

What is the SDE, and Why Do We Need it Now?

by Stephanie Ezrol

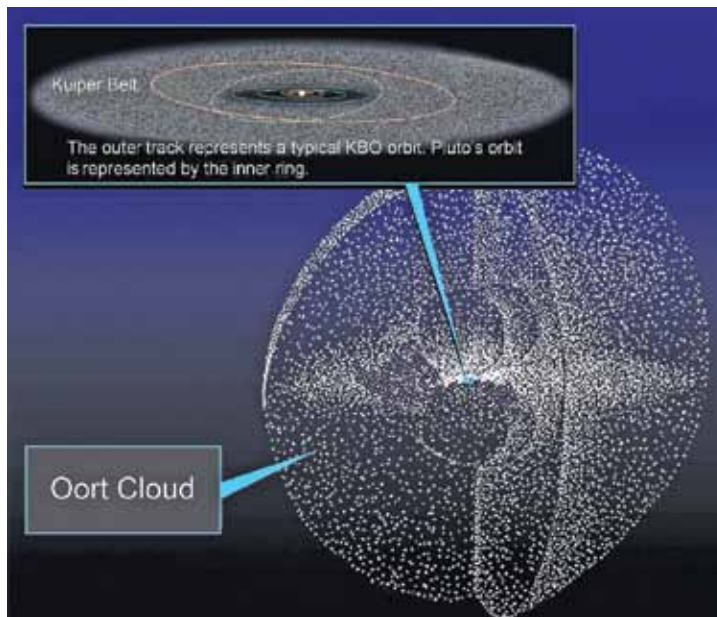
March 25—In 1957, mankind launched the first artificial satellite in orbit around the Earth. We quickly confirmed with the next 60 years of space exploration that there is no empty space out there, but instead there are belts of radiation, solar winds, and varied fields of radiation as well as a constant flow of asteroids, comets and assorted space debris sharing the 239,000 miles of territory between us on Earth, and the Moon.

In the sixty years since 1957, we have vastly expanded our understanding of our surroundings, including threats to the well-being and even the continuing existence of life on Earth. We also now know that our sun's domain extends far beyond the 7.4 billion km furthest distance of Pluto and to the possibly 30 trillion km distant Oort cloud, believed to be the source of potentially planet-threatening comets.



Illustration by Chris Jatz

Artist's rendition of a threat to Earth from space.



R. Mewaldt & P. Liewer, JPL, NASA

Artist's depiction of the hypothesized Oort cloud distribution of cometary bodies populating the farthest reaches of the Solar System.

The Strategic Defense of Earth (SDE) is an extension and expansion of Lyndon LaRouche's project to replace the insane military doctrine of Mutually Assured Destruction, aptly named MAD, with Mutually Assured Survival, based on the development of space-based beam and laser devices using new physical principles which would render nuclear weapons impotent and obsolete. That was President Reagan's Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI).

The SDE emerged, in post-communist Russia, as a proposal for joint Russian and NATO development of a global system of defense against missiles, asteroids, comets and other space-based threats to the Earth. Dmitri Rogozin, then the Russian ambassador to NATO and now the Deputy Prime Minister in charge of the defense and space industries, proposed the SDE in 2011 "to overcome the Russia-U.S. deadlock over the missile defense," according to a contemporaneous report

in [Russia Today](#). It described the SDE as “a new initiative: a global system to guard against missiles—as well as asteroids and other threats from space.”

Helga Zepp-LaRouche, in her March 22 Schiller Institute weekly webcast (this issue, page 26), called for enlarging Lyndon LaRouche’s 1984 “[Draft Memorandum for an Agreement between the United States of America and the U.S.S.R.](#)” to “become the SDE.” The Schiller Institute sponsored a [conference on March 23, 2013](#) on this very subject. Benjamin Deniston, in a 30 minute multi-media [presentation](#), presented the stark picture of the threat to Earth from “near-earth objects” (NEOs) the vast majority of which are too small for us to see but large enough to create widespread damage.

The urgency of the SDE is underscored by recent events. In the last 110 years, we have experienced the incredible damage of the impact of such un-seeable small space rocks. The 1908 Tunguska Event, is the most modern destructive evidence of such impact. What was most probably an asteroid traveling at about 15 km per second exploded over Siberia with a power estimated to be hundreds of times that of the bomb dropped on Hiroshima. That blast destroyed about 800 square miles of forest, flattened about 80 million trees, and left hundreds of burnt reindeer carcasses. [On Feb. 15, 2013](#) a relatively small asteroid exploded over Chelyabinsk, Russia with a blast equivalent to more than 300,000 tons of TNT, shattering windows for miles, injuring more than 1,000 people, and damaging 3,000 buildings. This



Explosion of the asteroid over Chelyabinsk, Russia, February 15, 2013.

was the “most energetic impact event recognized since the 1908 Tunguska blast,” according the Jet Propulsion Laboratory’s Center for Near Earth Object Studies.

To truly face and defeat such dangers, and the threat to civilization of hits from comets or asteroids in the kilometer-sized range, we must now become a space-faring people. To see what we can’t see, we will need to be on the Moon, and on planets beyond the Moon. To control and develop our 239,000-mile neighborhood between the Earth and the Moon, we will need to be able to build and launch ships from the Moon. As General Douglas MacArthur so clearly presented the need for a New Paradigm of human relations on Sept. 2, 1945 aboard the Battleship Missouri, in the age of nuclear weapons, war is no longer an option. MacArthur said then, “If we will not devise some greater and more equitable system, Armageddon will be at our door. The problem basically is theological and involves a spiritual recrudescence and improvement of human character that will synchronize with our almost matchless advances in science, art, literature, and all material and cultural developments of the past 2,000 years. It must be of the spirit if we are to save the flesh.”

The [LaRouche Political Action Committee](#) and the [Schiller Institute](#) both have in-depth multi-media material available for studying and teaching this most urgent subject. Human beings were built with the capacity to constantly transcend limits. We don’t need to kill each other, we need to take on the real challenges with the intellectual and spiritual strength inherent in our very being.

Known Near-Earth Asteroids

January 1980-June 2012

