

Report from Bonn by Rainer Apel

Will Weinberger follow through?

U.S. inaction on European participation in the SDI is giving all the leverage to Moscow's friends in the Socialist International.

If the U.S. did anything to make good on Weinberger's offer for the Europeans to directly participate in realizing the Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI), then we'd be in real trouble; but, as things stand, we have the ball." The speaker was a military professional who advises the Social Democratic Party (SPD) parliamentary group.

The Social Democrats initiated a "parliamentary resolution" on Nov. 8, consisting of a draft "Treaty to Limit the Military Use of Space." This was formulated as a "complete draft of a law to outlaw weapons in space." The SPD "draft" was entered into the record, and then referred to the Foreign Policy Committee for its deliberations by the SPD's Dr. Scheer, who was deeply involved in talks with the East Germans during the spring of this year.

Scheer noted, in forwarding the draft, that he wanted to "explicitly indicate that the content of this text was worked out by the Göttingen meeting of scientists." That meeting occurred in July, with Pugwash members, the West German Communist Party, and fellow-travelers combining to howl in indignation that someone besides the Soviet Union might develop beam-weapon defense systems.

So, the SPD draft is the Göttingen draft, which means "Drafted in Moscow," with one feature added: As the SPD paper notes, the views it expresses are "by and large identical with the views of the French government."

The claim is by and large true.

Since French President Mitterrand's trip to Moscow earlier this year, and since French Prime Minister Fabius's address to the Paris Institute for Higher Studies of National Defense, France's stance on beam weapons has swung away from Mitterrand's endorsement of strategic defense systems at The Hague. The French President has fearfully bowed to Moscow's fury.

This notwithstanding, Weinberger's offer to the Europeans of direct participation in the research and realization of the SDI, published in the West German daily *Die Welt* Nov. 7, elicited support all over Europe. As Dr. Scheer admitted in the Bundestag, "Those who merely object . . . because they fear a decoupling of Western European security interests from those of the United States . . . are easily tempted to give up their objections to weapons in space if only the Western European part of NATO is involved in the new Strategic Defense Initiative."

The latest tactic of the Socialist International gang in Germany is to use the Franco-German project for a military reconnaissance satellite as a wedge to destroy support for the SDI and accelerate the technological decoupling of Europe from the United States. While the German Social Democrats fear that the planned joint project could well be part of general European cooperation with the SDI—in which case, they will try to torpedo the reconnaissance satellite—their

gambit now is to say they will support the Kohl government in this project as an alternative to the SDI.

The word around Bonn is that "if the U.S. administration does not back up Weinberger's quest for European participation with all of the technology-sharing that involves, and if the Bonn defense ministry planning staff does not even get to collaborate on SDI feasibility studies as it wants to do, then the back of the proponents will be broken, and the opponents will tell them, 'The only place you're going to get technology development is with the French, against the U.S., and against the SDI.'"

Despite the positive turn taken by the German delegation at the recent Nuclear Planning Group meeting of NATO in Italy, the lack of such U.S. follow-up has already given the crowd around Foreign Minister Hans-Dietrich Genscher some leverage. It was Foreign Ministry State Secretary Jürgen Möllemann, rather than a defense ministry representative, who spoke for the government in the parliamentary session on the SPD's resolution to "outlaw weapons in space."

"The government shares concerns that an uncontrolled arms race in space could entail dangers for world stability," said Möllemann. U.S.-U.S.S.R. talks "concerning space-based defensive systems . . . would represent the beginning of *precautionary arms control*, to which we in the government attribute increasing importance, to avoid destabilizing developments, especially with a view to accelerated technological developments."

SDI supporters in Bonn are angry. "Weinberger had better put his money where his mouth is on European participation in the SDI," we were told, "or else, if we get hung out to dry on another unfulfilled promise like this, you can just go hang your alliance out to dry, too."