

## Senior Russian official confirms SDI proposal

Speaking in Rome on April 20 at the Assembly of the Western European Union conference on the subject, "Anti-missile Defense for Europe," Dr. Leonid Fituni, director of the Center for Strategic and Global Studies of the Russian Academy of Sciences in Moscow, stated: "Joint testing of a plasma weapon may be the first joint anti-missile program between the United States and Russia, as discussed during the Vancouver summit between Presidents Yeltsin and Clinton. The joint project called 'Trust' is based on plasmoids created by microwaves and optical laser-generating systems."

Dr. Fituni was asked by *EIR*'s correspondent to expand on his comments in his speech on the "plasmoid weapons" project. He responded that he could confirm that the matter was discussed between Presidents Clinton and Yeltsin. It was not yet a formal proposal and there was not yet a decision on it, he specified. He believed that it was in a state of stalemate and that there was opposition to it, perhaps also in the United States where there might be fear of competition.

The plasmoid project, he underlined, was designed to be Russia's secret answer to the U.S. Strategic Defense Initiative. You will remember, the Russian official continued in his public remarks, that the Russians said that there will be an unconventional response to the SDI. Russia's topmost secret research institutes were involved in it. He affirmed strongly that against this plasmoid design, there was no technologically possible countermeasure foreseeable. He said that there were also discussions in progress on the GPALs system, and that while everyone may assert publicly that the ABM Treaty was valid, it could be discounted in reality. The "Trust" project could become a major point on the agenda between the United States and Russia, Fituni added.

On the same day, Russian Science and Technology Minister Boris Saltykov also confirmed in Washington, where he was speaking on a forum on Russian science at Georgetown University, that the SDI joint-research proposal was discussed at the Vancouver summit. In answer to a question from *EIR*'s reporter, he stressed that the Russians are ahead in some areas in lasers and directed energy projects, citing work at Arzamas and at the Ogninsk Physics Institute where lasers are being used with nuclear energy to create a pulsed neutron reaction. "There is already collaboration on some projects apart from the military technology," he said.

downward slide of the U.S. economy into this century's worst depression. The only way out of the economic and political catastrophe now gripping both East and West is to combine a revival of LaRouche's original SDI policy, as a joint effort with Russia and other nations of the former Soviet Union, with a massive, global program of basic infrastructure development centered on the European "Productive Triangle." This means particularly: high-speed rail and magnetic levitation transport systems, "second-generation" nuclear energy, development of water infrastructure and communications, together with a complete reconstruction of health and education systems according to the requirements of the 21st century.

In this context, infrastructure and SDI development complement each other: On the one side, massive development of infrastructure provides the "transmission belt" for propagating the waves of new technologies, created in an all-out SDI effort, through the advanced machine-tool sectors into the entire economy; on the other hand, the effect of these new technologies is to greatly cheapen the *relative* cost of production for infrastructural and related capital goods. Thereby, as LaRouche emphasized, "we can spend all day long on SDI technology, and become richer all the time."

The science and technology behind the Russians' plasma weapon provides an excellent illustration of how this will

work. For example, microwave-driven plasmoids promise to become a crucial "working medium" for the production of new and old materials in tomorrow's industry. In the United States, a prototype plasma reduction using a plasmoid-like structure has been tested, which produces high-quality steel and other metals by direct reduction in a fraction of a second. A single unit the size of a garage would have the throughput of a present-day blast furnace! Such furnaces operate at temperatures of 10,000°C or more in a highly nonequilibrium, energy-dense regime which will make it possible to produce entirely new types of exotic materials. Using highly structured plasmoids permits us to run a material efficiently through a rapid series of phase changes, including "shock" heating and cooling and exposure to various radiation regimes. Plasmoid furnaces promise also to become the most efficient means for processing various forms of waste into useful materials. However, in order to exploit these advantages, we have to go to a much higher intensity of energy consumption in industry. That, in turn, is a question of infrastructure!

Will the Russian proposal for joint development of plasma weapons and a global defense system, turn the tide of history and revive LaRouche's original policies for peace and economic recovery? It is too early to tell, but *Izvestia*'s announcement is surely a step in the right direction.