

Editorial

A time for great concepts

Over the last several years there have been few bright spots in the news. War and economic depression have been the dominant themes, and seemingly nowhere were there men and women in positions of power with sufficient vision to support proposals such as the LaRouche-Reagan Strategic Defense Initiative. Such a gloomy view was fortunately mistaken, as the recent Russian initiative resurrecting an SDI based upon advanced physical principles, makes clear.

Indeed, human history has gone through many seemingly black periods, in which only the most discerning and the most optimistic could see the possibility of a renaissance. Thus it is our belief that now is the time to press ahead with the entire package of initiatives put forward by economist Lyndon LaRouche during the 1980s. These include the perspective of establishing a manned colony on Mars within a 40-year period, and the rapid implementation of his proposal called the "Productive Triangle."

The Productive Triangle includes the region of the greatest density of industrial production in Europe, encompassing Paris, Berlin, and Vienna, which would provide the economic weight to launch major infrastructure development projects throughout the former Soviet Union and other East bloc nations which were once under communist domination. When LaRouche first proposed this at the end of 1989, following the fall of the Berlin Wall, he anticipated the tremendous opportunity which would arise for launching a new period of prosperity, peace, and development throughout the world.

His proposal was not implemented, and instead, under the dictatorship of the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the people of these nations were subjected to a new tyranny, a bankers' dictatorship. The key individuals responsible for this outrageous failure to take advantage of an extraordinary historical opportunity were Mikhail Gorbachov, Margaret Thatcher, and George Bush. Fortunately, they have all been removed from the political scene, and there is still time to reverse what has seemed up until now an almost ineluctable slide into disaster.

It is not only the destruction of the Russian, Polish, and other economies of the East which presaged disaster. The accelerating economic collapse in the West, exemplified by the decline of French and German per capita productivity, as a result of the collapse of these economies, and the indications that the present worldwide economic depression may be more severe than that of the 1930s, are equally alarming.

Crucial to this economic decline has been the failure during the 1980s to implement the kind of initiatives which were put forward by LaRouche. In each of the three cases mentioned, the SDI, the Moon-Mars project, and the Productive Triangle, the centerpiece of the proposal was the emphasis upon investment in the most advanced technologies.

Productivity requires a higher standard of living; it requires investment in technology. A zero-technological-growth society, even without the kind of vicious practices embodied in IMF conditionalities and World Bank demands for the use of "appropriate" rather than advanced technologies, must ultimately lead to the depletion of a finite resource base and, as a result, a lowering of productivity.

Instead of favoring an accountant mentality, the attempt to enhance short- to medium-term financial yields and apparent profitability—the kind of thinking which dominates economic policymaking today—LaRouche argued for the kind of far-sightedness exemplified by President Kennedy's Apollo Project.

What is urgently needed today, is a reversal of priorities. We need to move ahead with the rapid introduction of advanced technologies in the short term, such as magnetically levitated train systems; in the medium term, with the kind of directed-energy technologies which will spin off from a combined Russian-American SDI initiative; and in the long term, with the colonization of space. In other words, rather than cost-cutting measures which typically involve cutbacks in research and development, a 180 degree turn must be accomplished to favor investment in and development of the most advanced technologies based upon new physical principles.