

U.S. policy on Russia under House scrutiny

by Suzanne Rose

At a House International Relations Committee hearing on U.S. foreign policy toward Russia on May 12, a group of Democrats attacked the Republican Congressional leadership for its Cold War policy toward Russia, and instead supported a Marshall Plan approach toward the ailing economy. During his opening remarks, the committee's ranking member, Sam Gejdenson (D-Conn.), said, "I think there's no question that we are trying to create in some quarters in this Congress the kind of isolation of Russia that was created after World War I. I don't think that is a good move. If we want to just create a new military adversary, then let's isolate the Russians, let's try to increase their own paranoia, and we'll be back where we started, having missed a great opportunity to reduce the danger in the world."

An instigator of the "new Cold War" is committee chairman Benjamin Gilman (R-N.Y.). Gejdenson commented on Gilman's opening statement: "Listening to your remarks, I'm not sure whether I'm listening to the old Cold War, or the new political war over foreign policy here in Washington." He was referring to the GOP leadership's decision to portray the Clinton administration as "selling out to the communists," in its campaign for the 2000 elections.

Gilman described Russian foreign policy as opposed to Western interests. He portrayed Russia as a rogue nation, supplying weapons to U.S. enemies, and responding to Western largesse (i.e., International Monetary Fund aid, which has in fact bailed out Western institutions, and IMF shock therapy, which has accelerated the destruction of Russia's economy) with anti-Americanism. Specifically, he charged that Russia is engaging in a "strategic triangle of some sort" with China and India, "with the apparent goal of undermining American leadership in unspecified ways."

Gilman's reference was to the diplomacy of the former Yevgeni Primakov government, which had been engaged since the fall of 1998 in forming a "strategic triangle" of economic and strategic relations among Russia, China, and India. This "Survivors' Club" evolved in part in reaction to the ongoing collapse of the world monetary system, to protect their national economies when it became clear that the Western powers would not act to put the bankrupt global financial system through fundamental reorganization. Instead, Western nations, under the thumb of the oligarchical British-American-Commonwealth clique, have hyperinflated financial markets and started wars around the globe, including in the Balkans, to ensure their continued control as economies col-

lapse into chaos. This "strategic triangle" diplomacy has been welcomed by statesman Lyndon LaRouche. He has authored a program for large-scale infrastructure projects, known as the Eurasian Land-Bridge, to rebuild national economies in the context of a New Bretton Woods bankruptcy reorganization of the monetary system, as the policy which best expresses the common national interests of the United States, Russia, India, China, and all of the world's economies.

During the hearing, Jim Leach (R-Iowa) acknowledged that as a result of the war in Kosovo, which has angered Russia and China, "We are in the process of looking at a hot war that we're not doing as well in as anyone in America would like, and precipitating two new Cold Wars." The two new Cold Wars (against Russia and China), he said, may be more significant than the hot war itself in Kosovo.

A new Marshall Plan

Several Democrats criticized the fact that the United States had failed to react to the collapse of the Soviet Union with a positive policy, as we had toward our allies and toward Germany and Japan at the end of World War II. However, they did not identify that the failed course taken was the result of the submission of President George Bush to the geopolitics of Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher and the British establishment, who intended to destroy Russia as an economic power through the shock therapy reforms.

Tom Lantos (D-Calif.) said, "After the First World War, we acted in a narrow, myopic, non-generous fashion, and we reaped Hitler and the Second World War. After the Second World War, with the Marshall Plan, we acted in a singularly generous, farsighted, intelligent fashion, and we reaped two generations of peace. Now, when the Third World War ended, which, of course, was the end of the Cold War, with the defeat of the Soviet Union and the triumph of the democracies, we had these two examples, and we did not choose the intelligent second example. The Russians had tremendous expectations of cooperation and assistance and help and participation. . . . But, with the exception of Nunn-Lugar funds [for dismantling the Russian nuclear arsenal], there is very little we did."

Others echoed this view, including William Delahunt (D-Mass.), who said, "In the aftermath of World War II, we did the Marshall Plan. That didn't occur with the demise of the Soviet Union, and possibly we missed an opportunity. I agree with Congressmen Berman and Gejdenson, it doesn't make sense to punish Russia."

At the conclusion of the hearing, Gilman asked George Bush's former National Security Adviser Brent Scowcroft about the best way to contain Russia and China, his assumption being that the development of peaceful and prosperous relations between the two is a threat to the United States. Scowcroft replied that U.S. interest lies in manipulating one against the other. "We need to keep in mind the Cold War," he said. "We need to have better relations with [Russia and China] than they do with each other. I doubt there can be a strategic alliance between the two."