

LAROCHE DEMANDS IMPEACHMENT

Obama's Afghan Policy Is Tantamount to Treason

by Jeffrey Steinberg

April 4—Lyndon LaRouche is demanding President Barack Obama's immediate impeachment or resignation from office, for crimes that are "tantamount to treason," starting with his Afghanistan policy. "American soldiers are being sent to Afghanistan to be shot by an enemy that the President is defending," LaRouche charged. "By refusing to go after the opium trade, which is the logistical and financial backbone of the Taliban insurgency, the Obama policy is giving those narco-insurgents a free hand to kill American soldiers."

President Obama's personal complicity in the opium treachery was demonstrated on March 28, when he made a 24-hour unannounced visit to Kabul, to scold Afghan President Hamid Karzai for his government's "corruption," but never mentioned the opium and heroin trade, which accounts for over 90% of the world's supply, and bankrolls the very Taliban insurgency that the Administration purports to be combatting.

"American soldiers are dying in Afghanistan, fighting an enemy that thrives on the opium trade, that the President refuses to target," LaRouche declared. "That kind of policy is tantamount to treason, and warrants the President's immediate impeachment. It cannot be tolerated."

LaRouche also called for the immediate dismissal of Gen. Stanley McChrystal, the U.S. and NATO commander in Afghanistan, who has been pivotal in the dis-

astrous Obama policy.

In stark contrast to the Obama policy, the Russian government has called upon the United States and NATO to collaborate on a full-scale war on the Afghan opium and heroin trade, which is the backbone of a global narco-insurgency, now running wild in Eurasia and the Americas, and which has been the cause of at least 1 million drug deaths from Afghan heroin overdoses over the past decade alone, according to United Nations data.

Two weeks before President Obama's Kabul visit, Victor Ivanov, the head of the Russian federal anti-narcotics agency, spoke at a conference in Kabul, demanding a comprehensive campaign to eradicate the Afghan opium trade. Ivanov cited UN statistics, showing that the Afghan opium trade generated at least \$65 billion a year in criminal revenue, and was the principal source of funding for the Taliban insurgency, as well as terrorist organizations operating across Eurasia, into the Russian North Caucasus.

As reported on Russian television on March 15, Ivanov's call was explicitly challenged by a British military officer, Richard Connelly, who was quoted: "Nobody knows better than Afghan politicians do, the history of their people and their way of life. Therefore the best thing is for them to decide themselves, what to do with the plantings. Without participation from the



USAF/TSft. Efren Lopez

"American soldiers are dying in Afghanistan, fighting an enemy that thrives on the opium trade, that the President refuses to target," Lyndon LaRouche charged. Shown: A U.S. Army officer and his Afghan interpreter discover a pile of dried poppy plants in Badula Qulp, Helmand Province, Afghanistan, Feb. 12, 2010. The evidence is everywhere.

international forces."

Such rhetorical nonsense has been used by the British for the past decade, to aid and abet the Afghan opium trade, which is the lifeblood of Britain's offshore financial operations, centered in such locales as Dubai and the Cayman Islands, where the drug profits are laundered and invested.

A week after his Kabul speech, on March 24, Ivanov presented a detailed proposal at the NATO-Russia Council meeting in Brussels (see *Documentation*), for a comprehensive international campaign to wipe out the

drug scourge, starting with the eradication of Afghan opium, of trafficking organizations, and of the money-laundering infrastructure. The Ivanov proposal was summarily rejected by the U.S. and NATO.

LaRouche Targets London

Then on March 29, suicide bombers carried out two attacks on the Moscow subway system, killing 38 people and injuring 100. Russian security services linked the attacks, as well as follow-on attacks in the North Caucasus region, to Chechen-based terrorists, who are part of the global apparatus bankrolled by the Afghan opium and heroin trade.

LaRouche identified the strategic objectives behind the terrorist attacks on Russia, in a statement on March 31: "Based on the facts presented, from what we believe to be competent sources, this is a threat to the Russian people, in order to demonstrate that the Russian government cannot protect the people. It's an attempt to discredit the Russian government, and show its vulnerability. I am looking at complicity, behind the scenes, by British intelligence.

"This is not a couple of loose nuts. This action has a mission orientation. That mission is to discredit the government's ability to provide security, and it is particularly aimed at Vladimir Yakunin, president of Russian Railways."

Indeed, the recent attacks come from the same Caucasus-based Anglo/Saudi-sponsored networks, funded by the Afghan opium trade, who were responsible for the November 2009 bombing of the Moscow-St. Petersburg Nevsky Express Train.

In the wake of the U.S. and NATO rejection of the Ivanov proposal, and particularly the Moscow subway bombings, the Russian government has responded with appropriate anger. Moscow knows perfectly well that the refusal of the Obama Administration to move against the Afghan opium trade guarantees that the terrorist networks targeting Russia will have the logistical and financial support to continue their destabilization.

LaRouche characterized the Obama policy, particularly following the President's Kabul visit, as a radical "phase shift" in the global strategic situation. Coming just days after U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton

successfully completed year-long negotiations with her Russian counterpart, Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov, on a nuclear arms reduction treaty, President Obama's Kabul trip and the associated refusal to take on the Afghan opium apparatus, represented sabotage of the potential for U.S.-Russian cooperation, a potential that cannot be repaired so long as President Obama remains in office.

While the nuclear arms reduction treaty is still scheduled to be signed in Washington in the coming days, the damage has been done.

GOP Psycho-Sexual Impotence

To be sure, the U.S. government's policy of de facto support for the Afghan opium apparatus did not begin with of President Obama. Successive U.S. administrations, going back to 1979, have either boosted the Afghan opium trade, or turned a blind eye to its presence. When the George W. Bush Administration invaded Afghanistan in October 2001, following the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks, Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld explicitly rejected proposals from some of his top military commanders to wipe out the opium trade.

Under the U.S. occupation, the Afghan opium business skyrocketed, to the point that, as of 2007, Afghanistan was producing 95% of the world's opium and heroin. In 2007 alone, Afghanistan produced 8,200 metric tons of opium, 160% of world consumption!

LaRouche noted: "The Afghan opium and heroin trade, which is synonymous with the Taliban insurgency, is not entirely new. While the current White House policy of collusion with the Afghan drug lords demands that President Obama be sent to early retirement, it is equally the case that the Bush Administration followed the same disastrous recipe. As the result, the Republican Party is completely impotent, to fight against President Obama's Afghan treachery. The Bush legacy hangs around their neck."

An Open Secret

In March 2009, Richard Holbrooke, President Obama's special envoy for Afghanistan and Pakistan—and a former business partner of drug legalizer George Soros—announced that the Obama Administration was abandoning all efforts at opium eradication in Afghanistan, claiming that the program was "inefficient," "costly," and was driving Afghan farmers into the arms of the Taliban. While Holbrooke was echoing the long-standing British policy of sabotaging any meaningful

anti-narcotics effort in Afghanistan, evidence was accumulating that the Afghan opium trade was the lifeblood of the Taliban and allied insurgencies, and that any counterinsurgency strategy that did not start with its eradication was doomed to fail miserably.

Several months after the Holbrooke announcement, the United States Institute for Peace (USIP), a Congressionally established and publicly funded research agency, published a 36-page dossier, "How Opium Profits the Taliban," by Gretchen Peters, which spelled out how the Taliban had evolved into a narcotics cartel. From the local level to the Taliban top leadership, widely believed to be operating out of Quetta, Pakistan, near the Afghan border, the insurgency is now synonymous with the narcotics trade.

And with that total integration, a level of brutality, previously not seen, has taken hold. Peters, a former ABC News correspondent in Pakistan and Afghanistan and the author of a 2009 book on the Taliban and the Afghan opium trade, wrote: "The drug economy brings an increased level of brutality—a viciousness that seems far more senseless to many who live under it. . . . The Taliban, which used to ban TV entirely, began releasing a grisly video series showing their fighters beheading men they accused of spying for the Americans. It culminated in an April release featuring a knife-wielding child executioner who looked barely 12 years old. There were also reports of Taliban soldiers gouging out eyes or gutting enemies they captured in battle."

In her USIP study, Peters wrote: "Opium has long played a supporting role in the Afghan conflict, and today the drug trade has moved to center stage. Not only have narcotics corrupted the Afghan government, they have also begun to transform—through deepening ties between insurgents and drug traffickers along the Pakistan-Afghanistan border—the nature of the insurgency from one based on ideology to one increasingly driven by profit. Insurgent commanders from the district level up to the top leadership have expanded their involvement vertically through the drug trade. . . . As the core Taliban in the south and other extremist groups such as al-Qaeda have become more closely tied to crime along the Pakistan-Afghanistan border, levels of violence have increased. Additionally, insurgents have diversified into other criminal activities, including kidnapping for ransom, extortion, and, in some areas, human trafficking. The more complex the criminal networks become, the more difficult it will be for the coalition of foreign forces in Afghanistan to fight them."

Opium Politics

The Peters USIP study was based exclusively on publicly available material, and on interviews with scores of Afghan eye-witnesses to the transformation of the Taliban into a narco-terrorist organization, in the mold of the Colombian FARC or the Peruvian Shining Path (Sendero Luminoso).

An even more widely circulated profile of the Taliban and the Afghan opium and heroin trade appeared on March 30, in Salon.com, written by Alfred McCoy, author of *The Politics of Heroin in Southeast Asia* (1972).

McCoy began his exposé with a devastating account of the U.S. military mission in Helmand Province, the center of the Afghan opium enterprise:

“After a year of cautious debate and costly deployments, President Obama finally launched his new Afghan war strategy at 2:40 am on Feb. 13, 2010, in a remote market town called Marja in southern Afghanistan’s Helmand Province. As a wave of helicopters descended on Marja’s outskirts spitting up clouds of dust, hundreds of U.S. Marines dashed through fields sprouting opium poppies toward the town’s mud-walled compounds.

“After a week of fighting, U.S. war commander Gen. Stanley A. McChrystal choppered into town with Afghanistan’s vice-president and Helmand’s provincial governor. Their mission: a media roll-out for the general’s new-look counterinsurgency strategy based on bringing government to remote villages just like Marja.

“At a carefully staged meet-and-greet with some 200 villagers, however, the vice-president and provincial governor faced some unexpected, unscripted anger. ‘If they come with tractors,’ one Afghan widow announced to a chorus of supportive shouts from her fellow farmers, ‘they will have to roll over me and kill me before they can kill my poppy.’

“For these poppy growers and thousands more like them, the return of government control, however contested, brought with it a perilous threat: opium eradication.

“Throughout all the shooting and shouting, Ameri-



USMC/CWO3 Philippe Chasse

Adm. James Stavridis identified the human disaster that Britain’s new Opium War has wrought in Russia, where, just last year, some 30,000 Russians, between the ages of 18 and 24, died from heroin usage. Shown: an Afghan poppy farmer watches an AH-1W Cobra helicopter fly over his field in Farah province, Afghanistan, March 8, 2009.

can commanders seemed strangely unaware that Marja might qualify as the world’s heroin capital—with hundreds of laboratories, reputedly hidden inside the area’s mud-brick houses, regularly processing the local poppy crop into high-grade heroin. After all, the surrounding fields of Helmand Province produce a remarkable 40% of the world’s illicit opium supply, and much of this harvest has been traded in Marja. Rushing through those opium fields to attack the Taliban on Day One of this offensive, the Marines missed their real enemy, the ultimate force behind the Taliban insurgency, as they pursued just the latest crop of peasant guerrillas whose guns and wages are funded by those poppy plants.”

McCoy’s account of the new Obama/McChrystal counterinsurgency doctrine graphically exposed the folly of the current U.S. strategy. The bulk of the report, however, catalogued the consequences of a 30-year war, waged on Afghan soil, which transformed a once-stable, remote agricultural nation into the world’s opium field. As the normal economic life of the nation was disrupted, the farmers found themselves at the mercy of the opium lords, who in many cases forced them to produce at the point of a gun.

When the Taliban seized power in Kabul in 1996, Afghanistan was already producing 75% of the world’s opium. The Taliban regime collected an estimated \$100

million a year in revenue from taxes on the government-sanctioned opium crop. Heroin labs in and around the city of Jalalabad boosted the Taliban's take.

McCoy reported: "During the 1990s, Afghanistan's soaring opium harvest fueled an international smuggling trade that tied Central Asia, Russia and Europe into a vast illicit market of arms, drugs and money-laundering. It also helped fuel an eruption of ethnic insurgency across a 3,000-mile swath of land from Uzbekistan in Central Asia to Bosnia in the Balkans."

In July 2000, Taliban leader Mullah Omar ordered a ban on opium production, for reasons that are still hotly debated. Almost overnight, poppy production, and with it, the Afghan economy, collapsed—by 94%.

The temporary rift between the Taliban and the legions of opium lords who had secured the group's consolidation of power in Kabul, benefitted the Bush Administration, in October 2001, when Bush launched the invasion of Afghanistan, to overthrow the Taliban and drive al-Qaeda, literally, underground. Opium lords who had prospered under Taliban rule prior to July 2000, lined up behind the Bush-Cheney invasion, and by the end of the first year of the U.S. occupation, opium production had soared back up to 3,400 metric tons. By 2007, Afghanistan was producing 93% of the world's opium, estimated by the UN at 8,200 metric tons.

The Generals Speak

If journalists like Peters and McCoy are capable of documenting the true state of affairs, where is the U.S. government?

Not all of America's top military commanders have adopted General McChrystal's "Made-in-London" mantra that the U.S./NATO coalition must first defeat the Taliban and al-Qaeda military forces, before taking on the opium trade. Gen. Barry McCaffrey (ret.), who served President Bill Clinton as head of the White House Office on National Drug Control Policy, has conducted a series of fact-finding missions to Afghanistan and Pakistan, and has published his reports in memoranda to Col. Michael Meese of West Point.

General McCaffrey's latest mission to Afghanistan was in November 2009. His Dec. 5, 2009 report featured the following blunt assessment of the opium plague in Afghanistan and its implications for the U.S. mission there:

"The \$3.4 billion opium crop of 7,700 metric tons (2008) produces weapons and supplies for the Taliban and al-Qaeda, corrupts the police and civil authorities,

diverts land from food (two million drug workers) and has addicted a significant percentage of the population. Left unaddressed—the heroin menace will defeat our strategic goals in this campaign.

"Afghanistan is now the most damaged narco-state on the face of the earth. There are at least 920,000 drug users causing abject misery among widows, orphans, the unemployed, the poor. A new UN study will soon suggest there may be as many as two million drug users....

"The current notion that we can ignore the growers as simple farmers trying to survive—and focus our counter-drug strategy only on law enforcement against the cartels—is painfully naive. These huge criminal Afghan heroin operations if not defeated will corrupt legal governance, addict the population, distort the economy, and funnel immense resources to the Taliban and terrorist groups.

"The solution is three-pronged. First, work on alternative livelihood agricultural crops. Second, have the Afghan political leadership confront the opium issue as un-Islamic and one that destroys their culture. Third, *destroy the crops. Without the last—nothing will work*" (emphasis added).

Adm. James Stavridis, the current head of the U.S. European Command and the NATO Supreme Allied Commander for Europe (SACEUR), has echoed McCaffrey's assessment, and delivered a de facto endorsement of Russian anti-narcotics chief Ivanov's warning that the terrorist threat across all of Eurasia is inextricably tied to the Afghan opium and heroin trade.

Addressing a conference of American ambassadors from the Black Sea region at his Stuttgart, Germany headquarters on April 1, Stavridis declared, "When I look at the [Caucasus region] in general, as we see with the recent subway bombings ... I'm worried about that as a zone of terrorism." As reported in *Stars and Stripes* on April 3, "During Thursday's conference, Stavridis and his diplomatic counterparts looked for ways to better coordinate efforts to promote cooperation in the region. The flow of narcotics, particularly heroin from Afghanistan, human trafficking, and weapons smuggling, are some of the factors that contribute to growing instability in an area where regional rivalries have historically limited cooperation.

"For instance, he said, more needs to be done regarding heroin flowing into the region from Afghanistan. Stavridis said that heroin is to blame for the deaths of some 30,000 Russians last year between the ages of

18-24. ‘That in and of itself is a humanitarian disaster,’ Stavridis said. ‘And the profit and the money from that goes right back to the Taliban in Afghanistan.’ Heroin made from Afghanistan poppy crops generates from \$100 to \$400 million each year for the insurgency.”

Admiral Stavridis focussed on the need for greater American-Russian cooperation, including on Afghan drug production and its consequences across Eurasia.

The Heart of the Beast

LaRouche today called for an immediate and massive American eradication program, to replace the failed McChrystal “counterinsurgency” strategy. “Bomb the poppy fields now,” launch a full-spectrum war on drugs, including to top-down elimination of such British offshore dirty-money havens as Dubai and the Cayman Islands. “It is the British opium war policy, now targeting all of Eurasia and all of the Americas, to sustain an already hopelessly bankrupt British offshore financial empire, that is the true enemy.”

LaRouche warned that the global dope trade and the flows of dirty money are the lifeblood of the London-centered financial system. “London will react desperately the moment they see the United States and Russia working together to take down their dope empire,” he said.

As for the program to defeat and replace Dope, Inc., LaRouche presented it concretely in 1985, when he outlined a 15-point war plan.¹

LaRouche warned, in the current context, that London is already putting in place an option of assassinating President Obama, as a means of throwing the United States into chaos. He also warned that the United States and Russia, in combination, must deliver an unmistakable, preemptive message to Israel: Under no circumstances are you to attack Iran. London’s other chaos option is to get Israel to bomb Iran, creating an even bigger global disaster.

“Only a strong alliance between Washington and Moscow,” he said, “which would be instantly joined by both China and India, can bring down the British offshore financial empire of drug money, terrorism, and unbridled speculation. That is why President Barack Obama, who has shown himself so far to be a pawn of the British financial interests, must be removed from office, through prescribed Constitutional means.”

1. http://www.larouchepub.com/eiw/public/2008/2008_20-29/2008_20-29/2008-29/pdf/12-13_3528.pdf