

INTERVIEW: Dr. Clifford Kiracofe

The Money-Changers in the Temple, Or a New Bretton Woods?

Mike Billington: Greetings! This is Mike Billington. I'm with *Executive Intelligence Review*, the Schiller Institute, and The LaRouche Organization. I'm here today with Dr. Clifford Kiracofe. Cliff served as a senior staff member for the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations during the 1980s. He's taught in universities in the United States and China, and is a prolific writer on historical, strategic, and economic issues.

Thank you, Cliff, for being with us today.

Dr. Kiracofe: Thanks, Mike, for inviting me. I'm very happy to be here with you today.

U.S. Imperialism and the Rise of the Security State

Billington: In 2005 and 2006, you gave several presentations at Schiller Institute conferences in Germany as well as in the U.S., several on the theme of U.S. imperialism and the rise of the national security state, and generally on the emergence of a fascist tendency within the United States. This was the time after the 9/11 attack—the Patriot Act, the beginning of the endless wars in Afghanistan and Iraq under George Bush and Dick Cheney.

What is your view of that era today?

Dr. Kiracofe: That was very significant; 9/11, of course, changed everything. It provided a pretext for increasing the national security state, if you will, here in the United States and a clampdown on liberty, and an interference with our constitutional rights. 9/11 was really a key. I can certainly remember and visualize the attack on the



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Dr. Clifford Kiracofe

Twin Towers. That stunned America. Using that horrible event, the powers that be took advantage of public outrage and fear and continued the construction of the national security state left over from the Cold War—the original Cold War from 1945 to, say, 1988, '89, when President Reagan and General Secretary Gorbachev kind of ended the Cold War. 9/11 revamped and provided context for this national security state.

[Those presentations were given] 15 years ago. In recent years, you have an addition of the surveillance state, which is actually manipulated by so-called “Silicon Valley people.” You have the social media, etc., all falling under the national security state's cognitive warfare and propaganda. In answer to your question, I think that early period 2001, 2005, 2006 has set the stage for the last 20 years of increasing this national security state here at home and globally, actually.



unknown origin

“9/11 changed everything. It provided a pretext for increasing the national security state, a clampdown on liberty, and an interference with our constitutional rights.” Shown: terrorists crashing UAL Flight 175 into the South Tower of the World Trade Center, New York, Sept. 11, 2001.

‘Liberal Democracy’ and the Rules-Based Order

Billington: I noticed in looking over your presentations that even then you rejected the idea of the “unipolar world” which had been promoted by [Vice-President Dick] Cheney, Paul Wolfowitz, and the neoconservatives—the so-called Wolfowitz Doctrine, which claimed that we had reached the end of history, as Francis Fukuyama put it, that liberal democracy was the proven doctrine for all nations for all time to come.

In your view, what did they really mean by this term, “liberal democracy,” which we still hear all the time today as the justification for the Western “rules-based order”?

Dr. Kiracofe: If you look carefully back at that era, you’ll see among the neoconservatives one outspoken intellectual, Mike Ledeen, who talked about universal fascism. The concept was early Mussolini, that is to say, fascism without anti-Semitism, which Mussolini later introduced into Italian fascism. For Mike Ledeen and the neocons, this kind of regime is one they’re comfortable with. Looking at the intellectual roots of the neoconservatives, really what you’re looking at is what was called Revisionist Zionism. These people are all from the Truman Cold War era mentality and the Revisionist Zionism of Vladimir Jabotinsky. Jabotinsky favored a Mussolini style politics, and, at base, a Nietzschean approach to politics.

When they use the term “liberal democracy,” well, that sounds great. It sounds excellent until you realize that what they really mean is quite the opposite, more of a regimented society. It’s this use of language, twisting language around. Of course, liberal democracy would be great, but that’s not what’s in their mind. And of course, here in the United States, we have a constitutional republic. Our democracy is based on a Constitution, and it’s republican in nature.

Billington: There’s no difference these days between the neocons who run the Republican Party and the so-called neolibs who run the Democratic Party when it comes to asserting the right to use military force against any government which does not follow their

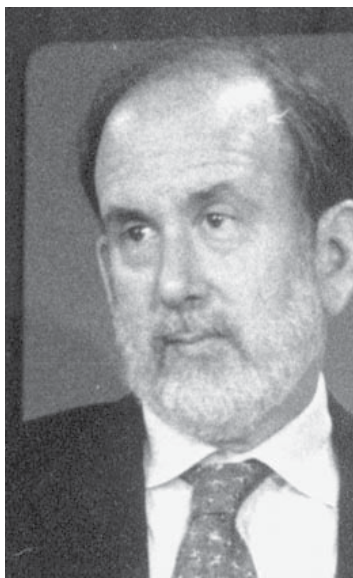
“rules-based order,” as they define the rules. The endless wars in the Middle East were unprovoked and were supporting the terrorists against sovereign governments, rather than fighting them. You’ve made the point that the U.S. lost all of these wars while causing massive destruction and death and mass migration. The UN Charter following World War II was very clear. It forbid the use of military force unless attacked and also forbid the use of unilateral sanctions for economic or strategic purposes.

How do you think the U.S. government has gotten away with such overt criminal acts against international law?

Dr. Kiracofe: Well, Washington just plows ahead and does what it wants—the so-called “blob,” or the “inside-the-Beltway” people. Both political parties have been “neoonized,” if you wish. Actually, the neoconservatives started in the Democratic Party under Truman in the Cold War atmosphere. Nowadays the neoconservative, bellicose, aggressive line is shared to a great degree by both political parties in Washington, and in Congress. In terms of interventionism, again, both parties are involved—the neoconservative policy network, the liberal interventionists that you mentioned, the so-called human rights people, human rights interventionists. It’s a disregard for international law, that is to say, traditional international law based on the concept of sovereign states, and also based on the concept of non-interference in the internal affairs of sovereign states.

This international legal concept goes back even as early as 1555 to the Peace of Augsburg, and then 1648 to the well-known Peace of Westphalia. These principles of non-interference in the internal affairs of other countries is a 500-year-old principle, although it has not, of course, been followed all those years. The United States since World War II is a prime example of what we would call “interventionist politics.” Its foreign interventions are supported by both parties, or a majority of both parties.

When it comes to major wars, as opposed to the covert *coups d’état* and all sorts of covert actions, we certainly didn’t win Korea, we didn’t win Vietnam, we



EIRNS/Stuart Lewis

*Neoon Michael Ledeen—
comfortable with universal fascism.*

didn't win Iraq, and [we had] an ignominious withdrawal from Afghanistan. And of course, we're not going to "win" the proxy war the U.S. started with Russia in Ukraine. We have a lot of violence going on and displaced persons, deaths, owing to this interventionism, or what we could call imperialism by the United States and its Western allies.

I would point out that the NATO alliance, we need to remember, is the U.S., Canada, plus Western European countries. It's really the product of a transatlantic oligarchy, rather than an individual United States or an individual Germany or France or England or something. It's this transatlantic oligarchy that is controlling NATO as a tool of policy, as an enforcement tool of policy, and is controlling the European Union as a political tool. So, when we talk about "U.S. imperialism," which is one way to look at it, we also should bear in mind the sort of transatlantic oligarchy which is subservient to, we could say, a certain plutocracy.

The Roles of the City of London and Wall Street

Billington: How do you see the role of the City of London and Wall Street in the governance of this transatlantic oligarchy?

Dr. Kiracofe: That's the core of it. Of course, the City of London is a very ancient setup, going back many centuries, I think maybe to the 13th century or a little later, but at least 500, 600 years, going back that far. The Bank of England was started as a private monopoly in the late 1600s, 1690s. That whole private banking and banking nexus there in what is called The City. That's the British component of it. And then we have the American side in Wall Street, you could say a parallel universe, or a parallel and cooperating financial mechanism with the British.

The Anglo-Dutch banking financial networks, and then the New York linkages, New York commercial



The Bank of England. Started as a private monopoly in the 1690s, it is at the center of the banking nexus called The City of London.

BoE

banks, investment banks are all kind of interlinked. Each has offices in the other countries—the New York banks have offices in London and the London banks have offices in New York. You're looking at the central banks and the cooperation of central banks to manipulate the money supply, credit and interest rates, and things along those lines—I would say a misuse. The British Bank of England was nationalized after World War II. The American Federal Reserve, so-called, is still held by commercial banks. The American Federal Reserve isn't really "federal" when you look at it closely.

Also, there's a problem of so-called independence of central banks. The central bank should certainly be under the control of the Treasury, not independent.

The United States Fed is not under the control of the Treasury and is only nominally under control of Congress, which is too supine to reform it.

Finance capitalism, of course, is the root, the foundation of modern Western imperialism. And Professor [John A.] Hobson in England, way back in the early 1900s, wrote about it, analyzed it. A number of American economists back in the early 1900s, following Hobson and other analysts, economists, noted this problem of what they used to call "national imperialism."

For example, in World War I, you had the British imperialism, French imperialism, Russian imperialism, German imperialism—it was a clash of these national imperialisms. After World War II, we seem to have more of what we might call globalist imperialism. That is to say that the competing national imperialisms of the World War I era, even World War II, something changed. After World War II, you had kind of a globalist, a group or a global oligarchy or plutocracy running the imperialist game. And, of course, being the most powerful country after World War II, the U.S. became an instrument for projecting military power or other sorts of power where necessary, to enforce, let's say, global finance capitalism.

So, the U.S. becomes a sheriff for Wall Street and The City. The British of course give the Americans a lot of ideas because the Americans don't have so much experience as the British do. So a lot of U.S. policies are actually British policies that the British basically "suggest" to the United States, and then the United States goes forward with that—anti-Russian stuff, and all of that.

Billington: Well, also financial policies, in the sense that the historic American system of Hamiltonian economics had the government directing the credit policy, not the Fed or the private banking system. And essentially, after the assassination of President Kennedy, this British model of banking systematically came in and generally took over the financial system. And all you hear since then is "the independence of the Fed—we must protect the independence of the Fed," which, of course, is the independence of private bankers, not government policy.

The Federal Reserve Bank Is Not Federal

Dr. Kiracofe: Right. When the Federal Reserve was set up in 1913, the ownership of the Fed actually was the shareholders, and shareholders were the participating big banks. They just put the word "federal" on it. It's a private bank, in essence. As I said earlier, it actually should be under the authority of the Treasury Department and the Secretary of the Treasury, which would be a cabinet official, with the President.

The Fed was set up by Congress. Congress has the power to create the Fed and Congress has the power to



CC/NCinDC

The private U.S. Federal Reserve in Washington, D.C., a bank parallel to, and cooperating with the Bank of England.

dissolve the Fed or put new legislation forward, to audit the Fed, to change how it works. The Fed is a creature of Congress. However, as you well point out, the idea that the Fed should be "independent"—what does that mean? Independent from Congress? What does that mean? Independent from the people of the United States who vote for their Congresspersons and senators? I mean, what is an "independent American central bank"? Who owns it?

If you take a look carefully during the Jacksonian period of the central bank, you do find that there are foreign shareholders of our own central bank. The issue then is, okay, let's nationalize the Federal Central Bank, and let's put it under the authority of the Treasury Department, Secretary of the Treasury, who, of course, is subject to his President and his President is subject to election.

Therefore, we certainly don't need an independent Fed. We need a Fed under political control. You may say, well, the different politicians are going to have different ideas. Well, fine, that's democracy. Let's have a vote in the Senate. Let's have a vote in the House about the management issues when it comes to the central bank. While it is this sort of "high priest" who would be the head of the central bank, why let that high priest make all the policies without regulation, without oversight?

The Banking Committee and appropriate committees in the House and Senate are supposed to exercise oversight, but they just write a blank check. The high priests and priestesses in the central bank—you can think about Delphi and ancient Babylon and all those ancient times



EIRNS/Stuart Lewis

The New York Stock Exchange on Wall Street in New York City.

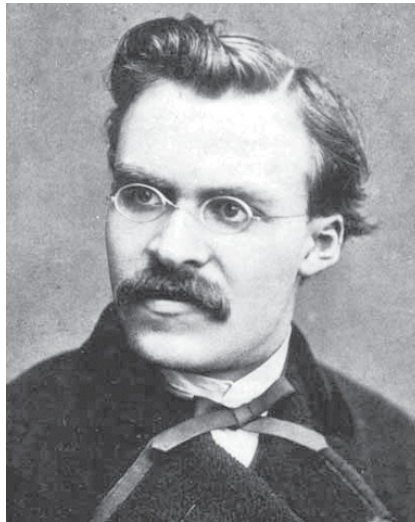
when all the money, the gold and silver, was kept by the priesthood in the temples. These high priests of the Federal Reserve are independent and not subject to democratic control. My personal view is that we need to federalize the Fed and bring it under democratic control of Congress which has the authority and the responsibility of oversight. Look at the interest rates today. Look at the Fed policy. It's a disaster. It's wrecking the country.

The Ideologists of Fascism

Billington: Let me let me ask you about the ideology behind fascism. As I'm sure you know, as a university professor for years, the likes of Friedrich Nietzsche, Martin Heidegger, and of the jurist Carl Schmitt, these people are taught as among the great philosophers and jurists of our age in American universities. And yet they were the ideologues who really gave rise to German Nazism. How do you see this?

Dr. Kiracofe: It's a tragedy, of course. Instead of teaching Nietzsche and Heidegger and Schmitt and all those guys, we should be teaching James Madison and George Washington and Thomas Jefferson and [Alexander] Hamilton. You know, our own intellectual tradition. What we've done is adopted the European intellectual tradition, which has nothing to do with the United States in these characters, and that has proliferated in American education. I will say that in particular, what's been devastating has been, I think, the Frankfurt School of German intellectuals who came to the United States in the 1930s and set up shop at Columbia University.

The Frankfurt School is "critical theory," a mixture of neo-Marxism and neo-Freudianism. But what people don't quite catch is that the Frankfurt School, really, is fundamentally based on Sergey



Gebürder Siebe Studio
Friedrich Nietzsche in 1869.

were dominating campuses from California all the way to New England.

If you take a look at their ideology, it's a brilliant strategy to destroy. They make no proposals as to what to build. Their role is to destroy. It's so funny, that the Frankfurt School itself was a creation of the Soviet intelligence services, the NKVD. Felix Dzerzhinsky himself worked with [Theodor] Adorno, directly, to fund and put together the Frankfurt School. And there was a close linkage then between the Frankfurt School and Moscow Center, and the Frankfurt School and the Comintern, the Communist International. In Russia, you had [Karl] Radek and some of the others who were linked in to helping support the Frankfurt School in Frankfurt, Germany, this group of neo-Marxist intellectuals.

Now, what about Nietzsche? What we find about Nietzsche, the trend in the late 19th century, particularly in Germany, there was, I would say, a revival, you could call it, or a wave of Nietzschean thought. Nietzsche became very, very influential in the 1880s, 1890s. At the same time, this strong Nietzschean impulse was linked, you could say, to the Charles Darwin people, the Herbert Spencer people. So, you had kind of a



Unknown origin
Sergey Nechayev in 1870.

convergence of Nietzsche, and this social Darwinism or however you want to phrase it—survival of the fittest, that philosophy. That was a driving force in Germany as well as in England.

There was a transformation into the military ideology, particularly by Gen. Gustav Ratzenhofer of Austria, who blended this Nietzschean stuff with this racial stuff, “survival of the fittest” stuff of Darwin and Spencer. Ratzenhofer I think in certain circles was influential. And let’s remember, Hitler wasn’t a German at all. Hitler was an Austrian. I think Gen. Ratzenhofer’s ideas provided a real basis for Hitler and that type of militarized Nietzschean thought and action. So, yes, you’ve identified Nietzsche. It’s very important. And when we look at what used to be called militarism, the rise of militarism in Europe in the 19th century, towards the end of the 19th century, that militarism was very much colored by the “Superman” and Nietzschean thought.

Now, we fought World War I and tried after that with the League of Nations, and then World War II and tried after that with the United Nations, to try to stem or stop or block or eliminate this virulent militarism that was tearing the world up. It includes, of course, Japanese militarism—I’m not letting them off the hook either, Mr. Abe. But this militarism was kept going in the United States after World War II, as President Ike Eisenhower said, by the military-industrial complex.

Behind ‘Neoconservatism’ Is Nietzschean Thought

What is the leading intellectual policy network for that? The neoconservatives. The point you made on philosophy driving thought in the United States—yes: Nietzsche, and also Heidegger, but in particular the Frankfurt School. Then we see the neocons pushing it. In the academic world, which has been completely wrecked by the Frankfurt School, higher education—not to mention K through 12—in higher education, in international relations theory, international relations scholars, we see the so-called “realists.” Well, what is this “realist” stuff? The “realists,” in academics and in



Gen. Gustav Ratzenhofer

policy in Washington, believe in the philosophies of Nietzsche and Thomas Hobbes. You didn’t mention Leo Strauss, but Leo Strauss is in there as a purveyor of Nietzschean thought. Hans Morgenthau, another purveyor of Nietzschean thought. So, in the National Security Network in the United States, we have Nietzschean thought, Hobbesian thought, German *Realpolitik* thought, *Macht*politik thought.

By the way, Friedrich Meinecke’s critique of *Realpolitik* is really good, his book on *Machiavellism, Die Idee der Staatsräson [Machiavellism: The Doctrine of Raison d’Etat]*, is a very important book on all this.

Permeating Washington, D.C. today, sitting in various offices in the Pentagon and State Department and Congress, there’s this national security thinking based on Hobbes. Well, the United States is not based on Hobbes—more Locke than Hobbes. What you point out about Nietzschean thought, is that it’s not just confined to the world of ivory tower intellectuals. No. Variations of Nietzschean thought are present in the policy making circles in Washington, D.C. Our imperialism, our interventionism, is a Nietzschean idea, that the United States should be the hegemon of the world, should dominate the world: so-called “Full-Spectrum Dominance.”

All this stuff that you see coming out of the Pentagon in their national security reports every couple of years, or national strategy reports out of the White House. It has this Nietzschean flavor to it. The National Security Council’s NSC 68, 1951—which is a very famous document—set the stage for the militarization of American foreign policy. You could say, the “Nietzscheanization” of American foreign policy.

Hobbesianization. Certainly, American foreign policy that the Founding Fathers intended, as in George Washington’s farewell address, has nothing to do with Nietzsche, or Heidegger, or Leo Strauss or Carl Schmitt who was Strauss’ teacher. What’s happened is, this European fascism, this strain of European fascism and philosophy, has come into the United States and spread to the higher education, and then spreads into decision makers in Washington. They have what we can call

roughly a Cold War mindset, a Nietzschean mindset, a zero-sum mindset.

U.S. Foreign Policy as ‘Great Power Confrontation’

Billington: We had another shift in strategy during the Barack Obama and Donald Trump administrations, when our national security doctrines declared that terrorism was not our key problem, but rather we now have “great power confrontation” and that Russia and China were identified as our competitors, actually saying that they were our enemies, that they were aggressive, they were trying to take the world away from America’s unipolar leadership and so forth.

And yet, just last week, we had a conference in Beijing of the BRICS countries—Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa—along with 13 other leading developing sector countries. They absolutely united, totally, in denouncing the idea of these “blocs,” of the East versus the West—what the Biden administration likes to call the “democracies versus the autocracies.” Instead, they called for international unity to deal with the actual global crisis that we’re facing—a perfect storm, as Helga Zepp-LaRouche calls it—the danger of a global nuclear war, the hyperinflationary collapse of the entire dollar-based Western system, mass famine spreading in an unprecedented scope globally. And yet the Biden administration and the media continue to say that Russia is isolated internationally, and that even China is isolated internationally, despite this reality.

So, what is the actual situation now in terms of the emergence of this new phenomenon in China, Russia, India?

Dr. Kiracofe: You’ve identified that really well, the BRICS grouping. What we’re seeing is these different groupings—we have ASEAN [Association of South-east Asian Nations] in the Pacific, etc.—around common interests, which boil down to economic and social development and cooperation. So here we have this concept of “peace and development,” or development meaning economic and social, scientific, technological development of humanity.

I’m an American and I’m really outraged at, not just

the Biden administration; it’s the entire U.S. establishment, the foreign policy establishment. They’ve completely divorced themselves from, let’s say, George Washington’s farewell address, or you could take Jefferson or Hamilton or Madison or Monroe or Abraham Lincoln, any of the Founding Fathers, astute statesmen of our past. They have taken American idealism, and have created the absolute opposite: the American imperial hegemon, a kind of Frankenstein monster roaming around the world.

As an American, I reject that. I think it’s an alien idea to us, to our culture, our country, our people. This



Brics2022.mfa.gov.cn

The 14th annual conference and summit of the BRICS nations countered unipolar hegemonism, denouncing the idea of West vs. East blocs, and instead called for international unity to deal with today’s global crises. Here, Chinese President Xi Jinping addresses the Business Forum and sets development as the defining agenda for the three days of meetings, Beijing, June 22-24, 2022.

alien idea is imposed by the establishment, the so-called “transatlantic oligarchy,” submissive to a certain plutocracy of finance. What we’re seeing now in the world is a natural reaction.

International Relations 101

Even if you took International Relations 101—which I used to teach in political science classes—you would see the concept of countries getting together to balance against the hegemon. In Europe, Louis Quatorze, Louis the 14th, wanted to be the ruler of Europe. Well, a coalition was put together to block that. Then you had Napoleon. He wanted to dominate Europe

and be the hegemon of Europe. Well, you have a coalition that comes together and then blocks Napoleon. And you've got Hitler doing the same thing, wanting to be the dictator of Europe. And again, a coalition comes together and defeats Hitler.

So, the pattern, at least in Western history, which is what we're talking about here, is coalitions coming together to block a hegemon. Now, let's apply that to the world today, because the United States has entered into this completely un-American hegemonic role, which is—let's face it, it's Wall Street, it's The City; we were talking about that earlier. Who's really behind American imperialism? Well, Wall Street, of course, and The City. Who's behind the military-industrial complex? Well, of course, it's Wall Street. They make the loans to the companies. This is what we call finance capitalism combining with militarism.

At any rate, the BRICS countries are now trying their best to coordinate their policies toward economic and social development of their people. And this includes health and all sorts of categories of social and economic development. China and Russia—and Putin in particular—have emphasized the role of BRICS, the emerging role of BRICS in the international system. The international system is changing, from what?

Well, let's take a look backward. After World War II, the international system was two blocs, the Western bloc vs. the Communist bloc. The Communist bloc was the Soviet Union and China basically, and their satellites. Two blocs, the West vs. the East. Then in 1991, the Soviet Union dissolves and the Warsaw Pact, its military alliance, dissolves. That left the U.S. with choices to make. Back then, some of us argued: "Hey, now it's time to take a breather. Now it's time to prepare for the eventual emergence of a multipolar world. And if we take a breather, retrench our economy, get our own economic and social development going because we're at peace. We can adjust to the inevitable ineluctable arrival process of multipolarity." Some call it polycentrism, some call it pluralism. Along with that,

you would have re-emphasized the United Nations as a central point for peace and development and international law.

Of course, the United States has done just the opposite. We've done everything we can to destroy the United Nations, to wreck its mission, to destroy international law.

Now that the world economy, more and more countries, have reached an economic level sufficient to sustain their independence and sovereignty, particularly when protected or led by China and Russia, you're starting to see a Global South emerging, with BRICS part of that. And you're starting to see this Western bloc of, let's be frank, white people in the U.S. and Canada and Europe. So, you've got this this radical militarized Atlantic community of white people vs. the rest of the world. That's what's going on.

Democracies vs. Autocracies: The New 'Cold War'

It's a tragedy. It's a disgrace that the U.S. establishment has supported and promotes this kind of a bloc system or bifurcation system of the world.

In 2005, the U.S. establishment elite, the foreign policy elite, met in a series of meetings. Princeton University hosted. It was to figure out an update to the Cold War. "How do we update

our Cold War policy? China is rising, Russia is coming back, we're mired down in the Middle East with the Iraq war. How do we update the Cold War?" That was the question. A new international situation, a new international balance of power.

The bottom line of that 2005 elite's decision, was the idea of "democracies vs. autocracies." Well, that just updates the language of the old Cold War, which was the West vs. the East, the Free World West vs. the Communist East. So, this bloc idea, just updated with a little different rhetoric, different language. Democracies vs. autocracies. That's 2005. That was carried forward. Remember, in 2008 we had the election of Barack Obama, so that was reached just before the election in 2008; that elite consensus was carried forward by Obama.



Ronald Reagan Library

U.S. President Ronald Reagan and Soviet General Secretary Mikhail Gorbachev at their summit in Reykjavik, Iceland, Nov. 10, 1986.

Who was the Secretary of State? Hillary Clinton. Who is Hillary's chief adviser? A gal who had been involved in this whole update of U.S. foreign policy, Anne-Marie Slaughter, who was Director of Policy Planning over at the State Department. Basically the U.S. elite, so-called elite, such as it is, decided to update the Cold War to take into consideration the rise of China and the return of Russia.

Still, the concept of containment from the old Cold War was applied to the new Cold War. That is to say: beef up NATO in Europe to block Russia, and strengthen the alliance with Japan and other alliances in Asia to block China. Therefore, we have this idea of encirclement of the Eurasian landmass from the European side, and from Japan on the Pacific side. That was already 2005 and carried into the Obama administration. We can remember Mrs. Clinton talked about—she didn't call it the Quad, but she discussed in 2011 and 2010, as they were two years into the Obama administration—having India, Japan, the United States, and Australia joining together against China. So, that "Quad," as it was later called, four countries. Hillary was already talking about that in 2010 and 2011.

Here we are in 2022. Let's think about this. You and I are both old enough to remember the 1970s. We were in college then, grad school. Back in 1972, Nixon did two things: the opening to China and a detente with Russia, easing relations. Fifty years ago, half a century ago, a Republican, no less, a conservative Republican administration, no less, was seeking ways to ameliorate relations with Russia and China. This was bipartisan because later in the late 1970s, President Jimmy Carter, we can well remember, sort of finalized the Nixon opening to China and achieved a normalization, you could say, of relations with China. Late 1978, '79. Here we are, 50 years ago, attempting to have better relations with Russia and China. And bipartisan, Nixon and Jimmy Carter, both Democrats and Republicans.

Let's fast forward. Here we are today, or since 2005, with the rebirth of the Cold War stuff, back in the 1950s, with Sen. Joe McCarthy! If you say something nice about Putin or President Xi, you're automatically a commie lover or a panda bear lover or a Russia bear lover or whatever you want to call it. You have this McCarthyism going on right now against anyone who



CC/Aimaina Hikari

Protesters behind a fire barricade attack police, Kiev, Ukraine, Feb. 18, 2014. Ukraine was set up as a tool for NATO's project to contain and crush Russia.

favors a responsible and reasonable policy toward other major powers.

There are only two paths symbolized on the back of a dollar bill, on which we have the great seal of America, where the bald eagle is clutching an olive branch in its right talon and 13 arrows in its left. Now, in foreign policy, that's your choice. You're either going to have peace with the olive branch or you can have war with the arrows. And right now, instead of the peace-seeking that Richard Nixon and Jimmy Carter and others had, now we've got a neocon-ized Congress and a neocon-ized administration. Antony Blinken. Victoria Nuland. I mean, come on. A neocon-ized administration, fully backed by the military-industrial complex and the Pentagon. People may not know it or understand it, but it's working overtime on war planning against China, using Taiwan as the pretext.

We're a little diverted right now with Ukraine. That's true. But what's really going on in the Pentagon behind the scenes is war planning against China over Taiwan.

In 50 years, we have gone from attempting to ameliorate, reduce tensions with potential adversaries, Russia and China, to the exact opposite. We are now in a confrontational mode with Russia and with China, and both of those countries are much stronger by far than they were in 1972, or '78 or '79. Russia and China are formidable powers. And the world is changing. The international system is changing to multipolarity.

The BRICS Alternative to the Hegemon

That's what gives space for the BRICS that you mentioned, a group of countries who don't want to live under an American hegemony—it's not really U.S., it's a NATO hegemony, the hegemony of the transatlantic oligarchy, or London and Washington. Countries that are in the Global South, as it's called, who don't want to be under this system, and who want to be independent, in the sense that they'd like to choose their own political system, their own economic development growth system.

It may not be a pure Western model, but they'd like to be able to choose their own path to development, to political development, economic development, social development, and not be bothered by the hegemonic policies of the NATO countries. NATO is expanding globally, so let's also remember that. NATO's not just for Europe anymore. NATO has been for 30 years reaching into Central Asia, the Afghan war, Libya in Africa, and also incorporating Japan and New Zealand as partners. NATO has been globalized and NATO is the control mechanism of the transatlantic oligarchy and plutocracy that I was mentioning before.

So, it's certainly no surprise that BRICS is being featured now as an alternative grouping, and other countries can join it. Saudi Arabia might like to join. Argentina has inquired about joining. Brazil is a member, so why not Argentina? I think Mexico would be a great addition. Indonesia, fantastic addition. BRICS, which is particularly emphasized by the Russians, by Putin, but also by China. BRICS has great possibilities in terms of forming a community oriented toward economic and social development.

I think it's going to expand. That's why they're starting now, in the last year or so, to talk about BRICS-Plus, plus other members. Who? as we just said, there are a range of members in the Global South that would be great additions to BRICS. And BRICS can certainly learn from the experience of China and its development model, which has been so successful, and from Russia, which has been successful in staving off Western sanctions. BRICS has a lot of potential as a cooperative grouping with a shared future. The key there is cooperation, solidarity, human development, peace. Those are the BRICS watchwords. That's what BRICS is aiming at.

A New Bretton Woods System

Billington: As you know, Cliff, the Schiller Institute has held a series of international conferences under

Helga Zepp-LaRouche's direction and leadership, focused on the idea that we have to find a way to get the U.S. and the European countries not to go to war with Russia and China, but to sit down with Russia and China and deal with the actual extreme crisis facing mankind, with the collapse of the dollar-based system, the threat of nuclear war, the pandemics, famine, and so forth.

We're now circulating a petition calling for an *ad hoc* committee for a new Bretton Woods system, basically insisting that what's driving the war is the economic breakdown of the West, and that the decision by some in the West that, rather than putting their own system through reorganization, they'd rather go out and destroy Russia and China, so there would be no opposition to their continued hegemony.

The danger that Helga Zepp-LaRouche has identified is that this new system, which we've just discussed around the BRICS and the BRICS-Plus, if it remains only the non-Western countries, and there are still the two blocs, two financial systems, it's going to aggravate the danger of war rather than alleviate that danger. The question that we are addressing with the petition and with our organizing is, how do we bring the United States to see its actual self interest in being part of the Belt and Road, the New Silk Road, the new BRICS-Plus—to join in a policy for peace through development.

What do you think? You've been involved in American politics most of your life. What must be done to bring the U.S. to its senses and to join with this positive effort?

Dr. Kiracofe: Well, I think Helga and the Schiller Institute really are leading the charge here intellectually on the issue. What we're seeing currently is this bifurcation process, the two blocs, a Western bloc and a, let's say, Global South bloc. It's fine that the Global South develops and creates itself into a bloc, or builds solidarity among its members. But, Helga was quite right that, eventually, who knows when, but eventually, we must have an understanding on a global level, which is what the United Nations is all about. We should have an understanding at the global level on an international economy, a global economy that works for everyone—a global international system that works for everyone.

We're all humans. This is the human race which is at stake here. It's true that for the moment, maybe for the next few years, we're going to see this bifurcation into blocs. That's true. We see it now. It's a natural reaction



U.S. President Franklin Roosevelt in 1941. During World War II, President Roosevelt planned for the post-War era.

against the hegemon—the United States and Western Europe, the transatlantic oligarchy and plutocracy. This is normal, but we have to look ahead. How do we look ahead? We do exactly what Franklin Roosevelt did during World War II. We look ahead to the aftermath of the conflict. We plan ahead. That’s why President Roosevelt, who was very astute in international economic matters, called for the Bretton Woods conference in 1944. That’s a year or so prior to victory in Europe and victory in Japan. So, a year before, while we were still fighting.

International Cooperation to Resolve the Coming ‘Economic Hurricane’

We knew by 1944 that we were going to win, that the Allies were going to win. But President Roosevelt wanted to start planning ahead because obviously, after a world war, there’s going to be global economic chaos. Similar today, just as you as you just pointed out, we’re headed into a situation—we’re already in it—but we’re headed into a more serious situation of global economic chaos. Hyperinflation. We can have a depression. We could have a depression that lasts 5–10 years. I mean, a serious global depression, a real one, like in the 1930s or worse—famine, as you just pointed out.

What we need to do is, we need to do exactly the model that our American leadership under Roosevelt—which was bipartisan, by the way, he had some Republicans in his cabinet—in a bipartisan manner, we should accept the fact that a new Bretton Woods arrangement is needed. There’s going to be this kind of

non-Western Global South bloc with its own currency in some shape or form, and there’ll be the U.S. dollar, and there’ll be others, the euro, etc. So, in answer to your question: adopt the Roosevelt model during World War II. Plan ahead. Plan to get us out of this chaos because we’re headed into chaos. Even Jamie Dimon, the head of JP Morgan-Chase Bank, said “an economic hurricane” is coming.

Now here’s a famous Wall Street fellow saying an economic hurricane is coming. The Bank of England has been saying the same thing in its reports over the last several weeks: A hurricane is coming. So, now is the time, exactly as Schiller Institute has proposed, to be thinking about, or pre-thinking, about the post-storm, after this

storm, after the hurricane. We need to get a global new Bretton Woods, that would relate to essentially—there’s a lot of different things there, but it would relate essentially to the issue of the currencies, which are all going to be bouncing all over the place.

The original Bretton Woods—and this is an important point here—the original Bretton Woods had the exchange rates of the currencies fixed. How were they fixed? They were fixed by the agreement between sovereign states. Aha! Here you have what we would call economic diplomacy. And you have the representatives of sovereign states agree on fixed exchange rates, and how to fix the level. That was destroyed in the 1970s when you had so-called “floating” rates. Floating rates are determined by who? By currency traders in the big banks. I myself had some friends who were currency traders in New York and London. At one time I took a visit to New York and they said, “Hey, come on into our shop here, spend an hour or two with us while we’re trading currencies.”

So, here I am sitting in a major international bank in New York City in their currency trading room. These guys are moving currencies. You know, \$50 million here, \$100 million there. Buy, sell, buy, sell.

Well, no, floating rates have nothing to do with sovereign countries. They turn over the valuation of the currencies to the private banking industry. My suggestion would be that in the New Bretton Woods, we return to the idea that sovereign states determine the rates of exchange, through economic diplomacy around the negotiating table.

If you take a look at the money clause in our own Constitution [Art. I, Sec. 8, Clause 5], Congress coins the money and regulates the values thereof, and of foreign money. Congress has the power to say, “Gee, you know, I think the pound sterling isn’t worth a \$1.20. I think the euro isn’t worth \$1.02 nowadays. I think the euro is worth \$0.98.” It’s the power of the sovereign to determine and regulate the value of money, and of foreign money that the sovereign is exchanging. Not the moneylenders in the temple—we know the biblical story. That’s the issue: is it going to be the moneylenders in the temple, or is it going to be sovereign states? That’s something that needs to be addressed when we’re thinking about structuring a new Bretton Woods.

I understand that the thinking of Sergey Glazyev, whom I’ve met, a fascinating person in Russia, and his colleagues at the Russian Academy of Sciences, have been working on concepts involving a basket of currencies for BRICS, or however one would create a monetary instrument and value it. I think they are working on a concept, for BRICS or BRICS-Plus, of some kind of a monetary unit that would be based on commodities or based on something tangible.

At any rate, that’s why I think Glazyev and his team at the Russian Academy of Sciences are trying to figure out how to create something that has value that they can identify, a number or quantity, or how to indicate that value—One euro, or one “BRICS-o.”

I think we need to look ahead. The model for me is Roosevelt’s Bretton Woods, and economic diplomacy by sovereign states. I think that’s the key principle. The numbers and all that stuff, that’s just a matter of negotiation. The key is getting the countries, the sovereign states, together at a conference like Bretton Woods, and have economic diplomacy—negotiate and have economic diplomacy. Let your technical people figure out the exchange rates and all of that.

But the key principle here is international cooperation to stabilize the international economic situation, the world economy. We’re going to go through the hurricane, so we’re going to learn again, like we did in the 1930s. We’re going to go right through that again, it appears. So, we should prepare now. It was a great idea for the Schiller Institute to call for preparing for a new Bretton Woods. Will the U.S. join?

Well, eventually you’re going to have to. The U.S. cannot be out of it forever. The two blocs cannot exist forever. 100 years? No. 50 years? No. 25 years? Maybe. 20 years? Maybe. Five years? Yeah. But at some point,

there’s going to have to be international cooperation on all this, on the dollar system. The use of the American dollar or the Treasury bills as your reserve, that’s going to go out the window. There is a de-dollarization going on right now.

You’re going to enter into a new monetary system, and whether you have two separate monetary systems for a while, at some point, you’re going to need to have agreement among all the trading countries, all the countries engaged in international commerce. You’ll have different types of additional reserve currencies. That, again, gets you into the whole issue, a separate issue, of the organization or reorganization of central banks. And that’s a that’s a whole other issue.

Aside from a monetary conference, there’s the issue of central banks. I think the proper concept there broadly for international finance—finance, banking—should serve industry, like a servant. What we have today is the inverse of that. Industry is serving finance, it’s the slave of finance. Finance is at the top of the pyramid. That’s based on debt, usury and other typical methods of the financial community. Central banks are going to have to be rethought as well. And the relationship between central banks is going to have to be rethought.

Billington: Thank you, Cliff. Of course, the Hamiltonian idea is for national banking as opposed to central banking. National banking being run by elected representatives rather than private banks, is one of the ideas that we’re fighting to introduce through what we call LaRouche’s Four Laws. Well, let us hope that your idea of bringing about this Bretton Woods conference, together with what the Schiller Institute is doing with the petition. I encourage everybody who’s watching this to sign. Go to schillerinstitute.com and sign that petition.

But let us make sure that this happens before certain mad men walk ourselves into a nuclear war. The urgency of making this happen is something that is now before the human race. I think people recognize that this is a turning point in history one way or the other, and that these same approaches as you’ve laid out, and as we’ve been fighting for, are successful. Thank you very much. We will definitely be circulating these ideas and your work here along with the rest of our mobilization. I want to thank you for participating in this fruitful discussion

Dr. Kiracofe: Thank you, Mike, for inviting me. And best wishes to all of our viewers.