

# Clinton strategic review ignores Russian danger, targets Third World

by Kathleen Klenetsky

Leave it to the Clinton team. At the precise moment in history when the threat of World War III — triggered by the reemergence of an imperial foreign policy in Russia and the West's failure to act decisively in Bosnia — looms on the horizon, the administration has released a proposal for a comprehensive revamping of U.S. military strategy, which blindly insists that the former Soviet Union no longer poses a threat to U.S. national security, and blithely asserts that the danger of a global conflagration has effectively disappeared.

The administration unveiled the preliminary results of its widely touted "Bottom-Up Review" of U.S. strategic policy and military force structure in early September.

Over the next month or so, Clinton and his entourage are slated to undertake an extensive public relations campaign for their strategic blueprint, including a host of speeches to be delivered by the President and his chief national security and military advisers.

As anticipated, the review proposes to continue the reorientation in U.S. strategy which was initiated by the Bush administration. This reorientation is premised on abandoning the Europe-centered defense strategy of the last 45 years, emphasizing instead U.S. involvement in "regional conflicts," primarily in Third World areas.

As Colin Powell, the outgoing chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff who helped shape the policy, told a Sept. 1 briefing: "The focus has changed away from just this Eurocentric orientation; we have to be ready to fight in a range of places, in a range of environments from low intensity all the way up to the highest intensity."

Powell took great pains to emphasize the similarities between the Clinton plan and Bush's. "And it ought to be quite similar," he said, "because the world looks the same to us" as it did to the previous regime. Judging from the Clinton proposal, Powell's remarks were not intended simply to deflect criticism from Republican quarters, but were an accurate description of the direction in which the Clinton team is headed.

The Clinton plan, which envisions fighting two regional wars simultaneously (although whether this is possible under the force structure proposed is a subject of hot debate) calls for some reductions in military forces beyond those projected by the Bush administration's long-term budgets. Troop strength would shrink from 1.7 million to 1.2 million, and

cuts would be made in Army divisions, aircraft carriers, and Air Force fighter wings. Modernization programs would be substantially scaled back, including in the area of ballistic missile defense, which would experience "sharp reductions," according to a senior Defense Department official.

## 'New threats'

But, as administration spokesmen have emphasized, it was political considerations which produced the decisions on force structure, and not vice versa.

Dismissing the danger posed by the growth of an imperial "Great Russia" breakout, the "Bottom-Up Review" instead envisions the U.S. military engaging in colonial-style policing operations along the lines of the invasion of Panama and the Persian Gulf war against Iraq, and the Clinton administration's continuation of these adventures, as exemplified by the current, foolish, U.S. military deployment in Somalia.

In a press briefing at the Defense Department on Sept. 1, Defense Secretary Les Aspin and General Powell identified the four "new threats" to U.S. national security that drove the Clinton administration's strategic revamping.

"We began with the question of 'What are the dangers that face the United States now in the post-Cold War, post-Soviet world?' And we came up essentially with four of them," said Aspin.

First, he said, is the "new nuclear threat — proliferation. . . . The new nuclear threat is a handful of nuclear weapons in the hands of some terrorist organization or terrorist state, perhaps delivered by unconventional means."

"The second thing that we decided was important," said the defense secretary, was "that we needed to have a defense establishment to deal with regional dangers. Saddam Hussein, Desert Storm, Just Cause with Noriega — these are the exhibits. There is still in the world today a handful of bad guys, who, while they cannot threaten the continental United States in any meaningful way, they can threaten American interests or American allies or American friends."

The other two main threats to the United States, said Aspin, include a weak U.S. economy, and "dangers to democracy" around the globe. "There is a tenuous movement toward democracy in a large number of countries in the world today," said Aspin. "If those were to reverse, or if any of them were to reverse, it would produce a different national

security situation for the United States. . . . So whether or not these countries . . . develop as democracies is important to this building and to our national security, so that dangers to democracy is a . . . national security interest of the United States."

### **'Democracy building' is the new imperialism**

For those familiar with the nasty machinations of the U.S. National Endowment for Democracy, which has used the guise of "democracy building" to foment political destabilizations in countries that have run afoul of Anglo-American colonial policy, the Clinton strategy's emphasis on "democracy" should hold ominous overtones. The administration plans to deploy somewhere on the order of \$5 billion of the Defense Department budget to "democracy building" and related activities. In their press briefing, both Aspin and Powell alluded to the new "democracy-building" role which the U.S. military has begun to take on, pointing to Somalia as a case in point.

This emphasis on "democracy" (read: subversion) comes in part from Morton H. Halperin, Clinton's nominee to be Assistant Secretary of Defense for Democracy and Peacekeeping, who participated in the drafting of the administration's strategic overhaul.

Formerly a leading figure in the circles around the Institute for Policy Studies in Washington, Halperin's own views on the importance of "democracy" as an instrument for extending Anglo-American political power can be found in an article he wrote for the Summer 1993 issue of *Foreign Policy* magazine.

"The United States should take the lead in promoting the trend toward democracy," Halperin wrote. "When a people attempts to hold free elections and establish a constitutional democracy, the United States should not only assist but should 'guarantee' the result. Those measures should be institutionalized in organizations like the United Nations and the Organization of American States, which would be responsible for carrying out missions to ensure the success of constitutional democracy."

Halperin called on the "international community" to "establish a process that parallels the provision of the U.S. Constitution, under which the federal government should be obliged to guarantee each state what was in 1789 called a 'republican' form of government."

If the American people saw that U.S. policymakers "were promoting democracy around the globe," Halperin argued, "they would be more likely to support American policy with financial commitments and *military action* when necessary to accomplish those foreign policy objectives" (emphasis added).

### **PD-13**

Halperin's emphasis on the importance of the United Nations and the "international community" to U.S. strategy goes to the heart of the Clinton "Bottom-Up Review": its reliance on multilateral institutions. The controversial Presidential Directive-13, which has been circulating privately for the past month, reportedly proposes giving even greater authority to the U.N. over U.S. military operations (see *EIR*, Sept. 10, "Will U.S. Troops Enforce a Russian 'Monroe Doctrine'?").

## **LaRouche: Gore-Clinton plan is 'just cosmetics'**

*In an interview with the radio program "EIR Talks" on Sept. 8, political prisoner Lyndon LaRouche made these comments:*

**EIR:** I'd like you to comment on the recent Gore-Clinton proposal for reducing federal jobs by 250,000 jobs over the next five years. It's supposedly a government reorganization plan. I know in the past, in 1984, you had a program for government reorganization. How does this compare to yours?

**LaRouche:** It's just cosmetics. They're under tremendous pressure. Clinton has not had a single success so far. He talks about the budgetary bill he got through. That was no success. The Congress and he both *had* to have a bill. No matter what was in it, they had to pass it, so that the

federal government would be manageable. Without that budget, you get to the point where the U.S. government starts to run on chits, because by law it doesn't have the budgetary authority to continue operation. So they *had* to get a budget through — no matter what was in it.

Clinton's earlier efforts to get some kind of stimulus program going, even the most modest kind, was shot down. His health plan is in deep trouble. NAFTA [the North American Free Trade Agreement] is a disaster; and in Washington, they're scrambling. They're trying to find some token they can throw out there, which, for its short-term advertising and public relations effect, will restore some credibility of motion to the administration. They're trying to get some momentum going from some place; and so far, they have failed to do it.

This is just a game, it doesn't really mean anything at all, it just contributes to the overall disaster, it's just more sliding down a greased slope toward the precipice. That's all it amounts to. One shouldn't get too excited about it — maybe a little bit disgusted, but otherwise, not too excited.