
Conference Report

Pakistani Gen. Beg adopts LaRouches' concept for Euro-Asian land-bridge

The following are excerpts from a speech by former Chief of Staff of the Pakistani Army, Gen. Mirza Aslam Beg (ret.), entitled "China and the Post Cold War Paradigm in Asia." It was delivered to the first conference of the 21st Century Forum, Sept. 4-6, 1996, which was sponsored by the National Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC), in Beijing. The conference was also attended by former U.S. secretaries of state Henry Kissinger and George Shultz, Lee Kuan Yew of Singapore, former Japanese prime minister Noboru Takeshita, and former German chancellor Helmut Schmidt.

The speech appeared in the August 1996 issue of National Development and Security, a quarterly issued by General Beg's Foundation for Research on International Environment, National Development and Security (FRIENDS) of Islamabad, Pakistan (subheads have been added). An interview with General Beg appeared in EIR on Jan. 7, 1994.

I deem it a great personal honor to be invited to the First Conference of the 21st Century Forum. . . . The theme of the conference: China and Asia in the 21st Century, couldn't be a better and more appropriate way of welcoming the oncoming century and to forge an attitudinal commitment and seek strategic consensus for strengthening Asian identity. For a proper appreciation of China's role in Asia, it is pertinent to take a broad perspective of the Cold War and the post-Cold War prevailing syndrome.

Conflicts are endemic and ubiquitous. . . . The pervasiveness of war in history has so conditioned the minds that pugnacity is conceived as if it were in the very bones and marrows and that disputes . . . could be settled only through violent means. . . .

What was true of Greek tragedy also holds true of the plight of the weak and impoverished nations at the hands of the superpowers. The Third World was transformed into a dangerous abode and the lingering agony of its people is a legacy of Cold War sport. . . .

The Third World was the arena of 138 wars that were waged between 1945 and 1989, entailing 23 million deaths and "the surfeit of weapons, especially small arms, left over

from this era is a key factor in many conflicts now scarring the world."¹ . . .

It has, perhaps fallen in the lot of China to fulfill a vital transcendental role and free the world from the menace of war and conflict and liberate the mind from the crippling Western paradigm of civilizational conflict—an intellectual ruse to fuel crises and fish in troubled waters. After all, how could Western nations push their arms sales, unless a [Samuel] Huntington or selected research institutions are commissioned to induce threats and accentuate crises so that the weak and vulnerable arm themselves and continue sinking into the abyss of poverty and deprivation! China's commitment is to transform confrontation into accommodation and promote a culture of cooperation, as a new paradigm. It is based on a great civilizational legacy, which has a deep imprint on the Chinese psyche. . . . The Chinese idiom of leadership is subtle and sophisticated and there is no aura of imposition or self-aggrandizement. . . .

It is in doing [things] ourselves, that lies the essence of Chinese orientation to life. Equipped with rich classical roots, especially that of Confucius (551 B.C.), who advocated the concept of "li," which demanded that one had to . . . fulfill the place one has in society and that the moral quality—"ren"—was essential for the good of humanity, that China is well on its way to blending power with morality. "If the presently dominant philosophy of the West," says Helga Zepp LaRouche, "would simply be extended worldwide, humanity falls into catastrophe."² . . .

The founding fathers of the American political system had



1. Nelson Mandela, *The Global Neighbourhood*, Oxford University Press, 1995, p. 14.

2. Helga Zepp LaRouche, "China 25 Years Later," *EIR*, June 14, 1996, p. 51.

based it on higher principles of morality. . . . “The emphasis, American leaders placed on moral foundations of America’s conduct and on its significance as a symbol of foundation, led to a rejection of the truisms of European diplomacy: that the balance of power distilled an ultimate harmony out of the competition of selfish interests, and the security considerations erode the principles of civil law. In other words, that the ends of the state justify the means.”³ Unfortunately, morality lost to the so-called security, and the pendulum swung in favor of realpolitik, which pervaded the Cold War climate and continues as a lingering legacy. Thinkers like Bernard Lewis and Henry Kissinger have contributed to a utilitarian and so-called pragmatic and amoral foreign policy orientation, which, in essence, is an extension of the old Great Game policy which the British had so meticulously conceived and executed in pursuit of their regional geopolitical strategies. The game was to prevent the Soviet Union from reaching the warm waters. Now the game is targetted to keep the Arc of Crisis, through consensus between Great Britain and the U.S.A., in turmoil and to block the economic prosperity and the well being of the Asian region. The developed world ironically sets limits for development, so that the impoverished and weak remain tied to their apron strings, and are malleable to their influence and domination.

The Confucius teaching is aimed at achieving human cooperation and collective well-being, rather than seeking self ends. Mencius—who came 100 years later, also followed the Confucius ideals as a way to perfecting society and freeing it from [the] benefit-oriented thinking of Mo-Zi, also known as Mohism, a counterpart of Western exploitative materialism—[a] so-called free trade idea for perpetuating economic hegemony. . . .

What masquerades as post-Cold War order, is also shifting targets of containment. After the Soviet Union’s breakup, it is now China, and Iran. . . . If one were to analyze why China is targetted to bear “slings and arrows” of accusations, one after another, mostly fabricated and concocted to harass and browbeat it, a patent realization emerges which perhaps is the irritant: “China is the world’s fastest growing economy and according to conservative estimates by American economists, it already has a GNP of about \$1.2 trillion.”⁴ . . . China has emerged as a potent actor in the affairs of the world and containment can not deter its resolve to steer a new post-Cold War paradigm of cooperation in Asia and beyond. . . .

. . . China is a vibrant nation with enormous power potential that any great nation can be endowed with. . . . It is out to demolish the physical and mental barriers that impede man’s progress towards peace, harmony and well-being. Its vision is one of Hope and towards a radically different strategic outlook—from the one that had led to the Hobbesian order of

morbidity and despondency. It was essentially the London-designed domination of the international economic order by the British 18th-century methods of Adam Smith which led to the emergence of the malady which is afflicting the world today. The great American traditions, set forth by Benjamin Franklin, Hamilton, George Washington, John Quincy Adams, Abraham Lincoln and McKinley, were sacrificed by Truman under the influence of Churchill. “The Truman administration’s scrapping of Roosevelt’s strategic doctrine has been one of the world’s great strategic misfortunes, these past fifty-one years.” President Truman and Stalin, “were caused, thus to dance like puppets on British puppet-master’s psychological warfare strings; this engendered the monstrously real, strategic nuclear conflict, which thereafter dominated all world policy-shaping, beginning 1946, through the events of late 1989.”⁵

The post-World War II plan was communicated by the U.S. President Roosevelt, to his British counterpart Winston Churchill that the U.S. would proceed towards the dissolution of the colonial empires of the United Kingdom, the Netherlands, and France and that it would also bring to an end British economic domination. There was also a commitment of cooperation with the Soviet Union and China—the war time allies. “The Churchill faction exploited these key flanks of the Roosevelt policy in sundry ways.”⁶ Had Truman not reversed the policy to conform to the British design, the world would indeed have been freed of the power-tug-of-war between the Soviet Union and the U.S.A., to the detriment of the dwellers of the Third World countries. China, conscious of the perils of the reversal of U.S. policy, is making strident efforts to place higher moral principles at the center of strategy—a path from which the U.S. strategic thinkers have considerably drifted and lost the vision of their forebears. . . .

China seeks economic cooperation

China does not use moral and ethical issues as rhetoric or clichés. These are translated into actions. A few excerpts would be pertinent to cite, which are revelations of an ex-ambassador of Pakistan to China:

“Premier Zhou Enlai informed a high-level parliamentary delegation that the hundreds of millions of dollars that China gave every year as loans to developing countries were shown in China’s budget not as capital outlay, but as expenditure on which no interest need to be paid and which need not be repaid if that could not be done conveniently in 25 years. Zhou explained the adoption of this policy to his guests. Unlike the revolutionary generations of China who had themselves experienced imperialist aggression, he pointed out, the future Chinese generations would not have any such experience. It was, therefore the duty of the leaders of the Chinese revolution not to leave behind any treaties that would be exploited by

3. Henry Kissinger, *Diplomacy*, Simon and Schuster, New York, 1994, pp. 33-34.

4. Donald S. Lagoria, “Clinton’s Asia Policy,” *Current History*, Vol. 92, no. 578, p. 42.

5. Lyndon LaRouche, “Now, Rid NATO of the Entente Cordiale,” *EIR*, June 28, 1996, p. 15.

6. *Ibid.*

later Chinese generations for imperialistic purposes, to the detriment of other countries that had been left behind in history's march."⁷ . . .

It would be pertinent to highlight the great strategic moves that China has initiated during the past few months, which augur well for its entry in the 21st century.

For disentangling itself from the insidious net of containment cast over it, China has made a bold imaginative move to counter it by the Sino-Russian Treaty on Confidence Building Measures (CBMS) in the Military Field between President Jiang Zemin and President Boris Yeltsin of 26 April 1996. Three Central Asian states bordering China, Kazakhstan, Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan have also signed the treaty, which has the potential to push transborder trade to the tune of \$5 billion in the very near future. Besides triggering economic cooperation, the treaty even though couched in military parlance is essentially symbolic of an attitudinal shift and as a harbinger of peace in the Asian region. . . . China and Russia were only estranged partners. . . . The machination to divide and rule was the British legacy which the U.S.A. so dextrously applied to put them on a confrontational path, as a part of the Nixon-Kissinger conceived strategy. The peace dividends of the treaty are indeed enormous. . . . By the inclusion of the Central Asian states in the treaty, there is also a latent message that Russia can not be contained within the European Union and that it has a rightful role to play in the Central Asian states and in Asia in general. It is on this account that the Sino-Russian Treaty is being viewed as signalling the end of the unipolarity in the world, as balance is the fulcrum on which peace hangs.

The significance of the Continental Bridge

Ideas, if ingeniously conceived and imaginatively implemented, tend to alter the course of history. One such idea was the convening of the International Symposium on Economic Development of the Regions along the New Euro-Asia Continental Bridge on May 7-9, 1996 at Beijing where over 460 experts from 34 countries participated and through distilled wisdom, a great vision emerged that may steer the 21st century on a course radically different from the prevailing ethos, which led Alexander Pope to exclaim: "What Man has made of Man!" Placing man at the center of development, is China's ethical commitment.

The concept of the Continental Bridge put forward by the Chinese organizers, is the culmination of an idea which was initiated in 1985, by the building of a railroad into northern Xinjiang, which was instrumental in linking Central Asia to Europe. Later, in May '96, Iran inaugurated the 165 km railroad, linking Iran with Turkmenistan, which was a great strategic step forward. The Chinese Prime Minister Li Peng described the railroad as the Silk Road of the 21st century. . . .

It was indeed a great tragedy for the region that the Silk Road, during the 13th century, was closed due to the Mongol

7. Mohammed Yunus, *Reflections of China*, pp. XI-XII.

invasions and through the sinister design of the British during the 17th and 18th centuries, and later as part of the Cold War legacy, and, after 600 years of its closure, has become operational by the completion of the railroad project. . . .

The Chinese vision articulated in the symposium, was to actually create new man-designed, economic regions, enabling mankind to bring human society and civilization to the 80% of the Earth's surface now too desolate for such development; using the most advanced technologies, including the maglev train and nuclear energy, all regions of Europe and Asia, and Africa can be brought into the "continental bridge era."⁸ The great idea of the Eurasian continental bridge is based on the assumption that cultures can be brought to cooperate if mental barriers are broken through creative reasoning and "the future of human society will neither be hindered by oceans, nor be frustrated by severe cold, altitude or desolation, anymore. . . ." It . . . brings into focus the ushering in of the land-bridge-economy era in contrast to river and seashore economies. Human civilizations were first built around rivers as these provided the requisite facilities and conveniences. Thus, the ancient civilizations were first built around the Indus River, Yellow River and the Nile River. With the invention of steam locomotives, oceans became the main channels to exchange commodities among the continents. People then gravitated towards the seashores to boost up the economy. This was the beginning of modern civilization. It is for this reason that "60% of the world's population lives in areas along rivers and near seas, which only accounts for 19.2% of the total land—now the prosperous and developed regions."¹⁰

. . . The land-bridge-economy idea is . . . a balancing factor to adjust populations so that the pressures are released from the seashore dwelling areas and new cities and habitats are built along the vast under-developed lands constituting 80.8% of the total land area.

Thousands of new cities

It is undoubtedly an enormous challenge and opportunity for mankind to imaginatively utilize the scientific and technological skill to fulfill the dream of man's peaceful interexistence in a facilitative environment so that man's creative potentials are fully harnessed. The idea, thus, is what the spirit of the time demands and what the Germans call *Zeitgeist*. China has sensed it, and the symposium is the first step forward on the long and arduous journey towards integrated civilizational cooperation ensuring ultimately that the East and West shall meet. "Everything is difficult at the beginning," is the Chinese proverb. The renaissance linked with "the development of the Silk Road will be successful in the next 50 years, thousands of new cities, with 300,000 to 1

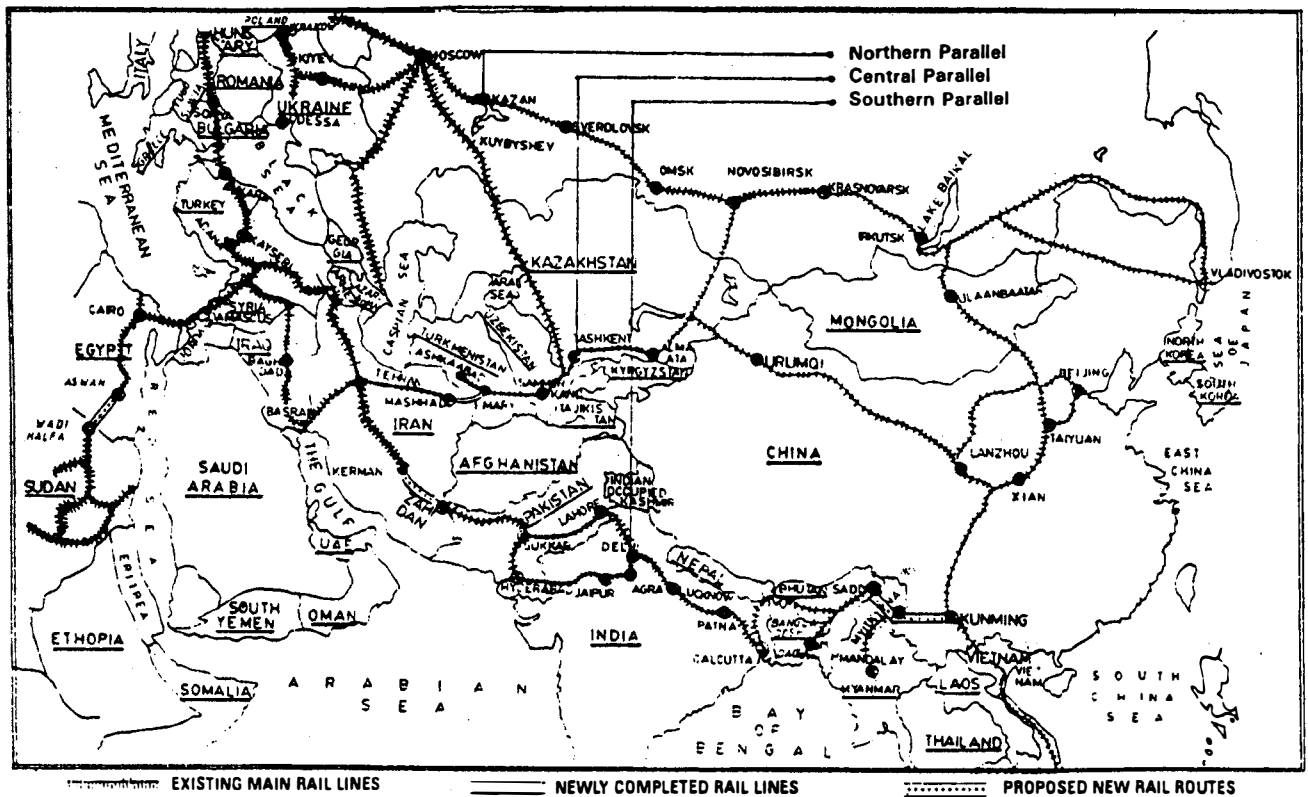
8. Mary Burdman, *EIR*, op. cit., p. 13.

9. Ibid.

10. Rui Xingwen, *EIR*, op. cit., p. 23.

FIGURE 1

Euro-Asian Continental Bridge: the three parallels



million each will be to be built. Many of these cities should be nuplexes, in which inherently safe HTR [high-temperature reactor] . . . nuclear plants produce electricity and process heat for regional industry and agriculture."¹¹ It is indeed a wonderful dream to realize.

To assume that the Eurasian bridge idea would have smooth sailing and would not be resisted by the old brand politico and economic strategists would be naive and simplistic. Sir Leon Brittan, representative of the European Commission, could not control his temper at the Chinese leadership's insistence on economic sovereignty, whereas his emphasis was that "China comply with the British Empire's free trade [looting] policies in order join the future World Trade Organization (WTO), something China has refused to do."¹² In the first place, free trade policy is hardly free, and secondly "China's highest officials and economists [are] aware of the dangers represented by the financial AIDS of the current system including the disaster in Mexico and the Barings Bank debacle."¹³ In the Group of Seven (G-7) summit at Lyons, France, on June 27-29, 1996, a very shocking proclamation was made:

11. Helga Zepp LaRouche, *EIR*, op. cit., p. 34.

12. Mary Burdman, *EIR*, op. cit., p. 14.

13. *Ibid.*

"Globalization, free trade and financial speculations were the irresistible and positive historical trends. Globalization, the G-7 gathering claimed, necessitated the transfer of power and influence from the institutions of the sovereign nation-states and national governments to supranational bodies."¹⁴

The idea of railroad communication was also dubbed anachronistic in an age of space technology, not realizing that people-to-people contact and cooperation can hardly be ensured through air-travel. Moreover, road transport can not match the magnetic levitation (maglev) train with the potential to run at 500 km. an hour. The geopoliticians like Karl Haushofer, Chamberlain, and Mackinder, "were painfully aware of the danger that successful national economic cooperation would render British balance-of-power political manipulation ineffectual and make the British Empire irrelevant."¹⁵ Mackinder had also questioned: Is not the pivot region of world politics, that vast area of Euro-Asia which is inaccessible to ships but in antiquity lay open to horse-riding nomads and is today about to be covered with railways?

The continental cooperation idea was also spearheaded through the Europe Asia Meeting which was held in Bangkok

14. *EIR Strategic Alert*, July 4, 1996.

15. Helga Zepp LaRouche, *EIR*, op. cit. p. 48.

in March 1996. . . .

The Euro-Asian Continental Bridge concept is based on utilization of the existing two parallel rail tracks (**Figure 1**).

The First Continental Bridge covers the areas from Beijing (China) to Ulan Bator (Mongolia), Krasnoyarsk, Omsk and Moscow (Russian Federation), Kiev, Odessa (Ukraine) and Krakow (Poland), and beyond. (Northern Parallel).

The Second Continental Bridge, links Beijing, Lanzhou, Urumqi (China), Almaty, Tashkent (Kazakhstan), Samarkand (Uzbekistan), Ashkhabad (Turkmenistan), Mashhad, Teheran, Tabrez (Iran), Yerevan (Armenia), Adana, Kayseri, Ankara (Turkey), Sofia (Bulgaria) and beyond. (Central Parallel).

Third Eurasian-African bridge proposed

I would like to propose, in this august gathering, a Third Continental Bridge, based on utilization of the existing rail tracks: . . . Beijing, Xian, Kunming (China), Myitkyina (Myanmar), Sadiy (India), Hyderabad, Sukkur, Quetta (Pakistan), Zahidan, Kerman, Teheran (Iran), Adana (Turkey), Basra, Baghdad (Iraq), Damascus (Syria), (Lebanon), Cairo, Aswan (Egypt), Wadi Halfa (Sudan) and beyond. (Southern Parallel). The third proposed bridge would actually cover three continents—Asia, Europe and Africa. The vast network of the third parallel already exists except for a few breaks, which if completed will integrate many nations of the world. The missing links are as follows: Kunming (China) to Myitkyina (Myanmar); Myitkyina . . . to Sadiya (India); Zahedan (Iran) to Kerman (Iran); Aswan (Egypt) to Wadi Halfa (Sudan).

The attitudes and beliefs deemed instrumental to the realization of Euro-Asian Continental Bridge-oriented prosperity will require fulfillment of the basic concepts and ideas:

- Respect and tolerance for all cultures is the quintessence of human existence. . . .

- Human consciousness has progressively reached an evolution where mere passive coexistence is not enough. . . . Interexistence will bring the value of alliance between religion, culture and science. . . . All great religions of the world must contribute to the blending of the material with the spiritual. . . .

- Economic development must assume the highest priority as its failure breeds despondency and hope crumbles and when hope crumbles everything else crumbles. Social and economic well-being is the precondition for peace. . . . Fortunately, there is proliferation of regional as well as sub-regional groupings—like the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO), the Asian Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC), the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), the Arab Maghreb Union (AMU), the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC), the Caspian Council, the Black Sea Common Market, etc., which in their own ways are contributing to regional prosperity. . . . In other words, they do need to integrate into the Eurasian continental bridge. The central idea is that the ponds and tributaries generating economic life must

flow into the global sea of economic cooperation, without losing, of course, their identity and distinctive character. . . .

- The Foundation for Research on International Environment, National Development and Security (FRIENDS) Islamabad, Pakistan, soon after its inception in 1991, conceived the idea of Asian Regional Cooperation (ARC). . . [for] facilitating economic bonds of cooperation among the core countries of Asia within a radius of about 1,500 miles around the Pamirs. The countries falling in this circle were Pakistan, China, Iran, the Gulf Region, Turkey, Azerbaijan, Afghanistan, the Central Asian Republics, Russia and India. . . .

Later Iran propounded the idea of Asian Identity, which has generated cooperation between Iran, China and India and other Asian nations as a natural response to meet the challenge of containment. Threat often generates affiliative bonds. The idea of the formation of the Asiatic Fund for Thermonuclear Research (AFTR) between China, Russia, Iran and India is indeed significant for the Euro-Asian Continental Bridge nations to meet their colossal energy needs requiring the utilization of nuclear energy.

China's progress is phenomenal and one has to see it to believe it. . . . China's clout, therefore has increased as a nation having far-reaching influence in the region, particularly in South Asia, the Middle East, Northeast Asia and Central Asia. It has very cordial relations with Pakistan, Iran and North Korea. In other words, China's inevitable role for improving the destiny of the Asian countries in the 21st century is a precursor of Hope for Asia. Dante has associated hopelessness with hell and hope with heaven. On the gate of hell, he says, is the inscription: Hope abandoned.¹⁶

Taking the three parallel structures of Euro-Asian bridge—the North, the Central and the South—into perspective, a network for integrating humanity at large will be a palpable reality and the greatest feat to be ever accomplished in the civilizational history of mankind. The magnitude of the impact can be gauged from the fact that over 2,000 years ago during the Hanwu emperor's reign in the Han dynasty, when the Silk Road had a transport system consisting of camel forces, the civilizations of Europe, Asia, and Africa when they came in contact with each other, not only trade and commerce had flourished but the inter-mingling added richness and variety to the lives of the people and promoted cordiality and friendship among them. Now, with the scientifically engineered multicontinental integrated transport systems, the physical distance will shrink and pave the way for greater interaction, inducing a sense of human heartedness and empathy for each other. In other words, enormous opportunities will be unleashed when these bridges are commissioned into operation. . . .

. . . Peace through Development is the objective which should be attained through the peoples of Asia, so that when the 21st century of Peace is born, we could proudly acclaim: "We did it ourselves!"

16. Dante Alighieri, *Divine Comedy*, Hell, Canto III.