

Let us finally win the war for the Eurasian Land-Bridge

by Mary Burdman

When, on Oct. 12, 1988, Lyndon LaRouche gave a speech in Berlin, forecasting the economic collapse of the East bloc economies unless there were external intervention, and calling for the reunification of Germany, to build an economic bridge into Eastern Europe, the government of China was beginning construction of what was to become the "Second Eurasian Continental Bridge." In 1985, China's eminent economist Ma Hong, had proposed the extension of the rail line being built in northern Xinjiang, China's westernmost province, to connect it to the railroad in Kazakstan, then part of the Soviet Union. This construction would finally complete a rail connection, delayed for decades because of the Sino-Soviet political split of the early 1960s.

China was re-opening the ancient "Silk Road" between Asia and Europe.

In November 1989, with the reunification of Germany imminent, LaRouche, then already a political prisoner of the George Bush administration in the United States, proposed launching a massive reconstruction and development program for Europe, based on the Paris-Berlin-Vienna "Productive Triangle." This policy was to create the economic powerhouse, which could support the construction of the transport, energy, and other infrastructure which was essential to solve the economic problems of the nations of the former Soviet Union. LaRouche's Productive Triangle, like the "Fifty-Year Development Policy for the Indian-Pacific Oceans' Basin," published in August 1983, outlined the economic "corridor" development concept, which became the core of *EIR*'s unique "Eurasian Land-Bridge" policy.

Less than one year later, in September 1990, the rail connection between China and Kazakstan was completed, and, in June 1992, it became possible for the first time to travel the 11,000 kilometers, from China's east coast port of Lianyungang on the Yellow Sea, through Central Asia, to Rotterdam, Europe's biggest Atlantic port.

This new Silk Road had the potential to revolutionize the world economic and political situation. The greatest political battle of the twentieth century, has been that between the national leaders committed to developing the Eurasian landmass, the greatest concentration of land, humanity, history, and culture on Earth, and the "divide and conquer" policies of those, led by the British Empire, whose policy has been to exploit these great resources in the interests of a world financial oligarchy which, as national governments fail to take

essential measures in their own defense, still remains the single most powerful entity in the world.

At the end of the twentieth century, the political, economic, and geographic challenges to uniting Eurasia, have still not been overcome. This project could have been made possible, by the development of the rail "land-bridge" already in the mid-nineteenth century, an economic breakthrough on the level of space travel today. Yet, 150 years later, China is only now constructing rail links to Russia and Central and Southeast Asia; Central Asia has only two outlets, to the south and east, and the Indian subcontinent has no rail connections whatsoever, either to West Asia and Europe, or to Southeast Asia.

While Eurasia's mountains, deserts, and great distances are certainly on a scale as nowhere else on earth, the real challenge to development has been political. To keep Eurasia divided, is the key policy of geopolitics, the basis of the British Empire.

Divide and conquer

In a speech read to a Schiller Institute conference in Berlin in March 1991, LaRouche identified the political battle of the last century, of European and Asian leaders attempting to unite Eurasia as "a sphere of cooperation for mutual benefit among sovereign states," which could have ended the British domination of the world. Then, as now, the British and their allies launched a twofold attack, using balance-of-power methods, playing off potential national collaborators among France, Germany, Russia, Japan, and so on, against each other, and of cultural warfare for the internal destruction of European civilization.

The current geopolitical crew has openly stated their intent to, once again, keep Eurasia divided. In July 1996, a leading British military strategist, whose specialty is "classical geopolitics," summed up the views of his ilk, saying: "This Euro-Asian railroad project, involving China, Iran, and other countries, requires us to revive Halford Mackinder and basic geopolitics. This has enormous geopolitical and strategic potential, and is a real danger, because, as you can see, it is not accessible to the Anglo-American maritime powers. . . . What worries me, is the economic *multiplier* effects of building railways. . . ."

"We've come full circle, now in the twentieth century. It began with a Eurasian geopolitical threat, and is ending with one. Go back to why Mackinder wrote his *Geographical Pivot*

FIGURE 1

Eurasia: future main routes of the Eurasian Land-Bridge



of Political History. . . . It was not accidental that this was written in 1904, just as the Russo-Japanese War was beginning. What motivated him to write it, was the building of the Trans-Siberian Railway. . . .

“Go back to the works of Haushofer, Adolf Hitler’s adviser. He had one of the great geopolitical designs, the so-called ‘inner line,’ free of Anglo-Saxon influence. It was a great design, but Hitler blew it, with Operation Barbarossa. When I hear about China linking up with Iran, and building a railway, and Russia becoming interested, I see this as the re-creation of that ‘inner line’ design, in a new form.”

In the summer of 1993, the “manifesto” of modern geopoliticians was launched, with the publication of Harvard Prof. Samuel Huntington’s “The Clash of Civilizations,” as the lead article in the New York Council on Foreign Relations magazine *Foreign Affairs*. While that article has gained notoriety throughout the world, it is nothing more than a classic, imperial divide-and-conquer intelligence operation, incorporating all the classic disinformation, lies, stupidities, and distortions about history, culture, and economics, on which such intelligence operations are always based.

Huntington had even lifted the term “clash of civilizations” from a September 1990 article in *Atlantic Monthly* magazine, by the high-level British intelligence operative,

Princeton University Prof. Bernard Lewis, the author of a plan earlier named after him for splitting up the nations of the Middle East into mutually feuding tribal and ethnic domains.

Lewis and Huntington both follow in the footsteps of their mentor, Arnold Toynbee, who for 30 years, was director of research at London’s Royal Institute of International Affairs, and the historian of British imperial intelligence.

In order to combat this intelligence operation, LaRouche commissioned a series of groundbreaking studies on the true history of the battle for Eurasia, which were published in *EIR* during 1994-96. These *Special Reports* included “London Sets the Stage for a New Triple Entente,” on how Britain launched World War I, probably the most destructive event in modern Western history (*EIR*, March 24, 1995); “Britain’s Pacific Warfare Against the United States,” on the political battle between U.S. President Franklin Roosevelt and British imperialist Prime Minister Winston Churchill (*EIR*, May 12, 1995); and “The Coming Fall of the House of Windsor,” (*EIR*, Oct. 28, 1994).

China takes warning

The reunification of east and west Europe in 1989-90, was a political upheaval which could have changed this situation, by breaking the power of “geopoliticians.” But, as Helga

Zepp-LaRouche describes elsewhere in this report, this potential was aborted by the operations of the new Entente Cordiale of French President François Mitterrand, British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher, and U.S. President George Bush, to launch first the Persian Gulf War against Iraq in 1990-91, followed by five years of brutal warfare in the Balkans. Simultaneously, Russia and eastern Europe were wrecked through economic “shock therapy.” Since then, there have been only brief, but unsustainable, revivals of the Productive Triangle perspective in Europe, especially with the 1993 European Union White Paper known as the “Jacques Delors Plan” to build a Trans-European Network of transport links.

However, the operations of Thatcher and company had a different impact in other regions of Eurasia. The government of China, especially, while shaken by the Gulf War, and its economic impact on the developing nations, took warning. From the beginning of the 1990s, the Beijing government began a series of policy moves to prevent the possibility of “shock therapy” wreaking the same havoc in China as it had in Russia and eastern Europe, and to expand its orientation toward its Eurasian neighbors.

While China, the only nation which has actually been building its economy in the past decades, has been at the core of the Eurasian Land-Bridge, many other nations, including India, Iran, Thailand, Indonesia, Turkmenistan, Kazakstan, and Russia, had turned in this same direction during the early 1990s.

The nations of Eurasia have made heroic efforts over the past decade, to overcome the difficulties and construct the Eurasian Land-Bridge. These vital transport connections, which have great political importance but were never built, have been made between China and Kazakstan, between Iran and Turkmenistan, and in southwest China, toward Southeast Asia. Iran is working to close the gaps in its rail network, which would mean that, for the first time in history, the Indian subcontinent, home of 1 billion people, would have a rail connection to Europe.

Now, many of these nations have been laid waste by the modern holocaust—that of “the markets.”

Moves toward Eurasian construction

Already in the late 1980s, political and economic steps which could have built a “cooperative sphere” in Eurasia, were being taken, amid the growing ties among China, Russia, and India, an effort to overcome the deep divisions created by the events of the early 1960s, including the Sino-Soviet split and the Indo-Chinese border war.

Already in December 1988, Indian Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi visited Beijing. In their discussions, Chinese leader Deng Xiaoping said to Gandhi, that the “North-South question . . . is only a question of development. . . . We should look at this problem in terms of the development of mankind as a whole.” There can be no “Asia-Pacific century,” unless Asia’s two Third World giants, India and China, are developed, Deng said. “Two things have to be done at the same

time. One is to establish a new international political order; the other is to establish a new international economic order.”

The Gulf War made it clear how urgent it was to create such a genuine, new international order. In the first months of 1991, Beijing, although it officially maintained a neutral position in the Gulf conflict, began attacking the Thatcher-Bush-Mitterrand “new world order.” Chinese leaders made repeated warnings, to Mikhail Gorbachov in Moscow and to the governments of Eastern Europe, of the dangers inherent in crash “market reform.” In December 1990, *éminence grise* Bo Yibo published an important policy article in the *People’s Daily*, warning of the dangers of too radical market reform, and emphasizing the maintenance of core industries. China’s central leadership, more and more concerned about the threat to national stability, by 1992-93 had turned the huge Chinese economy toward its current perspective of development for the twenty-first century. The show of high-technology force by the U.S. military in the Gulf War was also closely heeded in China.

Chinese-Soviet rapprochement, outlined in Gorbachov’s “Eurasian” policy speech in 1986 in Vladivostok, grew. One former Soviet official, then-Deputy General Secretary of the Soviet Communist Party Central Committee Vladimir Ivashko, who visited Beijing in early 1992 to prepare the state visit of Chinese Communist Party General Secretary Jiang Zemin to Moscow that May, returned saying that the Soviet and Chinese people have a “traditionally close friendship,” and that Russia “should take a closer look at China, at its experiences, including its economic experiences both positive and negative, and not at the West, as some of our economists mistakenly believed.” The Soviet press outlined the importance of the Kazakstan-Xinjiang rail link, and “combining market relations with state economic regulation.” Russia would have done well, to have heeded such warnings.

In May, Jiang Zemin, accompanied by military and other leaders, went to the U.S.S.R. for the first Sino-Soviet Party summit in Moscow in 34 years. The issue of this summit was mutual support for each other’s stability, peaceful coexistence, and economic cooperation in a tumultuous world. Both sides emphasized that their renewed friendship was not aimed at anyone. These views were echoed more strongly, when Jiang Zemin, by that time also President of China, returned to Moscow in April 1997. But, by that time, shock therapy had totally destroyed the Russian economy.

In 1992, while mutual trade was still very low, both sides were discussing the potential for Soviet exports of machinery and equipment, including transport and machinery-building technology, which had no market in the West, to China. On the eve of Jiang’s visit, the Soviet paper *Independent Gazette* stressed the “importance of our joint efforts to develop infrastructure along a vast zone, including the Soviet Far East, Manchuria, and Mongolia.”

Germany, India, and Indonesia

There were many more such proposals for cooperation among Eurasian nations during this time. Throughout Eastern

Europe, long-standing relations to Asian nations were seen as a real advantage over the Western economies.

In contrast to the unholy trio of Bush's "new world order," key nations of Asia responded immediately and positively to the reunification of Germany. In 1991, visits among the leaders of Germany, India, and Indonesia demonstrated what could have been achieved.

When German President Richard von Weizsäcker made a state visit to India on Feb. 28-March 6, 1991, both nations emphasized the importance of German-Indian cooperation for North-South relations. India gave unqualified support to German reunification, and the united Germany's strong and positive role in Europe. Von Weizsäcker's visit was seen in India as "nothing short of an offer to make India Germany's principal interlocutor in the Third World," as the March 11 *Hindustan Times* reported. Many collaborative projects were discussed, including in science and engineering, key strengths of both nations.

The closeness of the political atmosphere was shown when von Weizsäcker took the political risk to state in New Delhi, immediately in the wake of the Gulf War, that, "in the concert of nations involved, we Germans have shown a little more restraint than France or England, for instance, and I feel for good reason." This certainly struck a chord in India, where former Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi (who was assassinated just weeks later, on May 21) had publicly expressed his dismay over the UN's role in promoting the Gulf War and called for reinstating the UN according to the spirit of San Francisco after World War II.

Von Weizsäcker also called on India to develop its "traditionally good relations with the Soviet Union," in order to strengthen the international role of the Soviets in respect to "the future shaping of the relations between North and South." A concrete form of German-Indian-Soviet collaboration was proposed by Indian Foreign Secretary Munchkund Dubey, who said on March 4 that a group was being set up to explore possible joint Indo-German projects in third countries, including a DM 8 billion project to build more than 60,000 houses in the U.S.S.R. for Soviet soldiers returning from eastern Europe.

Six months later, the newly elected Indian Prime Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao visited Germany. But, despite the tragic circumstances of this visit, after the assassination of Rajiv Gandhi, the great potential for the Indian-German "bridge" remained. Rao's statement at his press conference in Bonn on Sept. 7, which this author attended, was very moving. This was, Rao said, a "very important moment," with "momentous changes" taking place in Europe. India had just come out of the very "traumatic experience," of the Gandhi assassination. In addition, India, hit hard by the International Monetary Fund in the wake of the Gulf War, was facing a "very grave economic situation" as his minority Congress Party government took office. For the first time since independence, New Delhi had been in danger of defaulting on its foreign debt.

But now, Rao said, India's leaders wanted "to assure our

friends abroad," that India is now back on a "normal course of development and back to playing her rightful role in international affairs."

Most notable was that this visit, Rao's first as Prime Minister, broke the tradition, that Indian Prime Ministers' first foreign trip was invariably to either Washington or Moscow. Rao did *not* visit either of India's close allies, the Soviet Union, or the other superpower, the United States, but Germany. Rao made it clear at his press conference, that by choosing Bonn over Moscow and Washington, he was sending a message. He affirmed that the perspective, of India as Germany's key partner and "bridge" to the nations of the South, had been again discussed in Bonn. Every aspect of international relations, including the unsettling situation in the U.S.S.R., had also been discussed, and, among other economic arrangements, Bonn confirmed that previous East German-Indian trade deals, primarily in chemicals, fertilizer, and machinery, would go ahead, with 90% export guarantees from the German government. India's trade ties with East Germany, built up since the 1970s, were proposed as the basis of new connections, and India had repeatedly proposed participating in the development of the new German states with the affiliate of the development bank in Berlin.

In the same period, in early July 1991, Indonesia's President Suharto became the first non-European head of state to visit Germany since its unification. Indonesian Foreign Minister Ali Alatas said that, coming at this "unique moment," the visit had "special meaning." The government of Indonesia was proposing, that relations among eastern and western Europe and Southeast Asia be transformed for their mutual benefit. Indonesia is "very sympathetic" to Germany's commitment to eastern Europe, including the Soviet Union, Alatas said. Germany's relations to the developing sector overall must also change, away from the industrialized sector draining the developing nations. It is "not just saying 'do not diminish cooperation with the rest of the world.' We must think how to utilize this new situation" to the benefit of all, he said. Among proposals put forward by President Suharto, was that urgently needed passenger ships and dredges, which Indonesia was ordering from Germany, be produced in the eastern states, to "keep its industry alive."

President Suharto also proposed that many of the materials needed for the economic development of Eastern Europe, could be produced far more cheaply in Southeast Asia than in western Germany. "What we are proposing is a triangular kind of agreement," among western Germany, Indonesia, and Eastern Europe, Alatas said, that could enhance development of both Asia and Eastern Europe.

But, by 1993-94, this potential was fading rapidly. Mutual visits between German Chancellor Helmut Kohl and Prime Minister Rao focussed not on what German technology and science could do for India, but on the deregulation and liberalization of the Indian economy and, especially, cooperation for the "successful conclusion of GATT," the General Agreements on Tariffs and Trade.



Helga Zepp-LaRouche, known as “the Silk Road Lady,” addresses professors and students during a visit to China, May 1996. She also attended a conference in Beijing on the Eurasian Land-Bridge.

The southern and central tiers

Throughout the early 1990s, intense discussions on cooperation were going on throughout Eurasia. The 14,000 kilometer Trans-Asia railway project, to link Indonesia in Southeast Asia, via Thailand and Myanmar, with the Indian subcontinent, and then to Istanbul on the border of Europe, which had been under discussion and planning since the 1960s, was again revived. In the early 1990s, work began on filling in the strategic “missing links” between Southeast and South Asia, Southeast Asia and China, and South and West Asia. China has now completed its Nanning-Kunming railroad, which could be linked to northern Myanmar. Iran, although under serious economic pressure, remains committed to finishing the short, vital 600 km rail line necessary to link Pakistan, and thus the Indian subcontinent, with West Asia and Europe.

In 1992, the Economic Cooperation Organization, of Turkey, Iran, and Pakistan, expanded to incorporate the Central Asian republics, which had declared their independence from the Soviet Union in 1991. The ECO held a series of summits, some including China, to plan Eurasian rail development, and outlined a modern transportation network running from “Istanbul to China.” These nations also discussed the construction of oil and gas pipelines to link Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan to Iran and to China. By May 1996, Iran and Turkmenistan were able to proudly announce the opening of the Mashhad-Ashkhabad rail line, which they had constructed without outside aid, for the first time linking Central Asia to the Persian Gulf.

Intensive diplomacy between India and Iran developed beginning in 1992, with one key issue being that Iran would provide India with a bridge to Central Asia via Turkmenistan. In 1993, Indian Prime Minister Rao visited not only Iran, but also China.

Up through the first half of 1997, there were many efforts

throughout Southeast Asia, with Thailand playing a pivotal role, to change the course of developments by expanding the “southern tier” of the Eurasian Land-Bridge, in collaboration with China, India, and Bangladesh. Just one example was that, on July 23, 1997, Myanmar, along with Laos, became a member of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations. This event was greeted in a commentary by China’s official Xinhua news agency, which said: “Burma’s [Myanmar’s] entry into ASEAN contributes not only to the development of the country but also to peace, stability, and development of the region. . . .

“Burma’s joining of ASEAN would also contribute to the transport sector of the Southeast Asian region. The eventual establishment of regional highway and railway networks would in turn promote the economic development of the region.”

Just one year later, the global financial crisis has devastated the economies of Southeast Asia.

‘The Renaissance ahead of us’

In autumn 1993, China officially announced its policy to develop the “regions along the Eurasian Continental Bridge,” an idea very close to LaRouche’s “development corridor” concept. With Russia, in the grip of Western “shock therapy,” plunged into economic disaster, the Beijing leadership announced a policy to bridge the growing economic gulf between China’s fast-developing coastal regions and the huge, backward hinterland.

This policy culminated in the international symposium, representing 34 nations, on the Eurasian Continental Bridge, held in Beijing in May 1996, where Schiller Institute founder Helga Zepp-LaRouche presented the concept of “the Renaissance ahead of us,” which could transform Eurasia, and finally defeat the insane, engineered “clash of civilizations.”

That potential remains, but only if nations finally decide they must *win* this decisive war of the twentieth century.