The Trilateral Commission's grab for world power

by Mark Burdman and David Goldman with Leonardo Servadio in Madrid

Italian Finance Minister Nino Andreatta let the cat out of the bag, in a discussion before Italian reporters following the May 16-18 meeting of the Trilateral Commission in Madrid. Andreatta, en route to the Madrid meeting, announced that no more than 30 financial institutions would survive the century, and that it was the task of governments to accede to this inevitable evolution.

The David Rockefeller organization, long headed by Henry Kissinger, emerged in the 1970s as the Carter administration's think tank, and in the early 1980s as a cartel of creditors against the developing world. It has propounded a global central bank, global controls on the world econmy, and one-world government since its founding in 1973. It has made a statement of intent: to become the unified creditors' organization, dictating policy to all governments. When Andreatta spoke of a handful of institutions controlling world credit, unrestrained by national borders or local regulation, he had just emerged from a gathering of precisely those institutions which intend to be the survivors.

The future belongs to the multinational banks, David Rockefeller told the meeting. "The general interest of humanity will develop, in economic terms, when the forces of the free market go beyond national frontiers," he said. "The moment has come to end the siege upon the multinational firms, to continue to develop the world economy."

Andretta's remarks came at an economic strategy meeting held May 15-17 in Venice, under the sponsorship of the Banca Nazionale del Lavoro (BNL). The topic of the meeting was "strategies of the big international banks," and "management of banks in the future." Henry Kissinger was made an international adviser to BNL almost one year ago.

The financiers who gathered at Madrid are the subject of the just-released second edition of *Dope, Inc.*, published by the editors of *EIR*. The financiers' source of strength derives from over $500 billion per annum in international capital flows associated with narcotics traffic, not including related flows derived from tax evasion, arms traffic, and other illicit business. Aside from David Rockefeller of Chase Manhattan, there were two top officials from Shearson Lehman Brothers and its sister organization, Shearson Lehman American Express, including Shearson Lehman senior manager Philip Caldwell and Shearson Lehman American Express managing director Richard Holbrooke, a former Carter administration State Department operative, most recently active in the overthrow of Philippines President Ferdinand Marcos. Also in attendance were chief officials from Midlands Bank, Banque Brussels Lambert, Banco March of Spain, Milan's Banca Commerciale Italiana (BCI), and others.

Henry Kissinger joined the board of American Express in 1984, immediately after one of the world's shadiest financiers, Edmond Safra, took control of Amex's international banking operations. *Dope, Inc.* shows that the reorganized American Express, incorporating the old Lehman, Kuhn Loeb, and Loeb Roades investment bankers, became the new legitimate front for international dirty money moving into the United States.

Kissinger's most recent public sally was a widely-circulated proposal, praised by Secretary of State George Shultz, to withdraw American ground troops from Western Europe. That is not merely consistent with Kissinger's profile, but with the policy-objectives of the financier-faction which owns him. The banks which plan to ride the financial tidal wave, know that their strategy includes the industrial and military ruin of the West, and made clear their intention to accommodate the Russians' principal territorial demand: Western Europe.

Postlude to Tokyo

The final Trilateral Commission declaration, issued May 20 by the three regional presidents, Rockefeller (North America), Georges Berthoin (Europe), and Isamu Yamashita (Japan), praised the May 2 Tokyo summit for having "enhanced the needed Trilateral cohesion," particularly because the summit went beyond the limit of discussing only economic issues, but also discussed "fighting international lawlessness and worldwide perspectives on environmental protection." The Trilateral Commission had urged the summit-participating nations to adopt both of these latter issues, the Rockefeller-Berthoin-Yamashita declaration claims.

Unfortunately, the seven heads of state or government who met in Tokyo did heel to the Trilateral agenda—although not in the way the group's declaration claimed. The Tokyo summiteers agreed to give the International Monetary Fund a set of measures of economic performance, making the IMF the referee in all disputes over exchange rates, trade policy, as well as domestic economic policy of the major industrial nations. However, the criteria were left vague, in what amounts to a common declaration of intent among the leading nations to cheat with respect to these criteria.

The essense of the Trilateral Commission meeting was to install an international system of mutual cheating, in which that group, operating as the deliberative body from which IMF decisions are generated, would supervise the cheating.

An official of the Trilateral Commission said May 19:

> International economic cooperation must be strengthened, and this must not be ad hoc, but systematic, which means that institutions like the IMF, the General Agreement on Trade and Tariffs, and so on, must absolutely be strengthened. The IMF has been partially successful in what it has set out to do, but, in the end, there is the need for a political realization on the need for cooperation, and that will mean, some time, overcoming the impediments represented by national sovereignties.

For all the talk of international cooperation, "the representatives of the major industrial countries found plenty to quarrel about at this meeting," wrote the *New York Times*' Leonard Silk, a Rockefeller friend. The *Times* was the only other U.S. publication to attend the meeting. "Heading the list of disputes were the European Community's protectionist agricultural policy and American threats to retaliate against it; United States discontent with the huge Japanese trade surplus and Japanese discontent with the rapidly rising value of the yen; American insistence that other countries, especially West Germany, expand their economies faster, and foreign criticism of American slowness in closing its budget deficit."

What emerges is that the Trilateral Commission is playing a coordinating role in the "trade war" now emerging between the United States and Western Europe. On May 16, European Community commissioner for external relations Willy de Clercq demanded that the Europeans invoke trade restrictions against the United States, supposedly in retaliation for U.S. import limitations from Europe that followed upon the entrance of Spain and Portugal into the European Community. He accused the United States of "harassment," and of unilateral contravention of the General Agreement on Trade and Tariffs (GATT). Le Clercq's remarks fed directly into the protectionist momentum in the U.S. Congress, where the House May 22 passed a trade bill with a veto-proof margin, despite President Reagan's best efforts to stop it.

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After handing Congressional protectionists the ammunition they needed against the President, the same Willy de Clercq showed up in Madrid, to be one of the four featured panel speakers at a May 17 afternoon Trilateral panel on "The Future of the International Mercantile System"—sharing that podium with panel director Arthur Dunkel of Switzerland, the international director of GATT!

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The reality is that world trade collapsed after 1980 and never revived. Without measures to revive trade, particularly in high-technology capital goods, the world economy will continue its spiral into financial collapse. In the midst of this, the same supranational agencies which caused the problem, i.e., the International Monetary Fund and the General Agreement on Trade and Tariffs, increase their own powers to meddle in the affairs of the disputants.

In 1980, all the world's nations exported a grand total of \$1.9 trillion in physical goods. By 1983, the volume had fallen to \$1.67 trillion, or about 12% less than the 1980 total. At the height of the supposed "recovery," in 1985, world exports were only $1.72 trillion, still 10% lower than the 1980 level. During the 1975-80 period, world trade had *grown* by 5% a year.

The true position of world trade is even worse than the numbers show. To start with, American imports rose from a total of $256 billion in 1980, to $361 billion in 1985. These imports, bought at 40% to 70% below American producer prices, merely replaced production capacity we lost at home. In other words, the increase in U.S. imports reflects, not economic growth, but decay. Total world trade in 1985 *minus* the $104 billion increase in U.S. imports was only $1.663 trillion, lower than the supposed nadir of international trade in 1983, when exports fell to $1.667 trillion.

Discounting the bloating of America's import bill, the fall in international trade since 1980 amounts to 19%—not quite as bad as the worst of the 1930s, but grim by any historical standards.

Recent developments show that the American import surge has proved to be a very temporary phenomenon. The dollar has fallen by 30% against the West German mark in the past year, and even further against the Japanese yen, which means that the United States can no longer afford to soak up foreign production at a fraction of its true cost. World trade is ready to collapse from the present diminished levels in any event; the Trilateral Commission intends to extract the maximum political leverage from the disaster.

The economic issue

What the Trilaterals promise is the continuing de-industrialization of the West, in what amounts to a generalized asset-stripping. Both in the industrial world and the developing sector, the main policy demand was so-called privatization, that is, the generalized sell-off of government assets, as first initiated on a grand scale by Britain's Thatcher government.

The principal statement of economic policy at the meeting came from Europe's most hated proponent of deindustrialization, Viscount Etienne Davignon. "The Davignon report issued here is the most important policy statement of this Trilateral meeting. It has a lot in common, in the area of international economic policy, with the approach Count Davignon took to the European steel situation," an official spokesman of the Trilateral Commission told a reporter.

Davignon, of the Societé Générale of Brussels, Belgium, had authored the "Davignon Plan" for shutting down European steel production. Over the past months, he has become a member of the board of directors of Kissinger Associates.

The Soviet dimension

The creditors' empire propounded by the Rockefeller group implies the final deindustrialization of the West, and, by implication, the collapse of Western defenses. Accommodation with the Soviets, therefore, formed the second major agenda item at Madrid. While the first two days of the meeting were devoted to "international economic policy," the last day focused on "East-West relations," under the chairmanship of former Carter national security adviser Zbigniew Brzezinski. Brzezinski was the founding executive director of the Trilateral Commission in 1973, replaced by Kissinger when Brzezinski went to the White House in 1977.

Kissinger himself did not attend the meeting of the organization he directed for years, reportedly because he and Brzezinski cannot stand each other; but Kissinger's discussion in the public press of an American troop withdrawal from Western Europe, published while the meeting was in progress, summarized the content of the meeting's second phase. The creditors' empire will preside over a ruined industrial West, ceding to the Russians suzerainty over Western Europe, in the odd hope of unchallenged power within their own empire.

Appropriately, David Rockefeller arrived in Madrid fresh from a 10-day visit to the Soviet Union, for the annual Dartmouth conference, held this year in Baku. Rockefeller was flanked there by several veterans of Kissinger's National Security Council and State Department. Among the American participants at the Baku meetings were Robert Neumann, Middle East-Afghanistan hand at the Georgetown Center for Strategic and International Studies and former U.S. ambassador to Saudi Arabia and Morocco; Hal Saunders, former State Department Middle East director, now at the American Enterprise Institute in Washington; Seweryn Bialer, of the Brzezinski-related crew at Columbia University; and Harrison Salisbury, of the *New York Times'* international network. Their private discussions with the Soviets, centering on the sellout of Western Europe, were the implicit content of the Trilateral meeting; the Trilateralists merely ignored the bloody surrogate warfare the Soviet Union is conducting against the West through its Libyan puppets, and the present Soviet war mobilization.

"Prospects for improvement in the near-term" in East-West relations were emphasized in the final Rockefeller-Berthoin-Yamashita declaration issued May 20. These "prospects" exist, because of "mutual commitments and interests," although the "highly competitive" relation between East and West will continue. The declaration complains of a "lack of East-West cooperation on matters of interdependence," such as "nuclear safety."

The report of the East-West panel insisted that the West is in an "historically favorable position, and, with imagination and ability, can rebuild a better relation with the Soviet Union." The report's co-authors were William Hyland, former Kissinger aide at the National Security Council and now editor of the Council on Foreign Relations' *Foreign Affairs* journal; Karl Kaiser, of the CFR-counterpart German Institute for International Relations; and Japanese strategist Hiroshi Kimura. They evaluated the Geneva summit of President Reagan and Soviet leader Gorbachov as having brought "an end to the phase of tension in relations between East and West," and said that the West was now negotiating from a "position of strength."