Bertrand Russell was the 'godfather' of Hiroshima-bomber James B. Conant

by Carol White

James B. Conant, Harvard to Hiroshima and the Making of the Nuclear Age
by James G. Hershberg
Alfred A. Knopf, New York, 1993
948 pages, hardbound, $35.00

"How Bertrand Russell Became an Evil Man"
by Lyndon H. LaRouche, Jr.
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The recent "revelations" by self-avowed KGB agent Pavel Sudoplatov, in his book *Special Tasks: The Memoirs of an Unwanted Witness—a Soviet Spymaster,* have been the occasion of renewed interest in the truth of how the Soviets succeeded so quickly in getting the atomic bomb. Were scientists such as Robert Oppenheimer and Enrico Fermi slipping them secrets, as Sudoplatov claims? In the July 1 issue of this magazine, American statesman Lyndon LaRouche asked, "Of What Is Leo Szilard Guilty?" In his short piece, he alleged that the atomic bomb was developed not to counter a perceived German threat, but as a pretext for the imposition of a world federalist government under British control.

LaRouche followed that up in an article scheduled to appear in the Fall 1994 issue of *Fidelio* magazine, which has come to us in a prepublication draft. We also have on hand James G. Hershberg's biography of James Conant, the man with direct supervisory responsibility for U.S. government nuclear energy policy during World War II. Much in the Hershberg book confirms LaRouche's contention, although this was hardly the intention of its author, who appears to be quite sympathetic to Conant.

While Hershberg documents an ongoing relationship among Conant, Winston Churchill, and Churchill's deputy Frederick Lindemann (Lord Cherwell), it is not clear to what extent personal contact existed between Conant and Bertrand Russell. That they agreed in principle on questions such as the direction of the postwar peace cannot be denied, even though at times Conant was constrained to take into consideration the anti-British sentiment among many Americans, including members of the U.S. Senate and House of Representatives. Moreover, particularly on issues of bomb policy, where the retooled "pacifist" Russell considered favorably the possibility of a preemptive strike against the Soviet Union at the close of World War II, Conant and Russell had a profound underlying agreement on the shape which the peace should take. Thus, to identify Bertrand Russell as James Conant's godfather, is not too great a liberty on my part.

I wish here to discuss LaRouche's article, counterposed to Conant's book. But first it is worth noting that the Russian scientific community has vehemently repudiated Sudoplatov's implications that they were dependent upon spies for the success of the Russian scientific effort to produce a bomb.

On July 12, a group of nuclear physicists published a letter in *Izvestia,* the Russian government paper, in which they denounced Sudoplatov's version of the history of the building of the nuclear bomb in the U.S.S.R. Sudoplatov had worked in Soviet foreign intelligence and was a close associate of the chief of Stalin's secret services, Lavrentii Beria. In his book, Sudoplatov claims that leading American scientists shared strategic information with Soviet agents regarding the bomb, without which they could not have succeeded in building the bomb.

This the Russian physicists deny. According to their letter, they used information from spies in order to exactly replicate the American device because they were afraid that Stalin would exact brutal retribution should they develop their own innovative design without immediate success. Considering that there can be no doubt of the independence of the Soviet development of the hydrogen bomb, the claim by these scientists should be treated with respect.

The evil Bertrand Russell

We do know of one occasion when Conant and Russell definitely did meet, and that was when Russell lectured at

Harvard University in 1940. Viewed from the vantage point of today, it is hard to imagine the vehemence of the public outcry against Russell when he toured the United States in 1940. Nonetheless, it is a fact that he was barred from speaking at New York's City College because of his despicable public flaunting of immorality. Nonetheless, despite the general uproar, in December 1940, the president of Harvard University, James Conant, invited Russell to deliver the annual William James lectures at his university.

Conant, like Russell, was a self-avowed libertarian, in political if not sexual matters. In May 1943, at the height of the war effort, when he himself was fully involved in giving political direction to U.S. atomic energy policy, he found time to write an article for *Atlantic Monthly* magazine entitled: "Wanted: American Radicals." Not surprisingly, Conant was a strong supporter of Robert Oppenheimer, who also was a libertarian of the British, Benthamite stripe. The accusation by Sudoplatov that Oppenheimer passed on secrets to the Soviets during the war does not ring true, but it can be made to appear credible not only because of Oppenheimer's past communist associations, but because he too was a British radical of the same stripe as Bertrand Russell, or Russell's philosophical progenitor, the mummified Jeremy Bentham.

Russell, Oppenheimer, Conant—these are the men who participated in shaping a postwar era to be dominated by the specter of the unnecessary bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. It is interesting to contrast two different treatments of this subject, LaRouche's and Hershberg's.

The trip of the Enola Gay

LaRouche takes off from the fact that the bombings occurred despite the fact that the Emperor of Japan was already negotiating surrender terms with the Truman administration through Vatican channels. He begins his article with the stark statement: "See in your mind's eye a B-29 bomber aircraft, called the *Enola Gay,* flying to its hellish appointment, that horror stricken summer's day in 1945." The remainder of this piece explains how such an atrocity could have occurred.

Even before the United States was at war, in the summer of 1941, Conant was given responsibility by President Franklin Roosevelt for assessing the feasibility of building a weapon employing the newly discovered principles of nuclear fission. Then, as deputy to Vannevar Bush, he took over responsibility for directing the U.S. government's crash effort to build that bomb. This effort continued and accelerated, as Hershberg documents, even after it became clear that Germany 1) was not itself making a bomb, and 2) would be imminently defeated. Japan then became a target of opportunity on which to demonstrate the efficacy of the bomb. Japan was to be the instrument of a policy of terrorizing the Soviet Union and patriotic forces in the United States and France, into accepting the dominance of a world government.

In the summer of 1945, Conant was a member of the top-secret Interim Committee, which was appointed by President Truman to debate the use of the atomic bomb. Conant suggested that the bomb be dropped on a "vital war plant employing a large number of workers and closely surrounded by workers' homes." This was in fact the basis upon which Hiroshima was chosen as a target. The aim of the choice was to exterminate as many people as possible, using the factory as a cover. After the first euphoria over the ending of the war had subsided, the horrible thing that Conant and all those responsible had decided to do came under increasing attack.

On page 284, Hershberg cites private correspondence between Conant and one of his critics, Reinhold Niebuhr, in March 1946, in which Conant flaunts the fact that the bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki were indeed intended to inflict maximum damage upon the civilian population. He wrote then:

"If the American people are to be deeply penitent for the use of the atomic bomb, why should they not be equally penitent for the destruction of Tokyo in the thousand-plane raid using the M69 incendiary which occurred a few months earlier? (I may say that I was as deeply involved with one method of destruction as the other, so at least on these two points I can look at the matter impartially.) If we are to be penitent for this destruction of Japanese cities by incendiaries and high explosives, we should have to carry over this point of view to the whole method of warfare used against the Axis powers."

LaRouche's argument

Today, the world's population has more and more come to accept such atrocities as necessary evils. Fear of the bomb, rather than moral qualms, is the stock and trade of the world federalists today, just as fear of hordes of the starving descending upon the industrial nations is used to try to bludgeon people into accepting genocide in the name of necessary measures to limit population growth.

LaRouche seeks to answer the question of how it is that such a transformation has occurred over the past 50 years; how it is that the United States has been drawn into these policies. To do this, he traces the thread from the pre-war decision to develop nuclear weapons as a means to impose world government as part of the postwar settlement, rather than from a genuine fear that Germany would develop a usable atomic weapon. It is useful to consider here a substantial quotation from an article by Russell, which LaRouche cites in his article. Russell's piece appeared in the *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists* (Nos. 5 and 6, Sept. 1, 1946). It bore the title, "The Atomic Bomb and the Prevention of War":

"It is entirely clear that there is only one way in which great wars can be permanently prevented, and that is the establishment of an international government with a monopoly of serious armed force. When I speak of an international government, I mean one that really governs, not an amiable facade like the League of Nations, or a pretentious sham like the

United Nations under its present constitution. An international government, if it is to be able to preserve peace, must have the only atomic bombs, the only plant for producing them, the only air force, the only battleships, and generally whatever is necessary to make it irresistible. Its atomic staff, its air squadrons, the crews of its battleships, and its infantry regiments must each severally be composed of men of many different nations; there must be no possibility of the development of national feeling in any unit larger than a company. Every member of the international armed force should be carefully trained in loyalty to the international government.

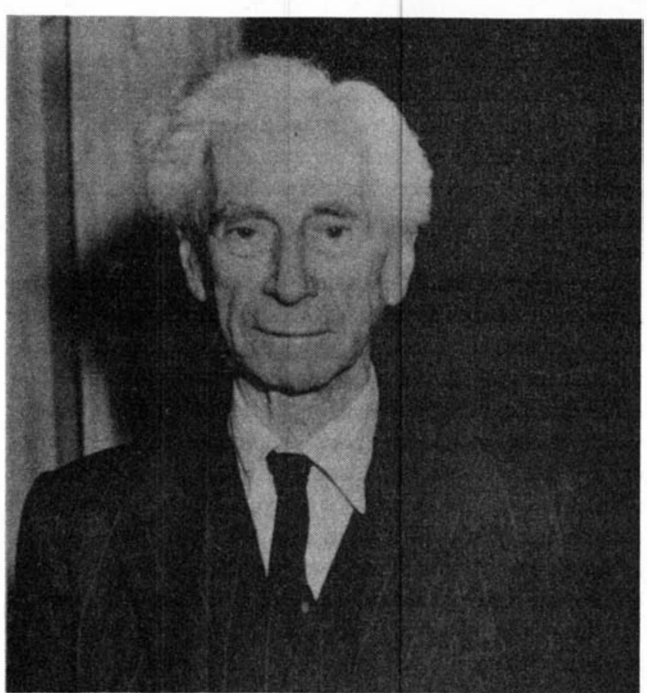
"The international authority must have a monopoly of uranium, and of whatever other raw material may hereafter be found suitable for the manufacture of atomic bombs. It must have a large army of inspectors who must have the right to enter any factory without notice; any attempt to interfere with them or to obstruct their work must be treated as a *casus belli*. They must be provided with aeroplanes enabling them to discover whether secret plants are being established in empty regions near either Pole or in the middle of large deserts.

"The monopoly of armed force is the most necessary attribute of the international government, but it will, of course, have to exercise various governmental functions. It will have to decide all disputes between different nations, and will have to possess the right to revise treaties. It will have to be bound by its constitution to intervene by force of arms against any nation that refuses to submit to the arbitration. Given its monopoly of armed force, such intervention will be seldom necessary and quickly successful. I will not stay to consider what further powers the international government might profitably possess, since those that I have mentioned would suffice to prevent serious wars.

'Peace through power alliances'

"There is one other method by which, in theory, the peace of the world could be secured, and that is the supremacy of one nation or one closely allied group of nations. By this method Rome secured the peace of the Mediterranean area for several centuries. America at this moment, if it were bellicose and imperialistic, could compel the rest of the world to disarm, and establish a worldwide monopoly of American armed forces. But the country has no wish for such enterprises, and in a few years the opportunity will be gone. In the near future, a world war, however terrible, would probably end in American victory without the destruction of civilization in the Western Hemisphere, and American victory would no doubt lead to a world government under the hegemony of the United States—a result which, for my part, I should welcome with enthusiasm."

Hershberg cites archival material showing drafts of memoranda by Conant indicating that he shared Russell's views. Hershberg also documents a point otherwise made by LaRouche, that the circumstances in Germany which did not permit them to launch their own Manhattan Project were well known to American and British policy-planners. It was not fear of a German bomb, but the desire to shape the peace, which impelled the shapers of the Manhattan Project forward. A memorandum to himself by Conant (still existing in government archives), which is cited by Hershberg, substantiates the parallelism between Conant and Russell on the subject of world government.



The evil Bertrand Russell, who urged the use of the atomic bomb to usher in a world federalist government.

In May 1944, Conant wrote: "Of course, for the very long run, I'm inclined to think that the only hope for humanity is an international commission on atomic energy with free access to all information and right of inspection." He elaborated on this, pointing to a stark choice faced by humanity: "Alternatives: race between nations and in the next war destruction of civilization, or a scheme to remove atomic energy from the field of conflict." This became the basis of a memorandum in which he outlined the structure of what in fact became the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), which would start as a clearinghouse but would rapidly gain policing powers so that, "after a decade," the scope of the agreement would be enlarged to "include all armament inspection and publications of figures."

"If eventually why not at start?" he wrote. "Perhaps so. Might try International Commission on Military Science with powers above on atomic powers but powers of inspection and publication on all armaments problems and military secrets."

The Venetian tendency

Hershberg's book is informative. For those who are interested in the history of the immediate postwar period, it is an extremely worthwhile contribution. However, the real question that must be answered is implicit in the title of LaRouche's article: "How Bertrand Russell Became an Evil Man." How, we ask, did the United States of Franklin Roosevelt, which believed itself committed to creating a world order free of such monstrosities as British colonialism, as well as Hitler's Nazi party, fall into the trap of postwar nuclear politics?

A partial answer is provided by Henry Kissinger's infamous May 10, 1982 speech to the Royal Institute of International Affairs, or Chatham House, in London. Here he admitted that he took directives from the British Foreign Office rather than his own President, and attacked President Roosevelt's wartime attacks upon British colonialism. For Kissinger, it was Churchill, not Roosevelt, who laid the guidelines for future U.S. policy, and for Churchill it was policy-planners such as Bertrand Russell who guided Britain's role in attempting to transform the moribund British Empire into a controlling role in what was to become the United Nations.

But to understand the extent of Kissinger's perfidy it is necessary to survey the past 600 years of human history, beginning with the Council of Florence, which ushered in the Golden Renaissance under the guidance of the groundbreaking philosophical and scientific contributions of Nicolaus of Cusa. It is this which Russell, Churchill, Conant, Kissinger, and the like intend to destroy. In this regard, we do well to recognize the British Empire as an offshoot of earlier Venetian ambitions to resurrect the evil Roman Empire.

Bertrand Russell was, in effect, born to be evil. To deny the birthright of his heritage, he would have had to break with a family tradition which allied him to an oligarchy which in turn traces its roots as far back as the aristocratic families which ran Rome. Just as his grandfather secretly supported the Confederacy during the American Civil War, so Russell hated the United States of Abraham Lincoln, which still survived in the memories of people alive in 1940.

Russell hated Franklin Roosevelt, because Roosevelt was first and foremost an *American* President. Russell favored a preemptive nuclear strike against the Soviet Union in order to maintain the balance of power in Europe, even after Germany was destroyed. His attack on the United States was only more subtle. He worked to subvert it from within, and turn it from a republican nation to a junior partner in a vicious Anglo-American alliance to rule the world. Roosevelt's expressed commitment to the Four Freedoms epitomized the hopes of people everywhere that out of World War II would come a peace which would have effectively extended the rights of man, as expressed in the U.S. Declaration of Independence and the Bill of Rights of the U.S. Constitution, to all mankind; which would guarantee a century to come of peace and development. Tragically this has yet to occur.