

Asia Looks to the Future: Can the U.S. Follow Its Lead?

by Mike Billington

Sept. 16—The historic defeat, at least temporarily, of President Obama’s drive for war on Syria, a war which would have almost certainly led to global thermonuclear warfare, has created a precious moment of opportunity for world citizens to come together, to proceed with the global development projects which have been postponed and sabotaged over the past 50 years, since the assassination of President John F. Kennedy.

Lyndon LaRouche, who has spearheaded the effort over these past 50 years to restore the “Great Projects” orientation last seen in the United States under Presidents Franklin Roosevelt and Kennedy, said in a meeting with associates on Sept. 14: “We’re going to have to take *leaps forward*, and the leap of this trans-Pacific orientation which we’ve introduced, with a thermonuclear [fusion power] objective built into it, *that’s* what is needed—nothing less than that will work. Anything less will be a failure.”

On Sept. 13, in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan, the Eurasian nations of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) came together in precisely that spirit, both proposing and beginning to implement some of the great-

est cross-regional infrastructure development policies in the history of Eurasia. Centered on the proposal by Chinese President Xi Jinping for a New Silk Road—a development corridor through Central Asia creating an “unobstructed route from the Baltic to the Pacific”—the nations of the SCO (Russia, China, Kazakstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and

Uzbekistan, with observer nations Mongolia, Afghanistan, Iran, India, and Pakistan) also took up crucial matters regarding the drug-and-terror complex in Central Asia, centered on Afghanistan, and issues related to the impact of the global economic crisis driven by the collapse of the City of London-based financial system.

On the same day as the SCO Summit in Bishkek, the LaRouche movement in the United States announced the release of a [Special Report](#), titled “Nuclear NAWAPA XXI—Gateway to the Fusion Economy,” which provided

the trans-Pacific context in which the Great Projects proposed at the SCO Summit can be successfully implemented.

The report presents the urgency of a leap to a thermonuclear-based technological platform globally,

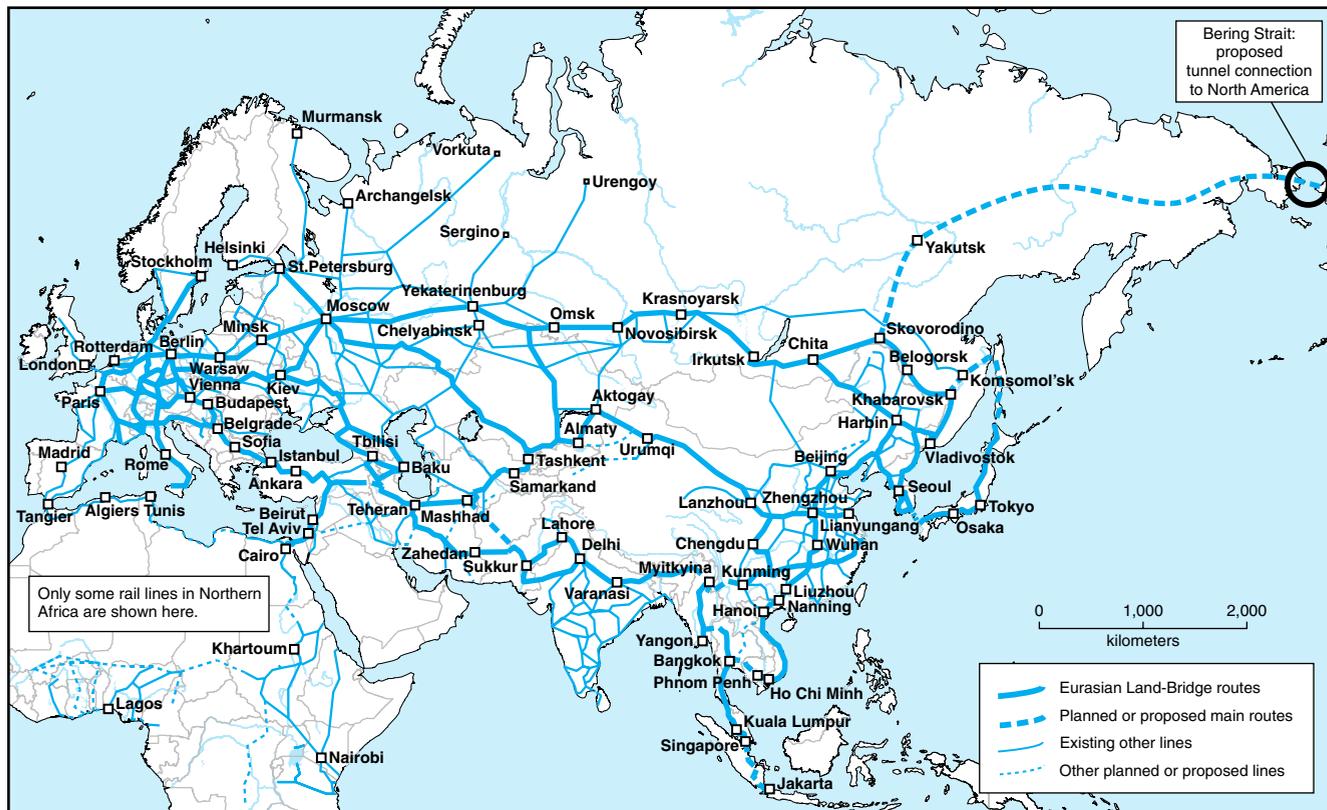


Russian Presidential Press Office

Left: Chinese President Xi Jinping at the Bishkek summit of the SCO, where he discussed the development plans for a New Silk Road. Right: Russian President Vladimir Putin greets Iranian President Hassan Rouhani at the conference, where Iran has observer status. This was Rouhani’s first trip abroad since assuming the Presidency.

FIGURE 1

Main Routes and Selected Secondary Routes of the Eurasian Land-Bridge



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while extending the proposed development projects of NAWAPA [North American Water and Power Alliance], through a new high-speed rail tunnel under the Bering Strait, into the Russian Far East, China, and Southeast Asia. The report emphasizes that these projects depend on restoration of a Glass-Steagall law in the countries of the collapsing Western financial system and a return to American System credit policies in place of the bankrupt monetary system in place today.

Even more important, the great development projects themselves constitute the *basis* for the new credit system. As LaRouche expressed it: “We’re not going to have the thermonuclear aspect fully operating as a system now. But we’re going to keep it on the agenda as our *intention*, and we’re going to use that intention as the basis for a system of *credit!* And it will be an *international* credit system, where nations agree that they’re going to do things, and they’re going to set up a credit system which will be backed up by the deter-

mination *to fulfill what is promised*. Which is what the United States did, when it was doing the right thing.”

The New Silk Road

President Xi visited Kazakstan on his way to the SCO meeting, where he first unveiled his plan for a “New Silk Road” through Central Asia, noting that all the SCO nations, including the five observer nations, lie on the route of the historic Silk Road. “We must expand the development of Eurasia,” Xi said, “creating an economic belt along the Silk Road.” (See article in *EIR*, Sept. 13.)

The Chinese have been deeply involved in the “New Silk Road” concept for decades, sponsoring a conference in Beijing in 1996 on the “Economic Development of the Regions Along the Euro-Asia Continental Bridge,” which featured presentations by Helga Zepp-LaRouche, founder of the Schiller Institute, and other *EIR* contributors. *EIR* issued a Special Report on the

conference, and conference speeches are in [EIR](#), June 14, 1996.

On Oct. 23, 2007, the first direct container train from Lianyungang, Jiangsu province, the eastern terminus of the continental bridge on China's east coast, reached Moscow, 8,310 km away, after 15 days transit through Central Asia. But serious problems exist: different rail-track gauges, customs issues, and the underdevelopment of the entire region. The implementation of the new proposal by President Xi would vastly improve and extend the rail connections to Europe, while also beginning vast infrastructure and city-building projects across the region.

Calling on the "Shanghai Spirit" of the SCO, and extending this to a call for a "Silk Road Spirit," Xi proposed, in addition to the rail project, cooperation on energy development, mechanisms to assure food security to all the nations, the creation of a "credit window" to facilitate trade, the utilization of regional currencies, and an SCO development bank for infrastructure financing. He also offered 30,000 scholarships to students from the Central Asian nations to study in China.

In announcing the plan, Xi noted that "my home, Shaanxi Province, is the start of the ancient Silk Road," at the ancient Chinese capital of Xian.

Oil, Gas, and Communications

An article published in *Asia Times* on Sept. 13 by Pepe Escobar shed light on the depth of China's development prospects for Central Asia, along the route of the New Silk Road. China's need for extensive oil and gas imports will be met in part from Central Asia, in what Escobar calls China's "Pipelineistan," in exchange for Chinese investments in basic infrastructure for the development of the Central Asian nations. China has already built multiple pipelines into Central Asia, with more in the works.

President Xi also stopped in Turkmenistan on his way to the SCO summit in order to inaugurate one of the largest gas fields in the world, Galkynysh, which recently began production of gas which will largely be piped to China. Escobar notes that 60% of Turkmenistan's GDP comes from gas exports to China!

China is also planning a pipeline to Kyrgyzstan, which will be part of the fourth pipeline eventually reaching Turkmenistan.

On Sept. 7, the China National Petroleum Corporation (CNPC), China's state-owned oil and gas com-

pany, signed a deal with Kazakhstan's national oil company Kazmunaigaz (KMG) to purchase 8.4% of the huge Kashagan oil field in the Caspian Sea, previously owned by ConocoPhillips. The Kashagan field is one of the largest in the world, currently being developed by a consortium including INI, Total, Royal Dutch Shell, ExxonMobil.

In addition to these "Pipelineistan" projects, Escobar notes that on Sept. 2-7 China sponsored a "China-Eurasia Expo" in Urumqi, the capital of China's far western Xinjiang Province, in which China Telecom and two Hongkong telecom companies signed seven deals with Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, Russia, and Mongolia. Urumqi is becoming a major telecom hub for all of Central Asia, with over 100 companies now serving the region outside of China.

Putin's Role: Syria and SCO

When Obama and his British/Wall Street controllers ran into a wall of rage from their own populations and legislatures against their insane drive for war on Syria, Obama turned in desperation to the longstanding proposal from President Vladimir Putin to cooperate on removing chemical weapons from Syria, and to push ahead towards a political settlement of the Syria crisis at Geneva. The emerging peace plan was strongly endorsed by all the participants at the SCO.

President Putin told the SCO Summit: "Our organization can make a substantial contribution in the resolution of the Syrian crisis.... In this regard, close cooperation within the SCO, a firm position to ensure the supremacy of provisions and principles of international law, and the leading UN role in world affairs, are important today as never before."

Putin also addressed two other strategic dangers: the threat of war against Iran, and the danger facing the entire region from Afghanistan, as the U.S. prepares to pull out in 2014, leaving the nation still infested with narco-terrorist gangs, and as the largest producer of deadly opium products in the history of civilization.

The issue is crucial: how to deal with the "New British Opium War" (as Viktor Ivanov, the director of the Russian Federal Narcotics Service, described it) from Afghanistan, which is flooding Russia (and other places) with opium. Since the occupation of Afghanistan by NATO forces in 2001, opium production has increased an estimated 40 times. *EIR* has published an interview with Konstantin Sorokin, one of the Russian

authors of the report “Afghan Narcotrafficking: A Joint Threat Assessment” (*EIR*, Sept. 6, 2013), who points to the fact that in Afghanistan, “the Western countries do not want to move for complete [opium] crop eradication—although they are well aware of the consequences of not doing so.” When NATO walks away from the mess it has created, Sorokin says that an even greater increase in opium poppy cultivation, drug production, and trafficking will ensue.

The SCO recognizes this as a critical security crisis, which must be met through united action—not only in the SCO, but internationally. Of course, corruption is a major problem in the region due to the huge flow of drug money—the biggest business in the world, promoted by major banks that launder the money.

Putin called for regional cooperation to deal with the U.S. pullout from Afghanistan, but also noted, “We believe that after 2014, any foreign military presence in Afghanistan should be based on a decision of the UN Security Council.”

On Iran, Putin praised Iran’s newly elected President Hassan Rouhani’s openness to new solutions to the international concerns about his country’s nuclear pro-

gram, while insisting that “Iran, like any other state, has the right for peaceful use of atomic energy, including enrichment,” provided it is under IAEA control.

Rouhani was present at the SCO event—his first foreign visit since assuming office on Aug. 4. In meetings with Xi Jinping and Vladimir Putin, Rouhani discussed cooperation regarding the British/Obama war plans in Southwest Asia, and counterposed the need for large-scale development projects across Asia. Russia is planning to turn over operation of the Bushehr nuclear facility to Iran within the coming weeks (the facility was built by the Russians), and there may be further peaceful nuclear cooperation in the future.

The potential for bringing together the trans-Pacific forces required for this leap to a higher level of human development is now greater than at any time since Franklin Roosevelt joined with Russia and China to defeat the fascist scourge of his day. The danger of failure is even greater today, in this age of thermonuclear weapons. The choice of thermonuclear development or thermonuclear war stands before us all.

mobeir@aol.com

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