

China State Council document cites LaRouche criticism of Cox Report

by William Jones

On July 15, the Information Office of the State Council of the Chinese government, the highest Chinese government organ chaired by Premier Zhu Rongji, issued a detailed response to the numerous allegations of illicit technology transfers to China that were raised in the much-hyped report of the Cox Committee, a U.S. Congressional committee, chaired by Rep. Christopher Cox (R-Calif.), that was constituted to investigate such allegations. In its response, the State Council's Information Office referenced the harsh comments made by *EIR* founder Lyndon LaRouche on the Cox Report on May 28.

Shortly after the May 25 public release of the Cox Report, LaRouche issued a statement which was widely covered by the Xinhua News Agency and other Chinese media. The State Council Information Office states the following: "Lyndon H. LaRouche, founder of the *Executive Intelligence Review*, said in a statement published on June 2 that the Cox Report was a fraud. Its accusation of the so-called Chinese 'theft of nuclear secrets' was sheer fabrication. The fraud of the Cox Report is 'a reflection of the kind of scientific illiteracy' of its writers. LaRouche said that the so-called 'nuclear secrets' were easily obtainable from the Internet, but the Cox Committee spent a great sum of money in investigating these false charges, which was simply 'too ridiculous.' LaRouche went on to point out that the clear purpose of the Cox Committee was to undermine U.S.-China relations."

The Cox Report specifically targets the scientific cooperation begun with China in 1979, a cooperation which has been of great benefit to both the United States and to China, and which has helped engender a greater degree of understanding between the two countries. According to the Cox Report, however, "P.R.C. [People's Republic of China] scientists have used their extensive laboratory-to-laboratory interactions with the United States to gain information from U.S. scientists on common problems, solutions to nuclear weapons physics, and solutions to engineering problems." One of the unspoken assumptions of the report is that the Chinese scientists had to somehow rely on espionage in order to resolve technical problems which they faced. Such an assumption is an affront to the Chinese, and it was tackled head-on in Beijing's initial response to the Cox Committee allegations.

In a statement on May 31, Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Zhao Qizheng dealt directly with these assumptions: "China is a large country with a long history of civilization. The Chinese nation is an industrious and ingenious nation. China has always relied on its own efforts to handle its own affairs. Never did China in the past, nor does it at present, nor will it in the future, base its development of sophisticated national defense technology related to national security and interests on the 'theft' of technology from other countries. China relies on its own forces to independently develop its national defense technology. This is a basic principle in which China has persisted."

Specifically, the Cox Report alleges that China had acquired information on U.S. satellite technology during the course of an investigation of a failed launch of a private U.S. satellite by a Chinese Long March rocket. The Cox Committee claims that the international committee assigned to investigate the failure of the Long March rocket, pointed Chinese investigators in the direction of the problem, thereby giving them restricted information gathered from their investigation. This claim, however, has been adamantly denied both by the Chinese government and by the international committee responsible for the investigation. The Chinese authorities had also conducted their separate investigation, which led to the discovery of the problem.

The Cox Report also claims that Beijing acquired the ability to modernize their nuclear capabilities through espionage acquired by Chinese visitors to U.S. national laboratories. As was pointed out by the Chinese government, in a very public press demonstration, which LaRouche had also noted in his statement, the "secret information" that the Cox Report claimed to have been stolen, was indeed available on the Internet for all those with access to a personal computer.

Science cooperation under the gun

"What is most malicious about the Cox Report," the State Council report says, "is that it links China's policies and guidelines for developing science and technology, the research institutes and their staff engaging in bilateral scientific and technological exchanges, the business agencies and their staff engaging in economic and trade exchanges, the official and non-official Chinese representative offices and

their staff in the United States, American Chinese and Chinese students in America with the so-called espionage activities. This is typical racial discrimination, and a deadly insult to the Chinese nation. It marks the reappearance of McCarthyism, active in the United States during the 1950s, and reflects the aberrant personality of some American politicians hostile to China's development and [who are] becoming powerful."

This aspect of the campaign launched by the Cox Report was also of concern to President Bill Clinton. On July 29, in appointing Prof. Chang Lin Tien, an engineer and the former Chancellor of the University of California at Berkeley, to the National Science Board, President Clinton addressed this issue. "Asian-Pacific American scientists have long made major contributions to our country, to our national security, and to our unmatched scientific enterprise. That is why it is intolerable that the patriotism of Asian-Pacific American scientists be questioned in the wake of recent allegations of espionage at one of our national laboratories. Security matters are of the highest priority in my administration, but history has shown the damage to the lives of our citizens and to our society that results from the destructive grip of prejudice, suspicion, and discrimination. Racism and stereotyping have no place in our One America in the 21st century."

The State Council report noted the many areas in which U.S.-China science cooperation has been implemented. "On Jan. 31, 1979, China and the United States signed an inter-governmental agreement on scientific and technological cooperation. The efforts made by the two countries over the past two decades have enabled this cooperation to reach a considerable scale. Up to now, cooperative protocols signed by related departments of the two countries have covered 33 fields, including education, agriculture, space, atmosphere, ocean fishing, medicine and health, earthquake prediction, environmental protection, water resources, energy efficiency, and renewable energy."

The Cox Report also targetted scientific projects encompassed in the "863 Program," a program of accelerated medium- to long-term scientific R&D launched by the Chinese government in 1986 as a springboard for rapid economic growth and to raise living standards. In its response, the State Council notes that the 863 Program "is a strategic policy-decision made by the nation to use its own intellectual, financial, and material resources to independently develop science and technology in order to narrow the gap with foreign advanced scientific and technical level and accelerate its own national economic development."

"The Cox Report intentionally distorts the research projects included in the 863 Program," the State Council report says. "For instance, the gene research plan which was clearly designed for the development of new medicines, it is said, 'could have biological warfare application.' The plan for developing a high-temperature gas-cooled reactor by Tsinghua University is a basic research project for the devel-

opment of the civilian use of nuclear energy, but it is said to 'aid in the development of nuclear weapons.' This cannot but show people how skilled Cox and others are at fabricating lies."

Given that the Chinese strategy for developing their economy, entitled "Revitalizing the Economy through Science and Technology," is focussed on rapid improvement of science and technology capabilities in order to foster economic growth, any sabotage attempts are rightfully seen as a threat to their national security.

U.S. scientists weigh in

The Cox Committee recommendations are opposed by a growing number of U.S. scientists and engineers employed at the national labs. In a forum at the National Academy of Sciences on Aug. 2, scientists and officials from the national labs and from other scientific institutions expressed their views on the "espionage" hoax. In particular, they were concerned that imposition of the restrictive measures which the Cox Committee is proposing on the exchange of foreign scientists at the national labs, and the atmosphere of growing McCarthyite hysteria, ironically, itself constitutes a grave danger to U.S. national security.

On May 21, in a statement on "Scientific Openness and National Security," the presidents of the U.S. National Academy of Sciences, the National Academy of Engineering, and the Institute of Medicine expressed growing concern over the Cox Report's proposed restrictions on foreign visitors at the national labs. "Such restrictions could harm our U.S. national interests by impeding scientific progress, weaken the nation's role as a key player in the international scientific community, and endanger international cooperative activities that bolster our national security and well-being by addressing such issues as nuclear safety and environmental cleanup," they said.

"[Department of Energy] national laboratories necessarily engage not only in classified military work but also in basic scientific research and educational programs, as well as technology transfer activities that stimulate scientific innovations and important new applications of technology," the officials noted. "Many of the foreign scientists who visit U.S. national laboratories come by invitation because they bring new knowledge and expertise. Bringing a range of scientific expertise into these settings—from the United States and abroad—is essential for maintaining the intellectual vitality and quality of these laboratories and for sustaining their capacity to attract and retain promising young talent."

More significantly, the statement continues, "An unnecessarily restrictive environment also generates hostility and is likely to exaggerate concern about the intentions of others." Beating the war drums about Chinese "hostile intent" may well engender the very phenomenon that Cox claims to fear. His attempts to whip up hysteria about a new "yellow peril" should be a cause of concern for those interested in U.S. national security.