

and humanist Helga Zepp-LaRouche, who addressed the international financial crisis.”

For former Mexican President José López Portillo, it would be a mistake to talk about the current economic measures imposed by the federal government, since it would cause “a lot of noise” to refer to such matters.

Interviewed at the end of the keynote presentation given by economist and humanist Helga Zepp-LaRouche, who addressed the international financial crisis, José López Portillo responded to questions:

. . . The former President admitted that in recent years, the country’s economic policies have been subordinate to the prescriptions dictated by the international financial institutions, “which have even made us forget our revolutionary principles.”

“I had my period of responsibility, and can now realize, in a rather dramatic way, what has occurred to national economies in an international financial order regulated by Bretton Woods, which operates with agencies such as the International Monetary Fund and World Bank.”

He commented that with independence, Mexico should organize itself as a modern nation-state to safeguard its interests from the critical whirlpool of international financial systems.

He insisted that in Mexico, the basic values of the Revolution have been forgotten . . . that of social justice, a principle which has not been taken into account with independence by the international agencies.

Francisco J. Martínez, “A Mistake to Fall into the Hands of Neo-Liberalism: JLP,” *El Sol de México*, Dec. 2, 1998.

The governments that emerged from the Mexican Revolution based the organization of their economy on meeting the demands for social justice, and not on responding to international demands, such as those currently posed in the context of globalization, insisted former President José López Portillo, adding that a country like Mexico, with great inequalities, should not leave itself in the hands of liberalism or neo-liberalism, as it is now doing.

He accused the international economic institutions such as the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank of assaulting the emerging countries, by demanding, through their policies the depression of consumption instead of encouraging the development of production.

“Mexico forgot its Revolution and the economy we wanted to create, given that all the prescriptions of the international economic agencies seek to depress demand and not encourage production,” López Portillo said.

Interviewed at the end of the speech of . . . Helga Zepp-LaRouche, at the Mexican Society of Geography and Statistics, the former head of state . . . praised the efforts of Zepp-LaRouche, saying that people like her not only foresee the economic imbalances represented by globalization, but also provide solutions based on protectionism.

Russia: A stream of sordid scandals

by Roman Bessonov

Russian journalist Roman Bessonov analyzes the circumstances surrounding the murder of Russian liberal Galina Starovoitova.

The effective insolvency of Russia, declared on Aug. 17 by then-Prime Minister Sergei Kiriyenko, appeared to be the last and decisive argument against the shallow and incompetent opinion that the Asian crisis was merely an Asian crisis. It was also a decisive argument that Lyndon LaRouche was right in his prognosis — as usual.

Inside Russia, the reality of financial collapse signalled that the era of official political liberalism, underpinned by financial speculation, is over. The gang of privatizer-swindlers and “human rights” demagogues, calling themselves radical liberals, is finished.

The appointment of Yevgeni Primakov as Prime Minister marked the beginning of a period of emergency transition, under extremely difficult social and economic conditions. Millions of Russians understood, mostly by intuition, that it was a shift from the collapsed and discredited liberal system toward something different. This “something” may be either total disaster, with the country’s collapse, or reconstruction based on new economic principles.

‘Why did you not join?’

Upon taking office, the new Prime Minister emphasized that his government would be neither a formal party coalition, nor a narrow one-party team, but rather a government of professionals. They might be drawn from various parties, but not just for the sake of “pluralism.” The members of the government were to be competent in crucial issues of economics, finance, science, and social problems, while a range of views would allow urgent tasks to be approached in a competent and creative way.

Among others, Grigori Yavlinsky, a liberal economist who heads the Yabloko party and parliamentary faction, and Aleksandr Shokhin, Vice Premier in the Viktor Chernomyrdin government and head of the “Our Home is Russia” group in the State Duma (Parliament), were invited to join the government. But Yavlinsky refused, saying that he would agree only to work with a team of his own people led by himself, while Shokhin accepted the Vice Premier’s post but then suddenly stepped down, on the pretext of reluctance to cooperate

with First Vice Premier Yuri Maslyukov, as the latter belonged to the Communist Party. Considering that Maslyukov is astronomically far from being a typecast cabinet Marxist, but is rather a highly qualified specialist in the defense industry and trade, it is clear that Shokhin's decision was motivated by other reasons, which he did not make public. The argument that Maslyukov previously headed Gosplan (the U.S.S.R. State Planning Committee) is irrelevant here, if only because the executive committee of the very party that Shokhin represents in the State Duma, was originally headed by former Gosplan Deputy Chairman Leonard Vid.

Still, in early October, Duma member Galina Starovoitova, head of the feeble remnant of the once-mighty Democratic Russia Movement, publicly blamed Primakov for not including Democrats in his government. The Prime Minister reminded her, politely, that prominent democratic politicians had been invited to join the government, but preferred not to take responsibility for the current situation, while some other democrats, like those who give promises to international institutions, and then break them, it was inappropriate to invite. Surely, the diplomatic Primakov meant former First Deputy Premier and Finance Minister Anatoli Chubais's team, which was responsible for issuing the infamous Russian state treasury bills, or GKO's.

Did the liberal politicians understand that their shock therapy and speculation policies were finished? Certainly they did. But to stay in positions of power was more important. This can be confirmed by the convulsive attempts of Chubais's team to secure power positions on a regional level, precisely in St. Petersburg, where many of them come from. The electoral bloc for the St. Petersburg municipal elections, called *Severnaya Stolitsa* ("Northern Capital") and headed by Starovoitova, was designed for this purpose. Still, at the deadline for registration of election blocs, Northern Capital had not yet been registered. Instead, Starovoitova decided to run for Governor of Leningrad Province, which surrounds St. Petersburg.

The question was the same: "Why did you not join?" But now it was to be addressed by Chubais to Starovoitova.

The fear of coughing

There were two obvious reasons for the nervous mood of the discredited *privatiseur* crew. First, Primakov's government was going to question the results of certain privatization deals, in which Chubais's team had played a visible part. In addition, the General Prosecutor's office was investigating several politicians, widely known as Democrats, and their financial backers. This list included Sergei Lisovsky, the person who was caught carrying \$500,000 in a Xerox paper box on the eve of the 1996 Presidential elections; his close collaborator Alfred Kokh, former head of the State Privatization Committee, now hiding in the United States; and former St. Petersburg Mayor Anatoli Sobchak, who secretly escaped from St. Petersburg via Helsinki to Paris

one year ago. All three of these persons were closely linked with Chubais.

The chance for a renewed political career for Chubais and his team could be preserved only in the event of some unexpected opportunity, which would produce the same effect of psychological paralysis as shock therapy. One more looming factor, like the gun hanging on the wall that will surely go off before the end of the play, was the state of health of President Boris Yeltsin, on whom the political existence of Chubais and his team has depended.

In this last respect, things were going from bad to worse. Previously, false reports about Yeltsin's bad health had been used by his people for political purposes, which created grounds for skepticism. But after the President's inadequate behavior in Sweden, and his collapse during his trip to Central Asia, any report about Yeltsin's "flu" was interpreted as something more serious. In October, the secret finally became an obvious truth.

The desperate state of the President's health seriously changed the political scene. For two months, Yeltsin's staff, including Presidential Administration head Valentin Yumashev, almost never appeared in public. Layoffs in this body, one after another, indicated that the Administration was no longer able to play its customary role of a "parallel government." This also meant that financier Boris Berezovsky could not utilize the Administration as a channel for his influence on policymaking. Meanwhile, Primakov made clear that he is not much interested in Berezovsky's assistance.

Two stories from one dusty box

A sudden opportunity for both Chubais and Berezovsky was provided by Communist Party Russian Federation (CPRF) member Gen. Albert Makashov, who, in his usual crude manner, accused nine Russian financial oligarchs (of whom seven were not oligarchs any longer) of having connections with international Zionism, which, in his opinion, is the main evil force behind privatization and the destruction of the economy, as well as the Armed Forces. There was absolutely nothing new in Makashov's ravings against "yids," as he earned his reputation as an anti-Semite back in 1991, when he was running for the Russian Presidency — two years before the foundation of the present Communist Party.

Still, the televising of Makashov's speeches around the anniversary of the 1917 October Revolution created an additional possibility for a political maneuver by the liberals. NTV, openly pushing Yavlinsky for the Presidency of Russia in 2000, and ORT, controlled by Berezovsky's interests, delivered a concerted blow against the *entire* Communist Party as allegedly condoning Makashov's desire to persecute, if not eliminate, the Jewish population of Russia.

These charges, echoed by global mass media, sound especially ridiculous if applied to Duma Speaker Gennadi Seleznyov, a CPRF member whose assistant, Mikhail Osherov, an ethnic Jew, barely survived an attempt on his life in St.

Petersburg on Oct. 16, and is still under treatment in the Military Surgical Academy.

At the peak of the massive campaign against “anti-Semitism,” both Chubais and Berezovsky insisted that the CPRF be dissolved, for being a “Nazi party.” It is not difficult to calculate that if this joint desire were fulfilled, the political arena would become much freer for Chubais’s crew, in case there were extraordinary parliamentary elections.

The “Makashov operation” had another strategic effect. A month earlier, CPRF leader Gennadi Zyuganov and Moscow Mayor Yuri Luzhkov had announced the possibility of a political alliance in the Presidential elections, in the year 2000 or before. It was absolutely clear that a “President Luzhkov,” the Moscow Mayor having repeatedly denounced Chubais’s methods of privatization and having made every effort to avoid such measures on the municipal level, would not likely assist Chubais in a further political career. The Luzhkov option would also deprive Berezovsky of opportunities.

Under heavy pressure, both Luzhkov and Zyuganov publicly backed away from their planned cooperation, but this did not mean that such a possibility was altogether excluded. Berezovsky proceeded to try to demonstrate (to the future President, or to the current Premier) that his role in Commonwealth of Independent States integration, as CIS Executive Secretary, is of tremendous importance. One November issue of the Berezovsky-controlled daily *Nezavisimaya Gazeta* was decorated with his portrait, in dimensions worthy of the late Leonid I. Brezhnev.

The ostensible subject of the Makashov case, anti-Semitism, was exploitable by Berezovsky for his personal needs. Next, he brought up another rather stale story as the subject of an international media scandal. According to *Komsomolskaya Pravda*, it was back on May 22 of this year, that the thrilling story came out about a group of Federal Security (FSB) officers allegedly receiving orders to eliminate Berezovsky physically. Only on Nov. 14, however, did Berezovsky publish his open letter to FSB Director Vladimir Putin, followed by the Nov. 17 ORT TV appearance of several repentant officers, who told how they were assigned to kill “this Jew Berezovsky who robbed half of the country” and how decisively they said “no.”

It remained unclear, why the brutal FSB that issued such orders did not just eliminate (or at least isolate) its men, when they “heroically” refused the task. Another puzzle: How did it happen that the criminal task could be given precisely to an officer known in the FSB as “Berezovsky’s man”? And, finally, if the FSB were to blame, why did Berezovsky’s letter to Putin target primarily the General Prosecutor’s Service, and especially Mikhail Katyshev, head of its Investigation Department, the person who launched the famous corruption case against former St. Petersburg Mayor Anatoli Sobchak?

Russia-reshapers reshape truth

But the Russian mass media, some of which were already expressing doubts about the Berezovsky assault story, were

suddenly distracted by one more scandal. St. Petersburg, the cradle of democratic revolution, has started eating its children. The series of political murders, which has shattered Russia’s second biggest city since September, was completed with the assassination of gubernatorial candidate Galina Starovoitova on Nov. 20.

For a sense of the political texture of this murder, one can look at the Nov. 24 issue of the London *Guardian*. “The Murder That Could Reshape Russia,” is its interpretation of the event. Under that headline, author James Meek reminisces about his acquaintance with Starovoitova in 1991 in London, and again in 1993, this time in Venice.

In our Russian tradition, it is considered indecent to speak badly about a person who has just died, especially if he was murdered. Nonetheless, I cannot help but identify the way in which Russia could have been reshaped, in case Starovoitova were in charge: the way Armenia and Azerbaijan were reshaped, in the process of Levon Ter-Petrosyan’s and Heidar Aliyev’s ascent to power; or, as Chechnya was reshaped in 1991, when a bloody putsch succeeded in establishing the illegal and brutal dictatorship of Starovoitova’s friend Jokhar Dudayev. The only excuse for speaking about these unpleasant past events just now, is that thousands of people, including innocent babies, perished in the Caucasus disasters—most likely for the benefit of the Baku-based Caucasus operations of British Petroleum. Or, was it to help Boris Berezovsky and Lord Alistair McAlpine organize what they call the “Caucasus Common Market”?

It may be very difficult to find Starovoitova’s murderer. It might have been any desperate refugee from the Caucasus, who lost his shelter, family, and means of existence—everything except hate. But the overriding question, *Cui bono?*, leads in another direction.

Starovoitova’s death was not just exploited politically, but heavily and hysterically so. Yavlinsky was clever enough *not* to arrive at the funeral with other liberals from Moscow; TV cameras were waiting, in order to depict him in the middle of the whole *privatiseur* mob, who were clutching at the coffin as a drowning man grasps a straw. Apparently, Yavlinsky did not want to disappear politically at this moment. But ex-Prime Minister Chernomyrdin did arrive, along with ex-Vice Premier Boris Nemtsov and ex-Prime Minister Kiriyenko. The loudest and most furious speech was delivered by Chubais. Already on the day after the murder, he was raving at a Moscow Cinema House memorial meeting, that “all democratic forces” must quickly unite in a “right center” (no longer “radical liberal”) bloc.

The same Chubais sat beside Chernomyrdin and Shokhin at a Moscow press conference on Nov. 25, where Chernomyrdin (who just weeks earlier had “joined,” and then left, Luzhkov in an alliance) declared that the newly concocted alliance, now doomed to acquire the name of the “Funeral Alliance,” would insist upon changes in the Constitution, and extraordinary and simultaneous elections to the Presidency and the State Duma.

The Communist Party had been violently attacked by the mass media for the same “heretical” proposal. But people standing at a fresh grave are not supposed to be attacked.

If only there were no other fresh tombs—but there are, not in the Caucasus, but in St. Petersburg. Dmitri Filippov, a sponsor of Seleznyov’s election campaign, received his own three bullets in the head in October. Who cared? The last victim of political terror before Starovoitova was Seleznyov’s assistant Mikhail Osherov. Who among the immense lot of journalists worldwide, who associated Makashov’s speech with the assault on Starovoitova, ever mentioned this case, in which the victim was Jewish? Or, is a Jew who is the aide to a CPRF member, automatically exempt from anti-Semitism?

Scandal calendar

The three scandals, which so mysteriously followed each other, exactly matching the desires and intentions of Berezovsky and Chubais, took place within three weeks. This period of three weeks preceded the visit of the Chinese President Jiang Zemin to Moscow.

The three scandals, shooting off like a MIRVed stink bomb, targetted not the Communist Party, not the State Duma, and not the security services. The way in which they developed, how and by whom they were highlighted within Russia, and by which foreign press most viciously interpreted, leaves

no doubt that the real target was the leadership of the government, which was about to be discussing the future of the country—and the whole world—with the leader of China.

The results of the Moscow-Beijing talks may be more or less encouraging, but it is clear that if Primakov’s enemies succeeded in replacing him with Al Gore’s crony Chernomyrdin, the strategic alliance for a new world economic system, proposed by China, would not be formed.

Throughout the IMF-dictated reforms in Russia, the ruling comprador *privatiseurs* would wail that their political opponents enjoyed the status of an opposition, with plenty of opportunities to criticize and expose. Now they are ousted themselves, by the crisis that threatens to destroy the country. Every convulsive move they make reveals that they don’t care about the recovery of the country and its economy. They would prefer to undermine the government and create chaos. Look at their masters and advisers abroad: Does it not seem they want the same?

The Russian liberals have got a funeral problem. They would like to be remembered through the ages. Still, even if they climb on top of each other, the size of these figures in the people’s memory will not exceed the size of domestic insects stealing food from the kitchen. In the long run, it will profit them nothing, even if they all immediately kill each other on behalf of unknown “anti-Semitic” soldiers. *Pesenka speta*, as we say in Russian. The song is sung.

Britain manipulates Kurdish insurgency against Turkey, plays the Ocalan card

by Joseph Brewda

Beginning on Nov. 13, the government of British Prime Minister Tony Blair, with the support of elements in the Italian and German governments, took dramatic action to protect the London-headquartered Kurdish Workers Party (PKK), which has been waging a terrorist insurgency in Turkey since 1984. The occasion was the arrest of the PKK’s founder and leader, Abdullah Ocalan, who was picked up in Rome’s international airport upon his arrival from Moscow. Within hours of his detention, the Italian government of Prime Minister Massimo D’Alema announced that it would not extradite Ocalan to Turkey, which has an outstanding warrant for his arrest, because, since Turkey has the death penalty, the Italian Constitution forbade it. On Nov. 20, the Italian government released him from prison, placing him under house-arrest, and stated that it might grant him political asylum.

Because of the threat to its sovereignty posed by the PKK,

Turkey almost invaded Syria in October for providing safe-haven to Ocalan and his group. After Syria agreed to Turkish demands on Oct. 20, and began closing down PKK camps, Ocalan fled Damascus for Moscow, and after being refused asylum there, to Italy.

In addition to refusing Ocalan’s extradition, and threatening to offer him asylum, Italy, together with Germany, Greece, the European Union, and several other European countries, denounced the Turkish government for “repression,” and called upon western Europe as a whole to intervene into Turkey’s domestic affairs to solve its “Kurdish problem.” Typical are the statements of Italian Prime Minister D’Alema, who told the Italian daily *Corriere della Sera* on Nov. 23: “It is not only PKK terrorism which is tearing apart the Turkish state, but also the systematic violation of human rights by the Turkish security forces.” He added, “Europe fights terrorism,