

CFR eyes U.S. role in U.S.S.R. civil war

by Webster G. Tarpley

In his recent farewell breakfast with reporters, outgoing Director of Central Intelligence William Webster raised the possibility that the U.S.S.R. might break up during the course of 1991. He talked about scenarios according to which Moscow could lose control over the Soviet nuclear forces. Webster's remarks called attention to the question of whether the Bush administration and its British *maîtres à penser* are seeking, in the wake of the Gulf war, to exacerbate Soviet internal difficulties in the direction of all-out civil war.

Such ruminations are being conducted on a large scale in the U.S. intelligence community, as indicated by a new volume, *The Rise of Nations in the Soviet Union*, published in June by the New York Council on Foreign Relations. These essays, edited by Michael Mandelbaum, reflect papers delivered at a New York City CFR symposium last Oct. 25-26.

The CFR announced the volume with a news release issued on May 20, which starts off with the bald statement: "The Soviet Union is beginning to break apart." The release goes on to specify that the volume is concerned with such questions as: "How will Western Europe and the United States react if millions of economic and political Soviet refugees flee westward? What role should supranational institutions such as the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank, and the European Economic Community play? Will the Kremlin be able to maintain exclusive control of Soviet nuclear weapons? What can the United States do to reduce the likelihood of such adverse outcomes as the rise of Russian fascism and Islamic fundamentalism? Under what circumstances might the United States deploy military force either unilaterally or as a part of a larger United Nations or multilateral force?" This last, obviously sensitive point had already been raised by a *Time* magazine item published after the end of the Gulf war which talked of a possible "Operation Steppe Storm" in which U.S. military forces would be sent into the

U.S.S.R., an item which had drawn some response from the Soviet press.

Whether or not it is desirable to have a civil war in the U.S.S.R. is the momentous issue. Humanity and reason say absolutely no to civil war. Notice that the rejection of civil war should not be construed as a commitment to the integrity of the prison house of peoples. In his West Berlin address of Oct. 12, 1988, Lyndon LaRouche offered the U.S.S.R. a comprehensive solution to the breakdown crisis in Eastern Europe and the U.S.S.R.: Moscow was encouraged to grant self-determination and independence to the Eastern European states, and to the peoples of the U.S.S.R. who desire to establish their own independent sovereignty. In return, the West must launch a vast program of productive investment in these areas to promote the scientific, technical, and productive modernization of the economies. During 1989-90, after the fall of the Berlin Wall, this aspect was further concretized by LaRouche in the form of the Paris-Berlin-Vienna infrastructural and productive triangle. These approaches are required to make sure that existing nations, new democracies, and newly emerging states all be economically viable as the basic precondition of war avoidance.

But civil war is the opposite of all this. Civil war spells a hecatomb at least on the scale of the civil war in the former Russian Empire after 1917, which claimed the lives of many millions. Civil war today may well be fought with nuclear, chemical, and biological weapons. Civil war means that no people or nation will see their legitimate aspirations fulfilled in a peaceful, equitable, and orderly manner. Above all, since the area in question deploys the most formidable nuclear potential the world has ever seen, there is grave danger that civil war between the Bug River and Vladivostok will spill over into an international nuclear conflagration, even a universal one.

In the studies they have now placed in the public domain,

the CFR authors are clearly profiling and toying with the evident possibilities for starting such a civil war. Classified documents are likely to have gone further down this road. The CFR authors are not describing methods of infrastructural investment that might make war avoidance possible. Rather, they are seeking to identify the ethnic, political, and institutional fault lines which might open up into armed conflict. They also open a discussion of foreign intervention, on the model of the British, French, U.S., Japanese, Greek, and related interventions in the post-1917 civil war.

Mandelbaum's introduction includes these comments: "Even if Western governments conclude that they would prefer to see the Soviet Union preserved in some form, it may well be that nothing they—or anyone—can do will keep it together. The continuing collapse of the country could produce far more instability than has occurred thus far, and that could, in turn, present the West with a third set of issues. The nations of Western Europe could find themselves flooded with immigrants from the western republics of the Soviet Union. The West would then have to either try to absorb millions of people for whom it is not prepared or, in effect, reconstruct the Iron Curtain.

"There is another, even more dangerous possibility. The rise of nations and nationalism has already generated violence, which could grow and spread until it becomes a civil war. The national question has already drawn the Soviet army further into the political arena than at any time since 1917. A number of its officers have expressed vehement sentiments in favor of preserving the Union, as well as outrage at the large-scale avoidance of military service in the non-Russian republics, particularly the Baltics. . . . In the event of civil war, the West would have to be concerned about the possibility that violence would spill over the borders of the Soviet Union into other countries, such as Poland or Turkey. There would also and inevitably be grave concerns about the control of the thousands of nuclear weapons. . . ."

Alexander J. Motyl of the Harriman Institute of Columbia University, in his essay entitled "Totalitarian Collapse, Imperial Disintegration, and the Rise of the Soviet West: Basic Implications for the Soviet West," provides helpful hints for U.S. policymakers, many of which seem apt to favor the most apocalyptic outcomes. "Pressure Gorbachov to dissolve the Soviet Union immediately and to replace it with a confederation of sovereign states" is his first suggested diplomatic opening gambit. Then "warn that the West will respond to the repression of republics and 'democrats' with diplomatic and economic sanctions along the lines of those imposed on Iraq after Saddam Hussein's invasion of Kuwait." We are back to Operation Steppe Storm. But could this policy do something positive for the republics and peoples, including the Russians themselves, who are striving for freedom? Motyl's next suggestion rules out any such hope: We must "envelop the republics in as many supranational institutions as possible so as to provide them with stable structures and

values for dealing with their problems." This is to include the lethal embrace of the malthusian-genocidal International Monetary Fund and the World Bank as well as NATO, but only "observer status" in the European Community. Motyl also wants the U.N. to take over a leading role in administering the republics in what sounds suspiciously like mandate status. Most sweeping is Motyl's proposal for a "second Nuremberg, at which the leading representatives of the former communist regimes and their collaborators would stand trial and be sentenced for their crimes against humanity. Only the West has the moral authority and the political clout to engage in such a replay of history." A glance at the genocide against Iraq ought to be enough to judge whether the U.S. and the West have any such moral authority, or whether their armed forces are capable of freeing anybody today.

Another essay is entitled "The Soviet South: Nationalism and the Outside World," by Ronald Grigor Suny. This is a survey of developments in the Transcaucasus and Muslim Central Asia. Suny is a professor at the University of Michigan whose method of approach is illuminated by the title of his most recent book, *Party, State, and Society in the Russian Civil War: Explorations in Social History*, which he co-edited with other authors.

More specific conclusions are drawn in the concluding essay by Jeremy R. Azrael of the Rand Corp. Among Azrael's credits is a Rand study entitled "Emergent Nationality Problems in the U.S.S.R.: A Project Air Force Report Prepared for the United States Air Force," dating from 1977. After surveying the breakup of the U.S.S.R. from the points of view of nuclear proliferation, Russian fascism, Islamic fundamentalism, and balkanization, Azrael proposes measures to "meet the challenge": "We may eventually have to consider much more drastic, emergency measures to deal with the consequences of our inability to secure more favorable outcomes in the time available. . . ."

"To indicate where the process might end, . . . it may not be inappropriate to point out that, among others, we should probably be planning for situations in which the United States cannot effectively protect its interests without deploying, and possibly even employing, military force, either unilaterally or as part of a larger United Nations or multilateral force. Possible cases in point include the acquisition of Soviet nuclear weapons by hostile and adventurist groups or regimes, the outbreak or threatened outbreak of large-scale hostilities along or across internationally sensitive Soviet (or ex-Soviet) borders, the initiation of genocidal or potentially genocidal attacks on U.S.-linked groups (e.g., Jews or Armenians), and/or the outbreak of a Russian civil war pitting an embattled democratic regime against insurgent neo-fascists. Although the force requirements to deal with these situations would vary greatly, depending on the particularities of the scenario, the need to consider U.S. force requirements in thinking seriously about prospective developments on the Soviet nationality front speaks eloquently for itself."