

President Clinton charts new foreign policy course

by William C. Jones

Over the course of his Presidency, President Clinton has been reshaping U.S. foreign policy away from the Kissingerian balance-of-power “geopolitics” of the Cold War era, toward a policy of peace-making based on agreements among sovereign nation-states—a policy characterized by the President as a “partnership” of nations. President Clinton has placed himself in the role of “peace-maker” in a variety of hot spots around the world, and has reoriented U.S. foreign policy in accordance with that peacemaking role. During his visit to American troops in Bosnia in January, spokesmen for the President said that he was acting on the basis of a new “Clinton Doctrine.”

At the same time, he has initiated an offensive against narco-terrorism, also in partnership with other nations, and made it a centerpiece of his foreign policy.

Yet, as the increasingly anti-Western turn in Russia indicates, there is still a commitment by sections of the Clinton administration to the perspective of so-called “democratic reform” under the International Monetary Fund. The uneasy cohabitation of this Project Democracy perspective, with that of bilateral partnerships for peace, cannot last. And unless the IMF reform/democracy policy is abandoned, the entire basis for the peace processes is jeopardized.

‘Revolution’ threatened

Lyndon H. LaRouche, Jr., in an article in *EIR* on Nov. 3, 1995 entitled “President Clinton’s Foreign-Policy Revolution,” analyzed the President’s Oct. 23, 1995 Hyde Park, New York, summit with Russia’s Boris Yeltsin as the sign of a breakthrough in American policymaking. “What has happened,” LaRouche wrote, “is fairly, and most simply de-

scribed as a return to the U.S. foreign-policy principles of the pre-April 12, 1945 period, a return to the anti-Churchill, nationalist tradition of Hyde Park’s President Franklin D. Roosevelt, and also, of patriots such as Benjamin Franklin, George Washington, James Monroe, Henry Clay, John Quincy Adams, and Abraham Lincoln earlier.”

In the three months since LaRouche wrote that article, the “revolution” he identified has proceeded on many fronts, most notably, Ireland and Bosnia.

While rejecting Kissingerian balance-of-power notions, the Clinton policy is also a de facto rejection of the Project Democracy approach initiated during the Carter administration—a policy that well-nigh destroyed U.S. credibility abroad, by attempting to strong-arm friends and allies of the United States into the straitjacket of what this or that State Department “area specialist” considered to be “democratic forms.” The rejection of the Carter approach has been dramatically evident in China policy, and significant in relation to Mexico as well.

But the fact that the Clinton administration has continued to support IMF policy, represents the Achilles’ heel of his foreign policy gains. It has given an enormous opening for British maneuvering. In addition, the campaign of British-intelligence scandal-mongering, through Republican stooges like Sen. Alfonse D’Amato (R-N.Y.) and columnist William Safire, has distracted the President from concentrating on the economic aspects of foreign policy, to his peril.

Taking risks for peace

The President’s commitment to the peace processes was intensified in a very dramatic way by the assassination of his



President Clinton speaks to the British Parliament at Westminster, Nov. 29, 1995. His challenge to the British oligarchy amounts to a revolution in foreign policy, which his opponents are doing everything they can to sabotage.

friend Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin, by a right-wing Jewish extremist on Nov. 4, 1995. When the President several weeks later made his trip to Northern Ireland, he began to formulate the concept of “taking risks for peace” as a leitmotiv of his policy, and used the murder of the fallen Israeli leader as an example of the sacrifices that people might have to make to establish peace in Northern Ireland. Speaking at the Mackies Engineering Plant in Belfast, Northern Ireland, on Nov. 30, the President said, “We will stand with those who take risks for peace, in Northern Ireland and around the world . . . those who do show the courage to break with the past are entitled to their stake in the future.”

Speaking at a ceremony at the Martin Luther King Center in Atlanta, Georgia, honoring Dr. King on Jan. 15, President Clinton reiterated that policy. “We must be the world’s drum major for peace,” the President said. “That’s the role our troops and their allies from over 20 other countries, including countries that we were enemies with in the Cold War, are playing in Bosnia. That’s what we’re trying to do in helping the Catholics and Protestants get together in Northern Ireland. That’s what we’re trying to do in working with the Arabs and the Jews in the Middle East.”

The implications of this policy were underlined by the President himself, when, at a press conference with Israeli Prime Minister Shimon Peres on Dec. 11, he was asked by an irate reporter how he could defend his dealings with “undemocratic” countries like Syria, Jordan, Egypt, and Saudi Arabia. The President responded, “Those countries have to work out their internal affairs for themselves. But as long as they are

responsible actors on the international stage, and as long as they are contributing to the peace process in the Middle East, we will consider them our partners for peace in the Middle East.” “That’s the first and most important thing—how do they conduct themselves and are they supportive of the peace process,” the President stressed as his criterion—rather than abstract commitment to “democracy.”

Project Democracy gets short shrift

Initially, the Clinton administration was saddled with a lot of the baggage of the Carter-era policies, policies that equally hallmarked the Reagan and Bush Presidencies, when the entire Iran-Contra fiasco was conjured under the guise of “Project Democracy.”

In a speech at George Washington University in 1992, Morton Halperin, earmarked for a high State Department post in the new administration, trumpeted the importance of United Nations operations during this new post-Cold War era. By the end of 1994, it was clear that the Halperin nomination would never receive any serious consideration by the Senate. And by the end of 1994, Halperin’s cheerleading for “U.N. combined operations” had been totally discredited, and rejected, in Bosnia.

In September 1993, National Security Adviser Anthony Lake had given a speech to the School of Advanced International Studies, where he described the task of the United States as that of building “democracy and market economies.” Harking back to the Wilsonian era, Lake explained how “the successor to a doctrine of containment must be a strategy of

enlargement,” which he explained as “the enlargement of the world’s free community of market democracies.” Ironically, it was on the small island of Haiti, where Woodrow Wilson first sent American troops in 1915, that the “enlargement” doctrine was implemented during early phases of the Clinton administration. In this case, U.S. forces were utilized to put into power the defrocked priest Jean-Bertrand Aristide, a man well-known for advocating having his opponents murdered by “necklacing.” What happens to this self-styled “Haitian democracy” when U.S. troops leave Haiti, remains a big question mark.

Reality intervened to throw cold water on many of the utopian fantasies contained in this policy, especially as carried out under the United Nations. The continued Serb aggression in Bosnia and the unexpected fall of Srebrenica in July 1995, followed by a systematic liquidation of the Bosnian male population of the town, was too much for the administration to take. For far too long, the United States, under the pressure of the British and of their French puppet François Mitterrand, had allowed NATO military power to be restricted by the dual-key policy, whereby any NATO military action had to be simultaneously approved by the U.N. officials on the ground. This led—quite lawfully—to the result that no serious military action was ever taken.

And yet the U.S. President had made a solemn commitment to prevent further genocide against the Bosnian Muslims. The United Nations had become the prime hindrance to any effective military action that would have sent an unambiguous signal to the Serbs that their aggression would not be tolerated. With the fall of Srebrenica, the United Nations was taken out of the picture. The subsequent NATO bombing and the shuttle diplomacy of Assistant Secretary of State Richard Holbrooke succeeded in establishing an initial peace agreement, signed in Paris in December 1995.

There is no question but that the Bosnian accord was a compromise on principle. Without any backup from France or Germany, the President had to make a deal based upon the Russia-U.S. dominant role. And by leaving the causes of the war unaddressed, the agreement does not prevent the dangers of a flare-up at any time.

The war on drugs

President Clinton’s assault on the premises of the Kissingerian foreign policy, and the way it was carried out by the Bush networks, has also been evident in his policy toward the drug trade. As elaborated in *EIR* of Jan. 12, 1996 (p. 57), the Clinton administration has begun a serious attack on drug-money laundering and pro-drug “free-trade” interests, that has panicked the dirty-money networks.

The two major arenas of the policy have been Colombia and Mexico. In Colombia, the administration’s support has been the key to the arrest of most of the leadership of the Cali cartel. In Mexico, the administration is working with President Zedillo to clean up pro-drug networks that have also

been the source of a terror spree against Mexican officials.

The Colombia policy was a break with the Project Democracy crowd. Here, the criterion for cooperation was the preparedness of friendly government to make a serious effort in eradicating the drug trade, rather than some formal criteria of “democracy.” And yet, the “democratically elected” and drug-backed Samper, whom the administration was prepared to make a good-will effort to work with, quickly reasserted his decalades-long commitment to the drug cartels. Under these conditions, the administration declined to respect the narco-democracy, and continues to pressure openly for Colombian government action against the cartels.

The Project Democracy crowd in the administration, represented by people like Assistant Secretary of Defense Joseph Nye, is, however, still officially committed to dismantling the militaries of Ibero-America, and even denies the existence of “narco-terrorism,” as witness the September 1995 report issued by the Pentagon’s Office of International Security Affairs. But the policy parameters set by the President, eager to make some headway in the war on drugs, are in stark contrast to their agenda.

The economics of peace

The ultimate success—or failure—of the Clinton peace policy will be determined in the arena of economics. In all the crisis areas where a tentative peace has been achieved—in the Middle East, in Northern Ireland, in Bosnia—the question of economic reconstruction looms as absolutely decisive. Although administration officials readily admitted the importance of the economic development issues, in practice the policy is still that of relying on the operations of the “free market,” with the World Bank still being allotted the central role as the ultimate arbiter of “development.” As the world’s financial system spirals into collapse, the President will be faced with a dilemma that far transcends the utopian “scenarios” worked out so diligently by State Department and Pentagon planners, and it will require an even greater deal of personal initiative and courage on his part, in developing solutions to that crisis.

That he is capable of such action, he has indeed exhibited on the numerous occasions when he has had to deal with volatile and unforeseen situations. The President indicated the proper approach in a radio interview with Armed Forces Radio on Dec. 22: “To be President at the edge of the 21st century,” he said, “in a time of dramatic, dramatic change in the way we work and live and relate to each other, means that you can’t predict the future, and you just have to do what you think is right.” The President’s political instinct in “doing what’s right” in a crisis situation, is, however, only one factor in resolving the financial blowout. The other element is the policy proposals of economist Lyndon LaRouche for reorganizing the world’s financial system, policies that must now begin to take center stage as the world’s financial structures unravel.