

avel), nautical instruments, cartography and navigation/astronomy techniques—which has come down to us as the School of Sagres (c. 1416-1490) of Portugal's Prince Henry the Navigator.

Columbus arrived in the New World on the decks of the Florentine Renaissance. Caponnetto's failure to appreciate the Christian humanism of the Renaissance, as opposed to the secular humanism which he correctly opposes, deprives him of the most power-

ful epistemological weapon which Western Christianity has to confront the very Black Legends which he so trenchantly dissects.

Despite this weakness, Caponnetto himself points in the right direction—one based on the Council of Florence program—in a passage which can only be seconded: "There was an encounter between two worlds, an encounter which—besides all the traumatic aspects which are usually emphasized—one of the worlds, the Old, gloriously

embodied in 'Hispanidad,' had the enormous merit of bringing to the other ideas which were unknown to it concerning the dignity of the creature made in the image and likeness of the Creator. These ideas—patrimony of Christianity and spread by eminent scholars—... were the true program of life, the genuine anti-genocidal plan for which Spain fought during three centuries of civilization, evangelization, and fervent commitment."

—Timothy Rush

The Imperial Origins of Central Asia's Thirty Years War

On November 15 and 16, 1992, the *Washington Post* featured a two-part series titled "The Afghan Archive" by correspondent Michael Dobbs. Dobbs' articles, based on newly declassified Politburo documents, indicate that in 1979 there was significant opposition within the Politburo to what was to become Soviet military involvement in Afghanistan.

According to Politburo documents, the split was between Soviet political leaders—in particular, Leonid Brezhnev and Alexei Kosygin—on the one hand, and the KGB faction headed by the "forward-looking" (i.e., expansionist or empire-building) Yuri Andropov, on the other. Andropov even went so far as to argue that a prolonged war was to be expected and not feared.

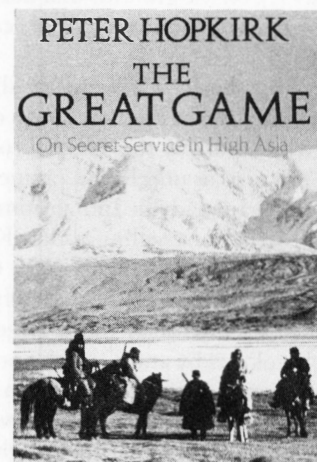
Andropov's "forward-looking" philosophy regarding Central Asia (the area which includes Pakistan, Afghanistan, Iran, and the former Soviet republics of Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Kirgizstan, as well as the Transcaucasus) was the mirror-image of the outlook of a faction of British political and military officers stationed in India in the nineteenth century, who believed that it was their duty to bring Central Asia into the British sphere of influence, before Imperial Russia brought it under theirs. A parallel faction existed as well in nineteenth-century Imperial Russia. There was constant friction between Tsar Alexander II's Russian Foreign Ministry headed by Prince Alexander

Gorchakov, who opposed such military expansionism, and the intrigues of the Venetian-inspired Prince Nikolai Ignatiev, who was attempting to advance Russian military interests in Central Asia.

The name given to the application of this "geopolitical," imperial outlook to Central Asia, was "the great game," a phrase first coined by Lt. Arthur Conolly of the 6th Bengal Native Light Cavalry, and later immortalized by Rudyard Kipling in his novel *Kim*.

Peter Hopkirk's *The Great Game* tells the story of that century, with a decidedly British bias. Britain's goal during this period was to maintain its commercial interest in Asia, which at the time was primarily opium (not mentioned by Hopkirk!), and to monopolize the trade from and to Asia. Britain's political and military agents viewed Central Asia as its buffer against Imperial Russia—which they believed would invade India if it could find an overland route suitable to that purpose. Its agents were constantly attempting, either through diplomatic or military means, to negotiate friendship treaties with the major khanates in the region. Through such treaties, Britain hoped to shut the door on any Russian operations in the region.

Hopkirk informs the reader in his Prologue that *The Great Game* is intended to be the story of "individuals," and that "this book does not pretend to be a history of Anglo-Russian relations" in the nineteenth century. The



**The Great Game:
The Struggle for Empire
in Central Asia**
by Peter Hopkirk
Kodansha Ltd. (Japan), 1992
576 pages, hardbound, \$30.00

author's chosen perspective has the effect of further muddling the reader's historical perspective, since the individuals involved, far from being simply British officers on hunting holiday or merchants looking for new markets as he portrays them, were in fact high-level intelligence personnel connected either to London or Calcutta, whose object was reconnaissance into the areas just beyond India's northernmost and northwestern borders. By focusing on individuals in this manner, Hopkirk avoids the essential analysis of how larger historical forces and the

global strategic situation made themselves felt within the sphere of the "great game."

Eurasian Development

In the penultimate chapter, we are treated to a very telling diatribe against Russia's Count Sergei Witte. Hopkirk accuses Witte, who wished to use the construction of the Trans-Siberian Railway as a civilizing force into the resource-rich, underdeveloped areas just north of Central Asia, of feeding "his sovereign's [Nicholas II] dreams with visions of a golden future for Russia." In just two pages, Hopkirk pours out his venomous hatred for Witte's grand design which, by economically linking the Asian continent to Europe, particularly Germany, would have successfully stymied the British geopolitical strategy of imperial control over the Asian rim, through the economic

development of the interior: "Russia would be a great economic power, as well as a great military one."

Eighty years later, in 1979, both Soviet leader Leonid Brezhnev and Prime Minister Aleksei Kosygin, strongly objected to the same sort of geopolitical thinking amongst their Soviet colleagues, in their opposition to Soviet military involvement in Afghanistan. "We have examined this question from all sides . . . and I will tell you frankly: We must not do this. It would only play into the hands of enemies—yours and ours," said Brezhnev; and Prime Minister Kosygin added, "If our troops went in, the situation in [Afghanistan] would not improve. On the contrary, it would get worse. Our troops would have to struggle not only with an external aggressor, but with a significant part of [the Afgani] people. And the people

would never forgive such a thing." It is unfortunate that the lesson of the "great game" had not been learned.

And today, with Witte's grand design almost forgotten, it is the continued refusal of oligarchical Britain to surrender its vision of an imperial, one-world empire based on the immiseration of others, which gives rise to the opposition to peaceful economic development of Central Asia. Hopkirk makes one realize that the flames of a Thirty Years War have been fanned in the region by a several-century process of exploitation by the "forward-looking" factions of both Britain and Imperial Russia. One can only admire the humanitarian intent behind Count Sergei Witte's grand design, and reject the imperialism which has been played out so tragically in the "great game" in Central Asia.

—Denise Henderson

President Clinton: Free Lyndon LaRouche!

Dear President Clinton:

In the course of your election campaign, and following your election as President of the United States, you pledged to bring about a change in American policy. We welcome this intent, and wish you courage and steadfastness for this difficult task.

We call upon you to take a first step in this direction: To end a crying injustice—see to it that Lyndon LaRouche is immediately set free and exonerated.

Lyndon LaRouche, who is innocent, has been incarcerated as a political prisoner in the federal prison in Rochester, Minnesota since January 1989. He committed no crime; his sentencing and imprisonment were the result of years-long slanders and persecutions by forces of the Reagan-Bush administration, in combination with the media and private organizations, as well as forces of the secret services of formerly communist states.

Over 1,000 prominent jurists from all over the world have protested publicly against this abuse of justice, in the course of which LaRouche and a number of his associates were supposed to be eliminated as an undesired opposition. Hundreds of parliamentarians and other prominent personalities from all over the world have joined this protest.

The LaRouche case was presented to the Human

Rights Commission of the United Nations several times; UN Special Rapporteur Angelo Vidal D'Almedia Ribeiro included the case in his report last year to the UN Commission on Human Rights.

Since then, explosive new material has come to light documenting the political motivation behind this persecution. One U.S. court has, in fact, ruled that the trial had come into being as a result of 'constructive fraud' on the part of the government.

We are outraged at the arrogance of the Bush government, which ignored all protests and appeals. Yet it was George Bush himself who in 1988, i.e., before LaRouche had been indicted in Alexandria, Va., declared in public that LaRouche belonged behind bars, thus, as Vice President, anticipating any legal procedure.

We, the undersigned, see ourselves as members of an international coalition to free Lyndon LaRouche. We appeal to you, President Clinton: Give a signal that you seriously mean to bring about change: Act! Take the necessary steps immediately to set LaRouche and his associates free.

I join the international coalition to free Lyndon LaRouche and endorse the above appeal. I agree to have my name published with this appeal in American or European newspapers.

Name _____

Address _____

1. _____

2. _____

Sign, circulate, and send to the Schiller Institute, P.O. Box 66082, Washington, D.C. 20035-6082.