

EIR Feature

Russia's rulers revert to 'Third Rome' outlook

by Michael Liebig

This analysis was first presented as a lecture in a series of classes held on July 31 in Paris, France by the International Caucus of Labor Committees, a philosophical association founded by Lyndon LaRouche.

Over the past months the French media reported extensively about the “Nouvelle Droite” (“New Right”) and “National Bolshevism” ideology becoming a major force in post-1991 Russia. Intense concern about a Russian variety of neo-fascism is also expressed elsewhere. Probably the most extensive study on that subject is Walter Laqueur’s 1993 book, *The Rise of Russian Fascism*. Certainly Nouvelle Droite-type ideological and political trends do exist in Russia. But I would advise caution about the strength of the influence they exert. I remember well the intense media campaign in France during the late 1980s about the dangerous rise of the neo-fascist Pamyat group in Russia with their black uniforms and anti-Semitic provocations. But today Pamyat is obviously insignificant, and it never was significant.

To state this from the outset: I think that the *importation* of fascist and proto-fascist ideas into Russia today is *not* a major factor. The ideologies of Alain de Benoist, Julius Evola, Friedrich Nietzsche, and the German “Conservative Revolution” group of the 1920s, are not and will not be playing a major role in the inevitable and massive political and social dislocations that will occur in Russia in the next two to three years. Indeed, Russia does not need any such ideological imports, because the *Russian* reservoir of ideologies that “fit” the political requirements of the coming years, *is already there*.

A few weeks ago, Lyndon LaRouche pointed to his 1983 prognosis that under certain circumstances, post-communist Russia would tend to slip back into its historically rooted “Third Rome” matrix. How can the Third Rome matrix be defined? Fyodor Dostoevsky provides a useful definition in his *Diary of a Writer*: “Under no circumstances can a Russian be converted into a real European if he



“Under massive Anglo-American pressure, ultra-liberal ‘shock therapy’ was implemented in Russia, leading inevitably to mass pauperization, deindustrialization, and hyperinflation.” The Aug. 11 Literaturnaya Gazeta, a Russian weekly, showed this line at a bread shop.

remains the least bit Russian. And, if this be so, it means that Russia is something independent and particular, not resembling Europe at all, but important by itself. . . . Every great people, if it wishes to live long, believes that it and it alone harbors the salvation of the world — that it only lives in order to stand at the head of all peoples, to assimilate them into itself, and to lead them.” The Third Rome matrix signifies a world-view in Russia which not only emphasizes the “otherness” of Russia vis-à-vis western Europe, but which invests Russia with an inherent, quasi-messianic superiority over a decaying, historically doomed West. It expresses itself in a rather undifferentiated, sometimes simmering, sometimes open hostility against “the West.” The Third Rome matrix is based on the Byzantine model of an all-dominating state, and emphasizes the collective over the individual.

The window of opportunity

Obviously, Russia’s slide back into the Third Rome matrix is not inevitable or pre-determined. Between 1989 and 1993, there was a historical “window of opportunity” for Russia to engage in a process of post-communist economic and intellectual-spiritual reconstruction, through which it could have transcended the Third Rome matrix. From 1989 on, the LaRouche “European Productive Triangle” reconstruction package has been available. Some leading establishment figures like Deutsche Bank head Alfred Herrhausen thought in a similar direction. But LaRouche was imprisoned, and Herrhausen murdered. Under massive Anglo-

American pressure, ultra-liberal “shock therapy” was implemented in Russia, leading inevitably to mass pauperization, deindustrialization, and hyperinflation.

After George Bush was gone, President Bill Clinton and his Secretary of State Warren Christopher said in the spring of 1993 that Russia’s fundamental economic and social crisis was “the greatest strategic challenge of our time.” But nothing came out of those declarations; the International Monetary Fund (IMF) policies toward Russia and the other states of the former Soviet Union were not changed. At the April Clinton-Yeltsin summit meeting in Vancouver, the Russian government offered joint cooperation on ballistic missile defense systems based on “new physical principles.” American acceptance of that offer could have meant giving Russia’s modern, high-tech military-industrial complex (MIC) the perspective of playing a “constructive” role both nationally and in international cooperation. American acceptance could have been a critically important contribution to making the MIC a kind of productivity locomotive for the reconstruction of the entire Russian economy.

Two global-strategic dynamics

But the United States government declined the offer, and by now, in July, there are growing indications that Russia has withdrawn its “Strategic Defense Initiative”-type cooperation proposal. What we can say with certainty, is that the Russian proposal has repeatedly and strongly been denounced in leading Russian media since April.

LaRouche explains the 'Third Rome' matrix

The following are portions of an Aug. 11 "EIR Talks" radio interview with Lyndon LaRouche, who is a political prisoner because of the role he played in the early 1980s attempt to shift the economic and cultural matrix in the Soviet Union. He was interviewed by Mel Klenetsky.

EIR: Mr. LaRouche, you were discussing the Clinton administration's giving up, in terms of taking control of strategic and foreign policy because of its relationship with Britain and France.

LaRouche: The issue here is, focus on the balance, for example, between the Balkans and what is happening in Russia.

As my wife Helga said, and as I have discussed this with her, it makes no difference what Clinton does to attack the Serbs or not attack them militarily in former Yugoslavia; that what the United States *fears* will happen in Russia, *will happen anyway*. . . .

The United States has lost Russia, just as surely as some pro-British meddlers in the State Department and elsewhere back in the late 1940s, gave China to the communists. I don't accept the Joe McCarthy version of that, of course, but there was a very large element of truth in that, that the United States brought the communists to power by supporting British policy on that issue back in the 1940s.

The United States has bungled under George Bush — and Clinton has yet to undo that bungling. George Bush created a situation in which once the Iron Curtain had fallen, instead of opening the world to cooperation and development, and the road to durable peace, through the economic policies of George Soros and others, which the United States and others imposed upon Russia and eastern Europe, the United States has driven Russia into a mood of bitter hostility against the West again.

What is coming back in Russia, is *not* a communist power, but a Great Russian power — *as I warned these guys* under the Reagan administration back in 1983 to 1985. I repeatedly warned them: I said, you are going to see the fall of communism, but you are going to see, if you continue these kinds of policies, the danger of the return of Russian power, a thermonuclear power, in the form of a Great Russian/Third Rome government.

That is going to tend to happen *anyway*; it is too late to simply reverse that. We can only *shape*, or *tend to shape*, what that development *is* at this stage. We have thrown away our options. Bush did the most of it. But the Clinton administration, by failing to act to correct this Bush error, by tolerating the shock therapy, by tolerating George Soros, by not taking action in the Balkans, allowed the Bush program to continue, and that sent us down into this road. . . .

EIR: Mr. LaRouche, the figure of Solzhenitsyn is recently emerging in Russia. He represents a critique of the West, very knowledgeable about the West. He pushes such figures as Stolypin and Dostoevsky. Of course, you have promoted Witte, who represents a different tendency than Stolypin.

Solzhenitsyn claims that the territory of Russia includes not only Russia but Ukraine, Belarus, and Kazakhstan.

What is the difference between what Solzhenitsyn represents, what Stolypin represents, and your view of how Russia has to go in terms of the policies of Count Witte, and what is the significance of this in terms of the strategic breakdown you've just been describing?

LaRouche: There are two aspects to be considered, in respect to what Solzhenitsyn is saying.

First of all, Solzhenitsyn and I have been crossing paths on this since the middle of the 1980s. Solzhenitsyn once made a public statement in a meeting in Washington, stating that I was the only one advising the Reagan administration who seemed to understand the Russian situation. That was in response to my warnings that Russia was headed toward a transition through crisis from Bolshevism

A spring 1993 shift of the West's economic policy toward Russia would also have meant adopting an anti-depression strategy for the crisis-ridden *western* economies, and even at that late point could have created a historical singularity whose effect would have been to redirect the basic strategic course in Russia — and the West. Sadly, it did not happen, and short of some miracle, the 1989-93 window of opportunity is now closed. Therefore, we have to assume that the global strategic situation in the coming months will be deter-

mined by two fundamental, interacting processes:

- A phase-change in Russia with the emergence of a Great Russian regime, based on a Third Rome matrix, which will try to restore formal or factual domination over all the successor states of the former Soviet Union;
- Dramatic upheavals on the globalized financial derivatives markets.

The two processes are closely interconnected. The IMF shock therapy policies were "exported" to Russia by the same

to a non-Bolshevik, Third Rome Russian empire.

Solzhenitsyn, of course, is intellectually a literary, not merely a literary but essentially a literary proponent of the Third Rome. That is, he understands the modern literature which shapes those aspects of the Russian culture which tend toward Third Rome; and that is what he is talking about when he talks about Dostoevsky, who is a prime Third Romer, and people like Stolypin.

The issue is this.

The Russians are not being moved today by Stolypin or Dostoevsky. One must not read that in. Those are only symptoms, they are not causes.

The Russians are moving to a Third Rome for reasons I indicated over 10 years ago. The Russians are reacting to certain axiomatic assumptions, which most Russians accept in their bones; and they are reacting to the crisis on the basis of those assumptions. Those assumptions produce results, in terms of policies, which in the mind of the literary observer, correspond to the same kinds of thinking one can read in the diaries of Dostoevsky.

EIR: Mr. LaRouche, you have been talking about the Third Rome. What is the Third Rome, and what are these assumptions that you have been discussing?

LaRouche: Following the collapse of Charlemagne's order in Europe, which occurred as a result of what was called the New Dark Age in European history, that's covering the very late thirteenth century and up to the middle of the fourteenth century, there erupted throughout Europe a policy impulse for the creation of a new Roman Empire, because Charlemagne's Holy Roman Empire had sort of taken that place.

This erupted in Russia beginning the middle of the fifteenth century. By about 1510 A.D., a Russian monk by the name of Philotheus of Pskov issued a statement like a prophecy which became the basis for the existence of the czarist government under a number of people of the sixteenth century, including Ivan Grozny, the famous Ivan the Terrible.

This has always been, as Dostoevsky, for example, celebrates it, the conception that Russia will be the third

and the last and everlasting version of a worldwide new Roman Empire. The very title of czar, which is Russian for Caesar, was adopted in the sixteenth century by the princes of Muscovy to identify this Third Rome imperialist thrust deeply embedded axiomatically in Muscovite culture, embedded in the bones of virtually every peasant in Russia while they are attached to this monarchy.

So what has happened, with the collapse of Bolshevism, the failure of Bolshevism from the Russian standpoint, the Russians go back to the axioms which existed before Bolshevism, and which shaped such Bolshevik figures as Stalin. Stalin, for example, was a combination of a Bolshevik *and* a Third Romer, especially so in the 1930s and 1940s, into the 1950s.

But that's what we're talking about.

The alternative is, what kind of a breakdown, and what kind of a Third Rome are you going to get? Not necessarily a Third Rome Russian Empire, but what kind of a Third Rome Russian government? Are you going to get what Solzhenitsyn represents, a sophisticated version of this kind of thing? Are you going to get an Ivan Grozny, the emergence of figures who remind us of Ivan the Terrible or Stalin in his Third Rome period? Not Bolsheviks, but Great Russians? Or are you going to get something else?

The only choice we have, as a United States or western Europe, is to contribute policy inputs which tend to cause Russians to make a rational choice of what kind of new Russia they are going to put together; and to exercise some tolerance and moderation toward peoples within the former Soviet Union, in the process.

We can do that, if we would dump George Soros and our IMF [International Monetary Fund] conditionalities and free trade, etc., policies. We could take a much more positive policy, by playing up Germany in Europe as the instrument of an international policy, to get some economic development going in all of eastern Europe, and to offer that kind of cooperation to Russia, as opposed to the kind of program which was shoved down Russian throats through Bush and Bush's — as you might say — patsy, the former dictator, Mikhail Gorbachov.

Anglo-American forces who are promoting the vast financial derivatives speculation in the West. Probably even before the end of 1993, the economic and social devastation generated to a large part by IMF shock therapy policies will reach the limits of what is endurable even for the Russian population. The economic breakdown crisis also threatens the political-administrative cohesion of the Russian Federation. Under these domestic conditions, Russia's military-security *nomenklatura* is likely to move toward a new regime. I think a direct

replay of August 1991 with tanks rolling through Moscow can be ruled out. The German word *Wende* [meaning a sudden turn or transformation — ed.], which is used to describe the late-1989 regime changes in eastern Europe, may be more appropriate to characterize what is likely to happen soon in Moscow. Something more quiet, but probably much more efficient than August 1991 should be expected. I think that the dramatic escalation of the *institutional crisis* in Moscow since mid-July 1993 is the beginning phase of such a *Wende*.

The battles over ruble exchange rates and other economic and financial policies, the corruption wars, the fight over the Constitution, the restorationist policies toward the other ex-Soviet states, are all predicates of this ongoing *Wende* process.

Obviously, a change in regime in Moscow will have major political and economic-financial repercussions in the West. The new regime would move to dismantle most of the post-1992 domestic economic policies. But I do not believe that they would try to restore the communist economic system. Simultaneously, the new Russian leadership would relentlessly pursue a policy of regaining control over the other ex-Soviet republics, most notably the Baltics and Ukraine. The emerging Russian leadership is also closely following the growing indications of a major upcoming derivatives crisis on the western financial markets. Moscow sees that the West is sliding ever more deeply into the second great depression of this century.

It must be assumed that the emerging Russian regime will try to exploit a financial eruption in the West to their maximum advantage. A financial crisis may influence the timing and mode of the coming *Wende* in Moscow. It certainly would have an impact on international regional conflicts such as the Balkans, and it would shape Russian moves in the ex-Soviet "sphere of influence." Here the question of Ukraine's nuclear weapons is of particular significance.

The nomenklatura's calculation

In trying to understand the emerging new Russian leadership, one should consider one important question: Why did the Russian leadership ever tolerate IMF shock therapy policies in the first place? It is certainly true that the West forced these policies upon an economically super-weakened Russia. It is likewise true that many Russian leadership figures were bribed by western financial interests in the crudest possible terms. But why wasn't there more real resistance?

The answer: The Russian *nomenklatura* coldly calculated that the acceptance of IMF shock therapy policies would serve their *caste* interests. By the term *nomenklatura*, we do not mean primarily a *Communist* top bureaucracy, but rather the state elite in the military, the security apparatus, the administration, business directors, and top scientific layers. The implementation of IMF shock therapy policies permitted the *nomenklatura* to enrich itself economically as a caste. An estimated \$100 billion has been set aside since the mid-1980s, most of it going into western bank accounts. With the post-1992 hyperinflation, that money could be used to build up entrenched economic-financial positions at the nerve centers of the Russian economy. So the *nomenklatura*, whatever internal friction there may be, has consolidated itself as a "corporatist-capitalist" caste. The *nomenklatura* knew that IMF shock therapy policies would completely discredit "western capitalism" as a whole, including some perfectly reasonable western economic policies as they still sporadical-

ly exist in Japan, Germany, and France. The Russian population would be increasingly disappointed, and finally become enraged at the West. That condition has now been reached. The parallel enactment of similar IMF shock therapy policies in the other ex-Soviet republics naturally weakened them economically, socially, and politically, thus increasing Moscow's leverage for regaining control over them. The events of this summer in eastern Ukraine and the Baltics are symptomatic in this respect.

Solzhenitsyn's world-view

An excellent insight into the *mainstream* political-ideological basis of the emerging Russian regime is, in my view, provided by Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn. He is an accepted moral authority in Russia. He is an internationally recognized writer, and the substance of his literary work stands above almost everything written in the West during the past 50 years. Solzhenitsyn was a courageous anti-communist dissident, who in his literary work exposed the communist regime's murderous crimes. For this, he was prosecuted and driven into exile.

At the same time, Solzhenitsyn is unquestionably a *Great Russian nationalist*. He can credibly claim that he knows Russia *and* the West. During his 20 years of exile in Germany, Switzerland, and the United States, he gained deep inside knowledge of western politics, social behavior, and culture. Now he is planning for his return to Russia, which in and for itself could become an event of great political significance.

I'm no expert concerning the literary work of Solzhenitsyn; in the following I refer to his essay, "Russia's Way Out of the Crisis," of which more than 20 million copies were printed in Russia in 1991, and to his March 1993 "Open Letter."

First, what is Solzhenitsyn telling his fellow Russians about the West? He says that:

- The West is absorbed by financial greed, excessive consumerism, and materialism.

- "Financial centers" tend to be the "secret masters" in the West, engaging in "parasitical usury" and creating inflation.

- Russia must be on guard against "western capitalists" who will tend to exploit Russia's natural riches and may turn it into a "humiliated colony."

- The West's population, especially its youth, are morally corrupt through the "amoral, rotten pop mass culture" and exposure to television.

- Western cultural elites are dominated by "American cultural imperialism" and "western intellectual garbage."

- The West has lost its Christian roots, has become non-religious, and is devoid of real spirituality.

- The West has lost its spiritual link to the soil and to nature.

"It is disgusting that the currently dominant popular intellectual pseudo-elite laughs at the absoluteness of Good and

Evil, and instead replaces it with the 'pluralism' of ideas and actions. Original European democracy was based on Christian responsibility and self-discipline. But increasingly these spiritual foundations have vanished. Intellectual independence is being curtailed, is being distorted by dictatorship, banality, fashions, group interests. We see democracy not exactly in her most healthy epoch."

Obviously, most of his analysis of the present condition of western society is perfectly correct. But Solzhenitsyn is not just telling his fellow Russians that the West is on the way of self-destructive decadence; he praises "civil liberties, respect for the individual, private initiative, prosperity, and mobility," as well as the social-economic middle class in the West.

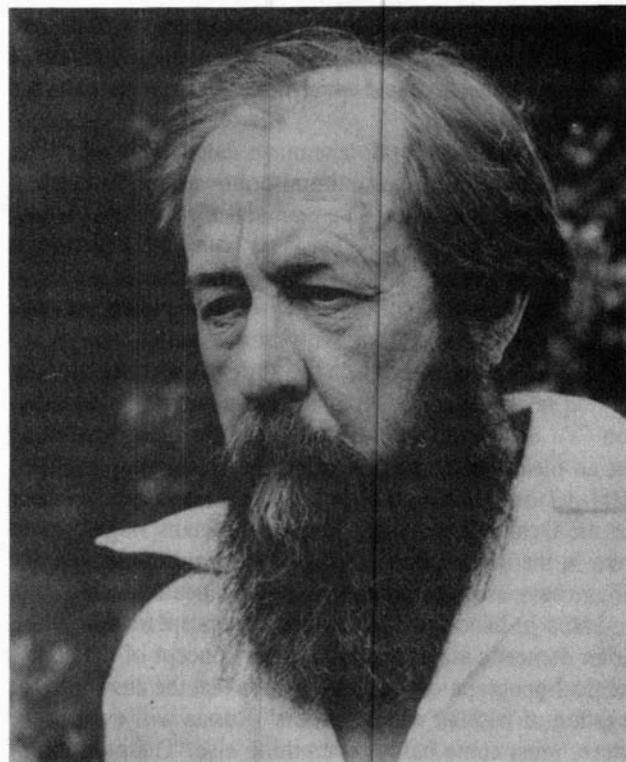
The Russian way of democracy

Then Solzhenitsyn quotes Fyodor Dostoevsky saying that democracy "is the most unreasonable invention of the nineteenth century." He does not disagree, but simply adds, "in any case, democracy is *no* natural law." Russia should carefully think about democracy, instead of making it a "fashionable" absolute, forgetting that did *not* mean rule of "truth," but at best of "mediocrity."

Again, one can hardly disagree that pure democracy breeds the tyranny of mediocrity or worse; but then comes his argument that democracy is questionable, because "for the majority [of the Russian population] politics is something they definitely do not desire to engage in." Or, "The [Russian] people have a right to power, but the people do not want power. Only 2% have the desire for power; before all else, *they want order.*" Again and again, Solzhenitsyn warns that it was democracy which in the "unfortunate eight months of 1917" paved the way for the ensuing communist dictatorship.

A "strong presidential authority" and "discipline" are the true fundamental necessities for Russia today," he says. The Russian people "are in *no* way prepared for the complexities of democratic life" which can only be introduced in a "step-wise, patient, and stable" manner. In Russia, "Democracy cannot simply be proclaimed loudly and rigorously rammed through from above." The only appropriate place for democracy in Russia, says Solzhenitsyn, is "local self-administration." From there, democracy can slowly "work itself up to the state government level." Solzhenitsyn strongly criticizes Count Sergei Witte for denying the compatibility of Czarist autocracy with local self-administration. For Solzhenitsyn, the best and only way to rule Russia is precisely that combination of a centralized authoritarian regime with democratic local self-administration. The one political figure in Russia's history to whom Solzhenitsyn refers repeatedly and positively, is Pyotr Stolypin. For Solzhenitsyn, Stolypin embodies the strong, ruthless, and authoritarian "reform leader."

With all due caution, and taking into account that Solzhenitsyn does take a differentiated attitude toward European culture, one nevertheless must conclude that his understand-



Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn

ing of the historical-cultural foundations of western European-Christian civilization is very limited. He does say that today's western leaders and people have rejected and betrayed their own cultural roots; but he does not grasp these roots beyond a limited, pragmatic understanding. It seems obvious to me, that the core concepts of Augustinian Christianity (as opposed to the Byzantine tradition), the Renaissance, Christian humanism, and the 1438 Council of Florence and what flowed from that afterward, are very *distant*, if not *alien* to Solzhenitsyn. I know of no explicit endorsement by him of Russia's mission as the Third Rome, but implicitly it clearly permeates his thinking. Solzhenitsyn does repeatedly and positively refer to Dostoevsky, not for his novels, but for his political-cultural philosophy. It is impossible to miss Dostoevsky "shining through" Solzhenitsyn's political-cultural views. One realizes this more clearly, once one looks at the *political conclusions* that Solzhenitsyn is drawing from his philosophical basis.

Great Russian restoration

Solzhenitsyn says, "Oswald Spengler has correctly pointed to the fact, that in *different cultures* the meaning of the state is different. It is not determined by the 'best form of government' which a great culture would adopt — one might think — from another culture. Montesquieu says that each *form of government* corresponds to a specific *territory*; a state cannot adopt a form of government that does not correspond

to the size of the territory. For a specific people with its own *geography*, its *traditions*, its *psychological habits*, a form of government must be found which allows it to prosper and not to degenerate."

An Open Letter by Solzhenitsyn dated March 7, 1993 also illustrates the implicit cultural-political Third Rome matrix of his thinking: "Russia . . . cannot exist without a strong presidential power. . . . What is at issue is *not* President Yeltsin or the present composition of the Supreme Soviet; at issue is a long-term policy, an agreement which prevents Russia from tottering from every gust of wind. . . . When people have been thrown into the abyss, is it really time for garbled referendum questionnaires or clauses of a constitution . . . or having meetings months after months working out an ideal constitution? During the entire year of 1917, ideal electoral laws were elaborated, and finished just in time for the October coup. . . . Hasty politicians wage furious wars in the stratosphere. . . . In the meantime, chaos and pillage have assumed a massive, unprecedented scale."

Hand-in-hand with Solzhenitsyn's concept for an authoritarian domestic state structure, is his concept of the state's political-geographical design. He says that the answer to the question of within "which borders" Russia will exist in the future, must come before everything else. The question of state borders circumscribing Russia's *soil* is of supreme importance to Solzhenitsyn: "Soil has for men not just an economic but a moral significance. Gleb Uspensky and Fyodor Dostoevsky have convincingly written about that. The decreasing linkage between the people and the soil is a great danger to the character of a people." For Solzhenitsyn, "our thousand-year history" and "the spirit of our forebears" means that today's Russia must have the borders of the ancient "Rus" or "Rossiya," including the Russian Federation, Belarus (White Russia), Ukraine, and Russian-populated north-central Kazakhstan. For Solzhenitsyn, Russians, Ukrainians, and White Russians are "three branches of one people," which are "inseparable but not the same." All "separatist" conceptions are for him based on a "falsification of history." He passionately deplors the "cruel separation" of the three branches of the Russian people, and foresees frightful calamities were they not to stay together in a "Russian Union." For Solzhenitsyn, historical, demographic, economic, and cultural reasons all demonstrate that such a (Great) Russian Union is the only sustainable way Russia can exist.

Solzhenitsyn does not view such a Great Russian Union as an empire. He thinks that the empire of the Soviet Union meant that the "life blood was sucked out of the core Russian peoples" and domestic development was paralyzed. The "spiritual and physical salvation and survival" of the Russian people have been undermined by the resource drain into the "fringe territories." Russia's cultures cannot survive the "mish-mash" of the Soviet Union. Therefore, the fringe territories — especially the central Asian "belly" — must be sepa-

rated and remain separate from the Russian Union. Only then will the material and spiritual resources be freed for Russia's internal development. Concretely, Solzhenitsyn demands the permanent formal separation of the following areas from the "Russian Union": the central Asian states of Turkmenistan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, southeastern Kazakhstan; the three Caucasus states, Azerbaijan, Georgia, and Armenia; and Moldova. What Russia's relationship to these states would be, Solzhenitsyn does not say. He mentions no spheres of influence or indirect, informal forms of control and domination.

Great Russian generals and geopoliticians may disagree with that latter point, but the basic thrust of Solzhenitsyn's manifesto, in my view, expresses the essence of the *mainstream* thinking and feeling in today's Russia. Naturally that does not apply to the particulars, on which there are certainly great divergencies of view. But I think the mainstream in elite layers *and* the general population "instinctively" thinks in his direction.

The ongoing phase change in Russia

As a result of the past two years' mainly social-economic collapse, the massive disappointment with and rage at "the West" in the Russian elite and general population has probably superseded Solzhenitsyn's position of "drawing the line" vis-à-vis the West. In March 1993 Solzhenitsyn wrote, "within 14 months the Russian people have been thrown into poverty and desperation . . . a massive, irreversible plundering without precedent has set in, a sellout of Russian goods at extremely cheap prices." As we said, the *nomenklatura* accepted IMF shock therapy policies in order to stage their short- to mid-term comeback as the *post*-communist ruling caste. But still they feel deeply hurt and humiliated by the West's contemptuous economic-financial and political attitude toward Russia from 1989-93. The rage is not alleviated by the West's explicit *consent* today for Russia's imperial reconsolidation. The West — the United States, United Kingdom, France, Germany — and Japan have signalled Moscow in no uncertain terms that they recognize the territory of the former Soviet Union as Russia's unchallenged "sphere of interest." Moscow has gotten the "green light" to do what it pleases in this area. But this will not undo the sense of having been deeply humiliated. I was told repeatedly by Russian officials, "We feel we're being treated like Germany was after World War I." There is an underlying, while not yet open, emotional disposition for revenge.

And the Russian people share that feeling of being cheated and humiliated. Their standard of living declined by 50% since the mid-1980s and their existential fears have dramatically risen. The "capitalist market economy" and "western democracy" have ruined their lives, have led to misery, cultural nihilism, and mass crime. The rage is naturally primarily directed against the political leadership *within* Russia that stands for economic disaster and political chaos. But there is

a deeply rooted sense that the present regime “really works for the West” to the detriment of the Russian people. Unfortunately, this is no mere paranoid concoction. The degree of corruption within the present Yeltsin regime is monstrous — which is not to say that the *nomenklatura* opposing the present regime is not also massively involved in corruption, including having large deposits in foreign banks.

But I have the impression that the people in Russia instinctively feel that many, if not most, of the present regime’s leading figures, maybe not Yeltsin, are accumulating personal riches by “selling out to the West.” They sell out dirt-cheap, as Solzhenitsyn said, Russia’s raw materials, scientific-technological know-how, and other resources. That corruption is not the “traditional” intra-Russian type of corruption, but one *by and for foreigners*. Moreover, there is a suspicion that leading figures of the present regime have already prepared for a luxurious exile. That suspicion is indeed correct: Most of the top people in the present leadership have in fact bought houses in the United States, the Caribbean, Great Britain, Switzerland, or Spain. Many of their relatives already live abroad, and one must assume they are ready to jump ship whenever the crisis escalates further.

My impression in talking to Russians is that there is a firm belief that the present regime is really doomed, that its demise is inevitable; that a new, tough, authoritarian regime will be not only accepted but really welcomed; that the democrats had their historical chance, but they and their western friends wrecked that chance in the most mindless and rude fashion. I have heard from individuals who in August 1991 personally defended the White House in Moscow, that they now think that a military junta is the only option left for Russia, because there is no other way to stop pauperization, chaos, and crime.

The “democratic movement” in Russia, which in 1989-91 mobilized hundreds of thousands of people, was essentially destroyed by the implementation of the Gaidar reforms, IMF shock therapy, after January 1992. The “democratic movement” split over whether or not to back the Yeltsin regime with its Gaidar-IMF policy. Most of its former activists withdrew from politics, and today most “pro-reform” demonstrations number only in the hundreds. Still, there is a plethora of political mini-parties, groups, and circles in today’s Russia. But I think they are not significant. That goes also for the variety of so-called “red-brown,” neo-fascist, and anti-Semitic organizations, which get a lot media attention. They have a certain influence in the Russian media. Certainly communist groups are the most cohesively organized, and they do have influential publications. But the *nomenklatura* keeps an arm’s length from them as organizations. I think that the key figures in the Russian political, military-security, scientific-technical, and cultural elite are deliberately *not* engaging in outward political-organizational activities. Probably the Civic Union was an attempt to form a “non-partisan party,” but the Civic Union proved not

to be very cohesive or effective.

I see the emergence of some leadership grouping from *within* the state institutions with a *non-partisan agenda* — some sort of “national salvation committee” within high and highest-level government structures, which may have the following program:

What the coming regime may look like

- Ending “political chaos” by establishing a tough, authoritarian center based on the Army, the KGB, and the top administrative bureaucracy;
- A “social-economic *stabilization* policy,” the content of which remains foggy, but which will emphasize “production” and combat domestic and foreign-related speculation;
- A ruthless crackdown on organized crime and crime in general;
- A ruthless Great Russian policy of dominating the other successor republics of the former Soviet Union, moving toward reestablishing some sort of new “union” or “federation” like the one proposed by Solzhenitsyn;
- An “assertive” foreign and security policy to force the West to globally accept Russia’s geopolitical interests. Russian military might will once again become an explicit factor in international politics.

A recent interview of Russian Deputy Defense Minister Boris Gromov with the journal *Argumenty i Fakty* sheds light on the mind-set of the top *nomenklatura* layers which might well come together around the program sketched above. Gromov expressed his disgust at the “*theft* going on at a high state level, and in the country as a whole,” and says he will not tolerate “treachery.” He finds “the loss of normal, human common sense in people invested with power” most horrifying. As a result of these conditions, Russia’s future “has become a total unknown.” Gromov says he can remain loyal to any party or politician in power, including the communists. He feels bound only by “the Constitution and the laws.” But he reserves special praise for Vice President Gen. Aleksandr Rutskoy: “As a military man and organizer, I value him highly. . . . He is a man of whom something decisive could always be expected.” Gromov described his relationship to Rutskoy as “good, Afghan-veteran relations.”

In an October 1992 interview with the German weekly magazine *Der Spiegel*, General Rutskoy said that at the core of his program was the “Stolypin formula,” which meant “liberal reform *and* a strong regime.” He said he was convinced “that the transition from a totalitarian regime . . . is only possible if this change proceeds in a controlled way. . . . In this country, that can only be guaranteed by a strong state. . . . Stolypin failed because he could not form such a strong government.”

The economic Achilles’ heel

The fundamental problem for the emerging new regime in Russia is *economic policy*. There does *not* exist any mean-

ingful, comprehensive program for Russia's economic reconstruction. This problem has its roots in the Byzantine-Orthodox tradition, which emphasizes the political-administrative *superstructure*, to the detriment of the physical economy. A "strong, authoritarian state structure" per se naturally will *not* even guarantee "social-economic stabilization," not to speak about reconstruction and development.

In leading *nomenklatura* layers, there is the assumption that their policy of recreating a neo-imperial Great Russian "federation" will reestablish the economic-infrastructure ties of the ex-Soviet Union that were severed in 1991. This is supposed to become a major, quasi-automatic factor of general economic regeneration. This assumption is, in my view, wishful thinking, for two reasons. First, it leaves out the enormous political-psychological friction — and possibly armed conflicts — that will go along with that neo-imperial policy, especially in Ukraine, but also elsewhere. That will obviously have a major negative impact on economic activity. Second, the generally decayed condition of basic infrastructure all over the former Soviet Union continues to be a fundamental impediment to healthy economic life, whatever the political conditions may be.

The intensity with which economic reintegration *under Russian domination* is already now being pursued by Moscow, is indicated by the July 1993 agreement among Russia, Ukraine, and Belarus to form an "Economic Union." Obviously, in general, economic cooperation is to be favored, but this Economic Union is fully dominated by Russia, which used a combination of massive political and economic pressures to force Ukraine and Belarus to join it under inequitable terms.

Herein lies the fundamental, *schizophrenic* contradiction in the likely policy package of the emerging regime: the Third Rome matrix, with its inherent trend for neo-imperial restoration, whatever form the new "Union" will take, on the one side, and on the other, the necessity for physical-economic reconstruction.

As I indicated before, the advanced technological standard and the quality of labor in the military-industrial complex gives it a central role for any reconstruction strategy of Russia's overall economy. The run-down, low-productivity civilian sector of the economy and the infrastructure will require MIC technologies as productivity motors. That kind of "conversion" would be a serious and workable undertaking. There are a number of privately and publicly stated economic policy proposals now in circulation in Russia which indicate that the necessity to adopt such a policy course is being increasingly understood. This approach is a core concept of the economic reform proposals which Lyndon LaRouche has been making since 1983. And here it becomes obvious that — in all soberness — an economic reconstruction package for Russia depends on the unique conceptual input of LaRouche's economic theory and economic policy. There simply cannot be any even half-successful economic recon-

Seeking a 'third way' to the 'Third Rome'

A call for Russia to take a "third way" against both Chicago School shock therapy, and a communist revival, installing instead a benign autocracy, was the subject of a full-page article in the Aug. 7 weekly supplement to the German daily *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*. The author, Yuri Arkhipov, an editor of the Russian magazine *Moscow*, offered what can be called a "mainstream" Third Rome approach to solving the Russian crisis.

Arkhipov began by saying that "evil has many faces," not only communism. Now Russia is suffering under an economic catastrophe that even in "the hard, meager times of communism, was unthinkable." He attacked the West's "Eurocentric" mentality, for seeking to impose a system on Russia alien to its history and culture: "The West supports any political force here which carries the label of 'democracy,' although in their political practice, they are anything but democratic. . . . They treat any opposition with unabashed intolerance, and operate according to the old Communist principle: 'Whoever is not with us, is against us.' "

Those in power, the editor added, "have suddenly discovered their love for democracy, meaning democratic power, and in fact in no way because it is democratic, but because it is power, namely their own power. . . . With a certain masochistic pleasure, they have destroyed their own state, permitted bloody local wars, streams of millions having become homeless, and the general impoverishment of large parts of the population. On top of that there are the territorial, cultural, and moral losses that Russia is currently suffering."

struction without four fundamental LaRouche economic policies:

- The creation of a national bank of the Hamiltonian type, to generate non-inflationary credit to finance capital investment and infrastructure projects, with a currency reform based on that commitment;
- The full utilization of the "third industrial revolution" technologies which the MIC has developed for military purposes in order to qualitatively advance Russia's overall economy and infrastructure;
- Comprehensive, "managed" trade relations with eastern and western Europe on a barter-clearing system basis;
- A de Gaulle-style national planning process using the

“The people call Gorbachov a ‘stupid man with good intentions’ ” and Yeltsin “ ‘an even stupider man with good intentions.’ ” With these words Arkhipov introduced the section of his article titled “Yeltsin and the Chicago Boys.” He referred to the “Chicago Boys of Yeltsin’s former Prime Minister Yegor Gaidar and his team” as “destroyers . . . who always referred to Russia as ‘this country’ ”: “They saw in [Russia]—once again [as with the Bolsheviks]—the experimental field for their theories or utopias.” They could act this way, ruining millions of lives, because “they don’t love Russia.”

‘From one extreme to another’

Arkhipov emphasized the traditional role in Russia of the Orthodox Church and the Army: “There exists in the world, besides the supermarket, the monastery and the barracks. The monastery stands for our thousand-year tradition and culture, which we just can’t simply walk away from, and the barracks stands for the strong power, without which rights cannot be implemented. Our leading reformers, however, following Russian habits, have plunged from one extreme to another, suddenly finding that human rights are more important than national or state interests. . . . Clearly in the Komsomol schools they never read Herodotus or Tacitus, otherwise they would have at least learned from Pericles or Trajan that the wisdom of the statesman consists in creating harmony and balance between the private and the general, the rights of the individual and the rights of the nation—not of any old country, but this concrete one with its traditional customs and practices.”

Citing the late physicist Andrei Sakharov and the author Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn, the two most influential anti-Soviet dissidents, Arkhipov wrote, “For now, Russia is being forced in polls and referenda to choose between evil and evil. This has no perspective. As long as Russia does not set foot on the third way, it will not be able to get

out of the swamp. What is this third way? It is the way of healthy human understanding. It unites democratic reforms and national interests, the rights of the individual and the basic foundations of the state. It is the path of moderation between compassion and sternness, between mercy and strength. It is the path of unity and concord, which is the legacy given us in Russian literature, from Pushkin to Solzhenitsyn. The necessity for this third way has long been recognized by the intelligentsia of our country, in some cases long before the collapse of the communist monstrosity. . . . Sakharov and Solzhenitsyn quarreled over this, but were less apart in their views . . . than in their terminology. Sakharov called the desired way convergence, Solzhenitsyn called it liberal patriotism. Both meant the same thing: a strong but benign, a self-assured but enlightened state—a Russia that never existed, but a Russia whose roots would reach back to the Russia that we lost in 1917.”

Arkhipov calls on the West not to make the fatal error of confusing the Russian centrists with the “nationalists and chauvinists of every color. Russia is paying today for having forgotten its national interests, just as Germany under the Nazis paid for inflating its own national interests.” A return of the communists would be a catastrophe, plunging Russia again into isolation from the world.

“Should the radical democrats of the Chicago Boys type triumph, then our country risks sliding down to the level of a Third World country and becoming a supplier of raw materials to the developed sector. Spiritually this would mean an impoverishment of Europe, [and] in the geopolitical sense, perhaps even a catastrophe. It would cause to disappear that ‘shield of protection between two races’ which the Russian poet Aleksandr Blok had written about—the strong, flexible mediator between Europe and Asia, which during the course of the centuries was able to dissolve in its realm the hordes of eastern invaders, and thus preserve Europe’s flowering,”—*Konstantin George*

LaRouche physical-economic method.

Any regime in Russia will have to turn to these policies if it wants to succeed economically. The emerging regime will break with IMF shock therapy policies; they know what they *don’t want*. But in order to fill the economic policy vacuum with a workable program, they will have to turn to the LaRouche concepts, whether they like it or not.

The Third Rome matrix contains a fundamental *paradox*. As we have seen repeatedly in Russia’s history, most recently under the communist regime, the Third Rome matrix is self-destructive, if not suicidal, when it comes to the physical economy. The economy is the “Achilles’ heel” of the Third Rome matrix. The paradox is so blatant that it cannot be

ignored. Russia can neither continue with IMF shock therapy policies, nor can it restore the communist economic system, which led to economic breakdown crisis conditions a few years ago. Russia *must* inevitably, as a matter of survival, adopt a *new* economic policy course. And I have the impression that within the *nomenklatura* layers out of which a new regime is emerging, there is at least a *partial understanding* of this reality. The reception of the Russian translation of LaRouche’s textbook, *So, You Wish to Learn All About Economics*, is encouraging, all the more so because there is a certain tradition of physical economics in Russia, Ukraine, and elsewhere in the ex-Soviet Union. Economics will decide Russia’s fate.