

## Editorial

### *SDI was no hoax*

On Aug. 18, the *New York Times* led an international press barrage, accusing the Reagan administration of faking results of tests in the Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI) in order to deceive the Soviets.

The claim in this spurious account is, that the Reagan administration deliberately concocted President Reagan's SDI as a deception operation. Their purpose, according to the *Times* and four anonymous informants whom the newspaper cites, was to force the Soviets into major increased defense expenditures which their already fragile economy could ill afford. So, the story goes, the United States knew that the SDI would never work and was not serious about developing it, but hoped to convince the Soviets otherwise. As part of the operation, the U.S. Congress was supposedly misled as well, into allocating large sums of money to the develop the SDI.

This account is based upon anonymous sources, four unidentified officials who supposedly were associated with the Reagan administration. It has been denied and vigorously countered by former Defense Secretary Casper Weinberger. "It's a pile of nonsense," Weinberger said. "You don't use it [deception] on the Congress, and you don't use it in situations where there is no reason to deceive." Pointing to the effectiveness of KGB information-gathering in the United States at that time, Weinberger went on, "They knew what we were doing." His point was seconded by former Weinberger aide Frank Gaffney, who accused these critics of dancing on the SDI program's grave.

Notwithstanding that the test in question involved missile intercepts of missiles, rather than the kind of advanced systems based on "new physical principles" mandated in the original SDI proposal, the *Times* has concocted this story in order to head off the diminishing possibility that the Clinton administration would take up the offer by the Russian grouping which surfaced the April 2 "Trust" proposal this year.

This was a proposal by scientists and members of the Russian military-industrial complex, for U.S.-Russian collaboration on joint development of the kind of systems which were envisaged by Reagan in March

1983. Crucial to the SDI proposal, which had been developed by Lyndon LaRouche and presented to the administration, was the offer of joint development of the SDI by the Soviets and the United States, in the interests of replacing the doctrine of Mutually Assured Destruction with a policy of Mutually Assured Survival. At that time, the offer was brutally turned down by the Soviets, who instead launched a campaign against LaRouche which led finally to his imprisonment in a Minnesota jail, in proceedings closely modeled on the methods of the Soviet justice system.

In 1982, LaRouche had entered into back-channel relations with the Soviets, with the full backing of the Reagan administration, precisely on the subject of strategic defense. Far from being a hoax, it was then widely admitted in informed scientific and intelligence circles that the Soviets were themselves pursuing development of what later became known as the SDI. This has been confirmed this year in a number of statements by Russians, including in the Trust proposal itself. Back in 1983, there was reason to believe that the Soviets were gaining a commanding lead over the United States on the SDI front.

The sad fact is that there was deception on the SDI front, not by President Reagan and those in his administration who supported the LaRouche-Reagan SDI proposal, but from those within and outside the administration who spread deliberate disinformation about the scientific and technical feasibility of a strategic defensive initiative based upon new physical principles, as advocated by LaRouche, and by Dr. Edward Teller. As time went on, laser and beam weapon defense concepts were put on a back burner, in favor of off-the-shelf antimissile-missile technologies, to the detriment of the U.S program.

The fact is that the SDI was the surest path to war avoidance in 1983 when it was proposed, and it could still function in that way today. LaRouche's concept of the SDI included economic proposals which were vectored toward a massive global leap in productivity, based upon the assimilation into the civilian economy of spinoff technologies from the SDI.