

sky of the New York Council on Foreign Relations, who admitted that U.S. policies toward Russia have contributed to “the unprecedented growth of both anti-Americanism and anti-democratic sentiments,” and that most Russians “blame the United States for allegedly seeking to inflict misery and humiliation on the Russian people.” Nevertheless, Dobriansky’s proposal was for more of the same. We should *not* get out of the “democracy promotion business,” she argued, but rather, U.S. aid should be targeted to build up NGOs and reform-minded local leaders. She proposed that “the bulk of American aid to Russia should be slated for such pivotal tasks as democratic institution-building, the fostering of the rule of law, and various institutions of civil society.” She proposed that that most of the funds go to Russian NGOs, and that U.S. aid should rely more on organizations like the NED.

In fact, this is almost identical to the approach being taken in Yugoslavia—but there, the objective of overthrowing the existing government is openly declared.

U.S. policy shift on Croatia

In Croatia, where the government of Franjo Tudjman has gone after George Soros’s Open Society Institute, U.S. policy has apparently shifted to target the government. OSI spokesman John Fox was also featured at the Senate hearing, and he described what has been done in Croatia “just in the past year with an activist U.S. Ambassador and a complete change of policy toward the opposition there.”

“One year ago, the policy changed,” Fox said. “Resources went in, NGOs were brought in. The IRI-NDI program was stepped up. Ambassador Montgomery has taken a very hands-on approach there, and much more active attention to the [war crimes] tribunal—a variety of aspects to this. But it was good, old-fashioned basic baseball democratization: campaign assistance; they’ve worked with that coalition, whipping them into shape, providing resources.”

Infrastructure is humanitarian

At the Senate hearing, a contrary voice was presented by Father Irinej Dobrijevic, of the Office of External Affairs of the Serbian Orthodox Church, who is based in the United States.

Father Dobrijevic challenged Sen. Joseph Biden (D-Del.) and others on the notion that some distinction can be made between “humanitarian” aid and rebuilding infrastructure. He asked, “Of what use is it for a hospital to receive medical commodities, to receive food and bedding and so on, and not have electricity, not have running water?” He also noted that people who need to cross a river to get to work, can’t earn a living if they can’t get to work.

“This is part of breaking that vicious cycle,” Father Dobrijevic said. “This is why I see the need for economic assistance. Infrastructure is intrinsically tied to the question of humanitarian aid, and the question of rebuilding Serbia.”

Sen. George Voinovich (R-Ohio) asked about the view expressed by some people, that if the infrastructure is not rebuilt, this will accelerate the demise of Milosevic. “Quite the contrary,” Father Dobrijevic answered. “I would disagree. I think it would so clearly demoralize the people that they would not be able to rise up against him. You can’t starve someone into submission.”

Failure of Afghan talks signals new war danger

by Ramtanu Maitra and
Muriel Mirak-Weissbach

The two-day talks among the warring Afghan factions, under UN supervision, in Tashkent, Uzbekistan on July 19-20, yielded nothing. What became evident is that the Taliban, who control about 90% of Afghanistan, and the Northern Alliance, led by Ahmed Shah Massoud and whose militia controls about 5% of Afghanistan, are preparing for yet another major clash, and it is not unlikely that some new elements may be joining the fight.

The talks were held at the behest of the six countries that border Afghanistan—China, Iran, Pakistan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan. (The talks go under the name of the “6+2” formula, because, in addition to the six neighboring countries, Russia and the United States are also involved.) But, unlike earlier Afghan talks, which had also failed, this round drew the attention of many because of the developments taking place around Central Asia. In the United States, Sen. Sam Brownback (R-Kan.), in his Silk Road Strategy Act, S. 579, urged lawmakers to assist “regional military cooperation among the countries of the South Caucasus and Central Asia through programs such as the Central Asia Battalion and the Partnership for Peace” of NATO. His initiative, though ostensibly favorable to development of the Silk Road, is a not-so-veiled proposal for NATO intervention into the volatile region. Any such intervention, whether directly by NATO, perhaps through Turkey in cooperation with Israel, would set the region afire. Russia has let it be known that NATO expansion into the Caucasus and Central Asia is considered a “red line”; if it is crossed, a major strategic confrontation will be on the agenda. At the same time that Brownback was peddling his wares to the Senate, developments in Iran, Uzbekistan, and Afghanistan seem indicative of a new pattern which is being woven—one that would have NATO embroidered boldly on the weave.

A British geopolitical thrust

In July, clashes broke out in Iran between the reform faction supportive of President Seyyed Mohammad Khatami, and the entrenched conservative clerical faction controlling the judiciary and law enforcement apparatus, clashes which provocateurs escalated into violent conflict. At the same time, the Turkish government intervened politically, voicing support for protests which it said could bring down the Iranian regime. And, simultaneously, Turkish planes bombed sites inside Iran, claiming that the Iranians were hosting Kurdish Workers Party terrorists. Evidence that the provocateur elements inside the Iranian student movement had close association with British-linked “human rights” groups based in the United States, pointed to the obvious: that the events in Tehran, as well as the Turkish military provocations, were part of a broader, British-backed geopolitical thrust, to destabilize the entire region (see *EIR*, July 23, 1999, p. 71).

The failure of the Afghan talks must be seen in this context. Significantly, London and Washington—at least the White House—have differing viewpoints on how to handle the Afghan war. The United States, as mentioned, is party to the 6+2 process, whereas Britain is conspicuously absent. Washington has recently imposed sanctions on the Taliban pseudo-government in Afghanistan, on grounds that the Taliban continues to harbor terrorist Osama bin Laden. Bin Laden is a Saudi national and a British asset, whose name stands for a network of former Afghan mujahideen, now deployed as roving terrorists. The Taliban is also largely a British creation, specifically of the circles of Lord Nicholas Bethell et al. (see *EIR*, April 12, 1996, pp. 43-48), together with elements of the British-backed and Mossad-infested Pakistani Inter-Services Intelligence. The support for Taliban insurgents by these outside forces has aimed at keeping the Afghan war going, so as to prevent realization of vital infrastructure development in the country, which would finally link it up to the Eurasian Land-Bridge, the new Silk Road across Eurasia. Pakistani interests, as well as the U.S.-Saudi oil group UNOCAL, have put their money behind the Taliban insurgents, ostensibly to seize political control over the country, and then to run an oil pipeline down through the country from Turkmenistan into Pakistan. The focus on this route is motivated by a commitment to keep Iran out of any such pipeline projects.

As for Iran, its entire foreign policy thrust over the past eight years, and increasingly under the Presidency of Khatami, has been defined by the economics of the Silk Road, and Iran’s geostrategic role in it. The current Iranian leadership is eager to reestablish normal relations with the West, including the United States, albeit in a careful, gradual process which would not upset the internal political balance. Iran is thus open to functioning as a bridge to Central Asia, and is therefore eager to help hammer out a diplomatic solution to the Afghan war, which continues to sabotage peaceful development.

At the same time, Iran is adamantly opposed to any foreign military presence in the region, emphatically, that of NATO or its proxies; for Tehran, as for Moscow, any intervention into Azerbaijan, for example, via Turkey, would trigger dramatic upheavals.

Washington now appears to have decided to openly disassociate itself from the Taliban, indeed, to slap sanctions on the regime, until such time as Bin Laden is handed over. Iran, Uzbekistan, and other Central Asian countries, have also openly opposed the Taliban, with the exception of Pakistan.

NATO aims

Bin Laden has also been identified as the main culprit in the Kashmir fiasco, the crisis which broke out when so-called freedom fighters entered Indian territory from Kashmir, a crisis which took many lives and resolved nothing. In reality, the “Afghan mujahideen” were the “fighting porters” (porters carrying weapons), while the majority of actual fighters or intruders into Indian territory were Pakistani regulars.

At the same time, those orchestrating this charade also consider it instrumental, to set up an “invasion” of Afghanistan, perhaps by NATO-allied forces, on the pretext of getting rid of “Islamic fundamentalists.” Their plan, through such schemes, is to expand NATO eastward, and to get strategic control over resource-rich Central Asia. This would pose a direct, strategic threat to both China and Russia, as well as to India—the three most powerful countries in the region.

However, this is not widely understood in New Delhi, where the euphoria of “American support,” which allowed India to hit back at the Islamic extremists and Pakistan during the Kashmir crisis, is acting as blinkers. The British lobby is actively camouflaging the broader picture hidden behind the turmoil in Iran: the threat of an attack on Afghanistan and the complex developments surrounding Turkey, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, and Iran. In other words, New Delhi has not comprehended the danger of lending support to “liberal democrats” and the “Tajik nationalists,” such as Massoud, in the present context.

For the full picture, the Uzbek and Turkish developments need to be taken into account. Uzbekistan’s virulent protests against Russia’s stated intent to set up a permanent base in Tajikistan, and its decision to strengthen military cooperation with Azerbaijan and Georgia, is indicative of President Islam Karimov’s desire to get rid of the “Tajik problem.”

Turkey, NATO’s cat’s-paw, also has deep-seated links with Israel and Britain. This makes Turkey perhaps the most ominous, and active player in the region. Turkey’s interest in Central Asia, like Iran’s, is no secret, although it is of a different nature. Turkey has been cast as the wrecker, in a vast destabilizing process across the Caucasus and Central Asia, whereas Iran’s thrust has been shaped by urgent economic self-interest: to develop transportation and pipeline infrastructure throughout the region, so as to develop the immense

economic potentials of the newly independent Central Asian republics.

The failure of the Afghan talks at this time was a nail hammered deep into the Taliban's coffin, in the sense that it has been isolated internationally, and punished by the United States. However, the Taliban remains a virulent, aggressive military force. Unless the major powers, the United States, China, and Russia, agree on a peaceful solution to the conflict, Afghanistan may again be engulfed in yet another war.

Conference advances India-Central Asia ties

by EIR Staff

Schiller Institute representatives Ramtanu Maitra and Michael Liebig participated in a conference in New Delhi, on July 28-29, whose purpose was to strengthen the ties of the "survivors' club" centered around Russia, China, and India, as the world undergoes an economic and finance crash. The meeting was opened by Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee. It was sponsored by the Maulana Azad Institute of Asian Studies of Calcutta on the topic of Indian-Central Asian relations, and with special emphasis on the contribution by the late Russian Orientalist Babajan Gafurov.

Conference participants included some 20 scholars from the Central Asian republics; a Russian delegation, led by the head of the Moscow Oriental Institute, Professor Rybakov; a Chinese delegation, led by Prof. Ma Jiali, who chaired one of the seminar's sessions; some 40 Indian scholars, led by Prof. Devendra Kaushik, chairman of the Maulana Azad Institute, who, in April, had addressed *EIR*'s strategic seminar in Bonn-Bad Godesberg (see *EIR*, May 7, 1999); and Hrant Khachatryan, a newly elected member of Armenia's Parliament and longtime Schiller Institute collaborator. Michael Liebig presented a paper to the seminar on "NATO, the 'Eurasian Triangle,' and the Caucasus/Central Asia Region." The conference proceedings, which are to be published as a book, include a paper by the Schiller Institute's founder Helga Zepp-LaRouche, on the Eurasian Land-Bridge and what is becoming known as the "China-Russia-India strategic triangle."

The conference demonstrated, in its own way, the major improvement in Sino-Indian relations over the past months. Chinese and Indian participants discussed in public the possibility of intelligence cooperation between China and India, and road connections crossing the Himalayas that would linking Central Asia and India through China.

The conference also showed the reality of the emergence of the India-Russia-China triangle on the world political

plane, as well as in the Caucasus/Central Asia region. This is all the more significant, as India is currently being intensely wooed by the very same British-American-Commonwealth oligarchy which had screamed and yelled about India's nuclear tests in May 1998.

In this context, even more light was shed on the high degree of credibility that Lyndon LaRouche, the Schiller Institute, and *EIR* enjoy, on both analytical and programmatic matters.

'Many silk roads'

The first day of the conference took place at the Indian Parliament, where Prime Minister Vajpayee delivered the inaugural address, focussing on the "geo-cultural space," uniting South Asia and Central Asia, "criss-crossed" by "many silk roads," in political, economic, cultural, and religious terms. Maitra and Liebig were introduced to the Indian Prime Minister as "the representatives of the Schiller Institute." With particular warmth, Vajpayee greeted the Chinese delegation. The conference was also addressed by the Indian Education Minister Dr. Joshi; the Secretary of the Ministry of External Affairs, N. Dayal; and the Chief Minister of Jammu and Kashmir, Faruk Abdullah. The second day of the conference, held at Jawaharlal Nehru University, was filled with lectures, among them from the Schiller Institute, and marked by intense debate.

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