency weapons, but enough to give the impression that there are "no more secrets."

The Erice conference agenda did not include the SDI or nuclear war, as it had in the last three years, but was this time on high-temperature superconductivity, fusion energy, magnetic

resonance-based technologies, supercomputers, and the creation of Zichichi's "World Laboratories" in the Soviet Union, China, and in any Western country ready to open one. "SDI is now in the hands of the militaries and not of the scientists," explained Velikhov. "Now it's time to have international scientific cooperation with no secrets, which is the ideal of your Zichichi."

When Edward Teller spoke of the "World Lab spirit as the only way to follow," Velikhov's prompt answer was, "I agree 100% with what Teller just said, and I think this year in Erice a big step was taken toward a fuller cooperation between my country and the United States."

Back in Rome, Gorbachov's scientific adviser specified in a press conference at the Soviet embassy that this cooperation will only be possible in non-military areas, such as the "Archimedes" project on earthquake forecasting, or the tokamak project on fusion energy, which could make a first functioning fusion reactor possible "by 1996-97."

"The problem," said Velikhov, "is research aimed at military use. If we do not reach an agreement on disarmament, it is useless to speak of labs open to anybody. Fifty percent of scientific research is for military aims. I think it is best to identify sectors where there are no secrecy problems and work together there. Gorbachov also said so, speaking of disarmament. But we need an answer from the United States."

Asked by *EIR* correspondent Gal-

liano Maria Speri why the Soviets do not accept Reagan's offer to cooperate on the SDI, if they are so willing to exchange information, Velikhov said: "I have known *EIR* very well for many years. As a man and as a scientist, I do not think the SDI is feasible, and I consider it an attempt to bankrupt the Soviet Union by forcing it to make investments."

**EIR:** You have already made investments, for example, in the Energia rocket, or in your secret SDI project.

**Velikhov:** We are doing all the scientific technological research necessary to guarantee our security, without leaving anything out.

**EIR:** But the United States is not threatening you, and with SDI, you are doing the same as with radio frequency weapons. . . .

**Velikhov:** What?

**EIR:** Radio frequency weapons, you work on them, but you deny it.

**Velikhov:** Radio frequencies have a wavelength which is so low that it is impossible for scientists to focus them.

**EIR:** You also have to consider the fact that in 1988 the U.S. might have a President, such as LaRouche, who wants peace but from a position of strength, and who will not accept the erosion of the West.

**Velikhov:** There was already someone in this century who wanted peace through strength. . . .

Velikhov's loudest proposal in Erice, in the context of the Archimedes project, was that "powerful electromagnetic waves be used to check the Earth's crust 100 km deep," the Italian Communist daily *Unità* reported Aug. 23. "The power necessary to produce such waves," said Velikhov, "can be derived from the propulsion systems of nuclear missiles after they have been dismantled thanks to an agreement on nuclear weapons."