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The Unipolar World Is Dead

Harley Schlanger, a spokesman for the Schiller Institute and The LaRouche Organization, gave the following presentation at the January 22, 2022 International Schiller Institute online conference, “A Difference in Leadership—Can War with Russia Still Be Averted?” following presentations by Russian Ambassador Dmitry Polyanskiy and Schiller Institute President Helga Zepp-LaRouche. Ambassador Polyanskiy’s presentation was published in the January 28 issue of EIR. The full conference is available [here](#)

What I will show is that the U.S. official position in the current crisis between the U.S. and Russia—that Russia is the cause of the problem, and Russia has to back down, Russia has to move back its troops, and so on—is either based on ignorance of history, or an arrogant view of the U.S. as the unilateral enforcer of a “rules-based order.” What I intend to show is that it’s the latter.

Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov said the other day, that ignoring Russia’s legal concerns over the eastward expansion of NATO to include Ukraine and a deployment of forces, including weapons, near the Russian border, will have the most serious consequences. In stating this, he was repeating the formulation that I think is the clearest, from President Vladimir Putin, from his annual press conference on December 23. I want to read the quote from President Putin:

Our actions will not depend on the negotiation process, but rather on unconditional guarantees for Russia’s security concerns. In this connection, we have made it clear that any further movement of NATO to the East is unacceptable. Is there anything unclear about this? Are we deploying missiles near the U.S. border? No, we are not. It is the U.S. that has come to our home with its missiles and is already standing on our doorstep. Is it going too far to demand that no strike systems be placed near our home? What is so unusual about this?

In listening to that, it’s very striking the similarity to



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Russian President Vladimir Putin: “Any further movement of NATO to the East is unacceptable.” Dec. 23, 2021.

the argument made to the American people on October 22, 1962 by President John Kennedy, as to why he had to adopt a quarantine—which was actually a blockade—of Cuba, to stop the import of further Soviet missiles, during the 13 days of the Cuban Missile Crisis. Here’s what Kennedy said in that speech to the American people:

In the world today, due to the destructive power of nuclear weapons and the swiftness of ballistic missiles, any substantially increased possibility of their use, or any sudden change in their deployment may well be regarded as a definite threat to peace.

President Kennedy talked about the build-up of the Soviet Union’s missiles in Cuba, and added:

“In an area well known to have special and historical relationship to the United States,”—and I might add parenthetically, exactly as Ukraine does with Russia today—

“the sudden clandestine decision to station strategic weapons outside of Soviet soil, is a deliberately provocative and unjustified change in the status quo which cannot be accepted by this country.”



White House/Robert Knudsen

President John F. Kennedy: "The decision [by the Soviet Union] to station strategic weapons outside of Soviet soil ... cannot be accepted." Oct. 22, 1962.

I think you'll see in President Kennedy's language something very similar to what President Putin is saying today, which is why many people, including Helga Zepp-LaRouche, have called this a "reverse Cuban Missile Crisis."

Rejecting the Common Good

I want to give you a quick view of what the idea of a "unipolar world" is, and what it means. The people who argue for the U.S. to be the main power, start from the standpoint that we're "democratic," we're "good." Therefore, when we deploy missiles, it's for the good. As Dr. Andrey Kortunov (Director General of the Russian International Affairs Council) told us: when the Russians deploy the missiles, since they are "bad," these are "bad missiles" and have to be opposed. From that standpoint, we have to look at where this idea comes from.

The underlying issue today, which is called into question by President Putin's insistence on legally binding security guarantees, is the construct of a unipolar world. The idea that there's only one nation on the planet which, because of its immense military power and economic power, can dictate the rules to the rest of the human race, and use satrapies such as the European Union and NATO to help enforce it, no longer applies. The Western financial system is collapsing. There's a

further point, though. In reality, this idea never really existed, except in the minds of those who tried to enforce it and tried to convince the rest of the world that it had no choice but to accept it. They believed that the collapse of the Soviet Union left them with no military obstacle to impose their unilateral decisions on strategic and financial matters.

We've talked about this before. Zepp-LaRouche brought it up again this afternoon. What is the "rules-based order"? Well, for the unilateralists, it's the rules that sustain their control over the global economy. This goes back to a merger during the George Herbert Walker Bush administration, and actually before that. It occurred during the Ronald Reagan administration with the emergence of the Democratic Leadership Council taking over the Democratic Party with its so-called "Third Way," which became the approach of the Bill Clinton administration. The idea of the neo-conservatives and neo-liberals essentially joining as an American force to impose this unipolar world. In particular, it was the neo-cons who were the most arrogant, with their Project for a New American Century, in which they insisted that the United States had emerged as the only power on the planet. Therefore, they created a narrative to explain why everyone else has to march to the tune of the United States.

The narrative starts with, "We won the Cold War." Second, the victory in the Cold War was one of "democracy" and the "free market." The third point: This means that every nation must submit to those who won the Cold War, because we're the good guys; we did what was right. The fourth point, which is usually not expressed, is that this means there's no more sovereignty, no more Peace of Westphalia, as UK Prime Minister Tony Blair blatantly stated repeatedly in trips to the United States. The idea that there's a common good is no longer acceptable. The idea that there should be no interference in other nations' internal affairs, which was part of the Peace of Westphalia, is no longer valid. That the "common good" is whatever the unipolar power insists on.

Thirty Years of War

I want to give you a sense of what the so-called "democratic order," this "rules-based order," has done in the world in the last 30 years. Let's look at some of the key moments in the "Unipolar World Order":

Start with the Dec. 20, 1989 U.S. invasion of Panama under President George Herbert Walker Bush, on completely fraudulent, trumped-up charges.

Then, Jan. 17, 1991, the United States launches Op-

eration Desert Storm, the initial invasion of Iraq; again, on totally spurious charges, unjustified activity. Nevertheless, a coalition force of 35 nations led by the U.S. went in, and fortunately, stopped short of Baghdad. That was taken up again later.

March 24, 1999, the United States and NATO began a bombing attack on Yugoslavia. The argument was that this was to protect Europe from the genocide being committed by Serbian forces. There are many questions still outstanding on this, but the obvious point is that these were extremely destructive bombing raids, both in terms of human lives and infrastructure, done by the United States and NATO, *in Europe*.

Then, Oct. 7, 2001, the U.S., under the younger Bush and NATO, launches an invasion of Afghanistan, which just ended, 20 years later, in August.

March 20, 2003, the U.S. invaded Iraq, again on phony pretenses, the idea that Iraq was building weapons of mass destruction. This case in particular was concocted by British intelligence and networks in the CIA that were committed to destroying the government of Saddam Hussein.

March 15, 2011 marks the beginning of the Syrian civil war. This occurred at a point when the decision had been made by networks in the United States and Europe that President Bashar al-Assad had to go, there had to be regime change in Syria. Over time, as the jihadist forces of al-Qaeda, ISIS, and al-Nusra were conducting a slaughter of the Syrian people, the United States was arming and training them as “moderate Syrian rebels.” The destruction in Syria continues to this day, through the Caesar sanctions policy, which is threatening the lives of hundreds of thousands of Syrians, especially children.

Four days after that, March 19, 2011, the U.S. under President Barack Obama, along with France and the United Kingdom, launched the bombing of Libya, which ended with driving Qaddafi from power and murdering him, which was greeted joyfully by a cackling Secretary of State Hillary Clinton.

Then, Feb. 22, 2014, the successful conclusion of the Maidan Square regime-change coup in Ukraine, which was an escalated phase in the targetting of Russia.

The U.S. rejected part of the strategic security architecture, which was part of the post-war world to reduce the danger of nuclear war. In Dec. 2001, President George W. Bush announced that the U.S. was getting out of the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty, the ABM Treaty. Then, on Aug. 2, 2019, Donald Trump did the same,

saying the United States was leaving the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty, the INF Treaty.

Then, you have the famous statement from March 25, 2014, again demonstrating an arrogance toward the government and people of Russia. President Obama said of Russia, “Russia is a regional power that is threatening some of its immediate neighbors, not out of strength, but out of weakness.” This was a reference in particular to Ukraine and the events in Crimea.

Russia Is Given ‘Shock Therapy’

There’s one other aspect of this which Zepp-LaRouche mentioned, and I just want to emphasize it briefly, because it’s a part of the same picture.

After the first Iraq War, the United States’ policy toward Russia became that of enforcing a so-called “economic transition” via something called “shock therapy.” The shock therapy doctrine was a product of the neo-liberal Chicago School associated with the Austrian School economist Milton Friedman. The idea was that the way you bring a country to “stability” is to crush the labor force, lower wages, and destroy unions and political parties. In other words, impose a dictatorship, exactly as Lyndon LaRouche warned on Aug. 15, 1971, that the intention was to use these Schachtian austerity policies to destroy nations.

The Pinochet dictatorship in Chile, with the neo-liberal reforms under the Chicago boys of Friedman, was the first step in this direction. It proved to be a complete catastrophe, destroying the standard of living in Chile. We now see a government coming into power in Chile that’s committed to completely overturning the last remnants of that neo-liberal policy.

In 1992, the shock therapy doctrine was applied to Russia under then-President Boris Yeltsin. It was run by Harvard economists associated with Jeffrey Sachs, with bankers from New York, Boston, and the City of London. It included people like Bob Strauss, the Democratic Party fixer and Bill Browder, the swindler who came in through hedge funds to loot Russia. But the policy of shock therapy was designed to destroy what there was of a Russian industrial and scientifically oriented economy and replace it by making Russia into something modelled on a Third World raw-materials exporting country, with the wealth in the hands of Russian oligarchs who were working with the Western bankers.

Just two indications of what this meant for the Russian people:

In January 1992, when it was first implemented, and



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Dr. Andrey Kortunov, Director General of the Russian International Affairs Council: Because the U.S. defines itself as “good,” its missiles are therefore “good”; however, because Russia is defined as “bad,” its missiles are therefore “bad.”

Russia lifted the price controls, retail prices rose 245% in that month. And for the year 1992, retail prices increased 2,500%! Along with the deindustrialization and the loss of living wages and the inability of the government to protect the social welfare, there was a dramatic increase in the death rate, and a decrease in average life expectancy over the next decade, which was only reversed with the Putin Presidency beginning in 1999. It took a while to reverse it; it’s still underway to being reversed.

What’s the reaction to what Putin did to overcome the effects of demographic collapse, of the looting of Russia? People such as Bill Browder and newspapers such as the London *Guardian*, and now the line from everywhere: “Putin’s an authoritarian; he’s an autocrat. There’s no democracy in Russia.” Anyone who says anything about the Russians raising legitimate security concerns, is called a “Putin apologist.” The attacks on President Joe Biden that you see coming out in the press, that Biden is weak, that Biden may be the Neville Chamberlain giving in to Putin, as a Hitler—this was furthered with the so-called “Summit of Democracies,” which tried to force the narrative that the West is democratic and Russia is not, China is not, and therefore we have to stand firm to defend the democratic institutions and sovereignty of Ukraine.

Well, just one simple point here: This is the height of hypocrisy! Where was that concern for the sovereignty of Ukraine, for the legitimacy of Ukrainian elections

when the U.S. ran the coup in February 2014? How is it reflecting the interests of the Ukrainian people, when that “revolution” so-called, that regime-change coup, brought in the International Monetary Fund and lowered the standard of living of the people of Ukraine dramatically? And where is that concern, when Ukraine becomes the potential staging area for World War III, provoked by NATO and the Western powers, when it would be very simple to sign the draft treaties proposed by President Putin, and move on to a bigger concern, which is addressing the pandemic, addressing food shortages worldwide, the global hyperinflation and so on.

The point is that the era of the unilateralists is over, whether they know it or not. We see it with the rise of Eurasia. But the continuing attack on Russia and China is the revenge of the geopolitical doctrine of Sir Halford Mackinder from the late 19th century, which says there can never be an alliance between Western and Central Europe with Eurasia. The emergence of Russia and China, as an economic power—not as a military power, but as an economic power—is the “threat” that’s being addressed—or being attacked, I should say—by the Western policy toward Ukraine.

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