

The New Europe's Old Colours:

Why Old Europe should beware its new partners



Things haven't changed much: Loyal pioneers who once saluted the Communist Party have found a new big brother

"The creatures outside looked from pig to man, and from man to pig, and from pig to man again: but already it was impossible to say which was which."

George Orwell, *Animal Farm*

Orwell's satire on Stalin's unscrupulousness is conventionally taken to be his reckoning with the Soviet dictator's willingness to collude with Hitler on the eve of the Second World War. But the fact that Orwell wrote the fable in early 1944, the latter part of the war when "Uncle Joe" was the West's ally - and the attempts by British censors to suppress the book - suggest that its target was more Capitalist-Communist connivance in general than the Nazi-Soviet Pact in particular.

With the collapse of the Soviet bloc's Communist regimes between 1989 and 1991 has Orwell's satire lost its sting?

In many ways the recent convergence of Western former Cold Warriors with East European ex-Communists adds extra spice to Orwell's vision of the underlying empathy between political classes regardless of their ostensible ideological differences. The latter turn out to be temporary divisions, easily overcome when the political and economic elites on both sides of the divide decide to do business together - at the expense of the masses east and west alike.

Nothing has recently given renewed currency to Orwell's insights into the cynicism of bourgeois and Bolshevik politicians more than the unholy alliance between right-wing

Republicans in the U.S. Administration and born-again ex-Communists in what Donald Rumsfeld called the “New Europe” of the former Warsaw Pact against lifelong democrats in the “Old Europe,” whose real faults are overlooked in preference for condemnation of their unwillingness to toe the Pentagon line without deviation or query.

What is this “New Europe”? Who constitutes it? Where did they come from and where are they headed? What does the existence of a Washington-backed “New Europe” mean for the “Old Europe”, the existing EU, mainly made up of America’s long-term allies in NATO before 1989?

A wake-up call to re-think illusions about the EU’s future

Donald Rumsfeld’s comments dismissing France and Germany as “Old Europe” and insisting that the “centre of gravity is shifting to the east,” should be a wake-up call to both proponents of EU expansion and genuine Euro-sceptics. Until now both Euro-enthusiasts and Euro-sceptics have supported including the ex-Communist states of Eastern Europe as a way of bolstering their mutually contradictory visions of the union.

The standard Brussels line has been that an ever more united Europe would necessarily be a counter-weight to the United States, albeit within the framework of the North Atlantic alliance. But the US-funded web magazine, *Transitions on-line* emphasised in its “Our Take” editorial “Choosing Sides” on 10th February that “Central European leaders [are], among the most committed backers of Washington and a united Europe” This latter point should ring alarm bells with Britain’s Euro-sceptics who fall in behind every American initiative without question, but have failed to notice Washington’s support for a united Europe.

Closer scrutiny of US policy towards EU expansion and the parallel growth of NATO suggests that neither Euro-sceptics hoping to slow European integration, nor supporters of an EU superstate as a balance to the trans-Atlantic superpower are getting their way. Washington is winning the battle for influence in the New Europe, not least because it started laying the foundations of influence long ago.

The strategic importance of the whole of Europe, old and new, was underlined by Michael Gonzalez of the *Wall Street Journal (Europe)* who wrote in the Hoover Institution’s *Policy Review* in August/September, 2001, before 9-11 let alone the Rumsfeld rumpus: “...the United States from its very beginning as an independent nation has been based on universal values... The [British] europhobes who would leave the EU to join NAFTA have, then, tragically misunderstood America as an idea. But, much worse, they have not grasped the exigencies of its status as a world power... Europe _ *all of it* [*emphasis added*] is the center of gravity of America’s global power projection. America can prepare to deal with potential hot-spots throughout the world only as long as its international political base, the Atlantic Alliance holds.” If anything the post-9-11 strategy of the Pentagon has been to embed its power further in Europe if not necessarily in the same bases as before.

To many people the Franco-German split with America and her allies over how to deal with Iraq has come as a great shock. But the division is not just Old v New Europe, but rather between democratic Europeans and ex-Communists, east and west. With a few exceptions, George W. Bush’s most vociferous allies belonged to their Communist parties when he was partying at Yale.

From Hollywood Ten to the Vilnius Ten

The monolithic line of the Soviet superpower was promoted by vast campaigns conducted via petitions expressing international solidarity against U.S. imperialism and its lackeys. The “Letter” or the “Petition” expressing the will of the working class or peace-loving nations was a standard Stalinist ploy in public diplomacy. A signature on such a document implied loyalty to much more than the text itself: it was a declaration of fealty to the Kremlin. At the height of the Cold war US actors and intellectuals who had signed Soviet-inspired or CPUSA promoted appeals for peace or international solidarity fell foul of the McCarthyite blacklist.

Ex-Communist opponents of the Kremlin tried to persuade Cold War Washington to imitate Soviet methods of propaganda and mass mobilisation in the 1950s, but American-sponsored front organizations and declarations never got going - not least because the Americans lacked a Communist Party-style apparatus to promote participation in the campaign. More recently, however, with the defection of so many ex-Communist apparatchiks in both the East and West to the U.S. camp experienced hands in the propaganda and mass mobilisation game have joined the American side.

The most dramatic example of ex-Communist fealty to the otherwise isolated U.S. line on war with Iraq was the Letter of the so-called "Vilnius Ten" published on 5th February, 2003. The signatories from Albania, Bulgaria, Croatia, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Macedonia, Romania, Slovakia, and Slovenia accepted U.S. claims of an imminent threat from Iraq on the basis of "compelling evidence" presented by Secretary of State Colin Powell. With the exception of Latvia everyone of them has a head of state who was a member of the Communist Party. Bulgaria's deposed child king, Simeon Saxe Coburg Gotha may now be in office there as prime minister, but he has been criticised by the local New European elite (children of the old Communist elite) for being inadequately enthusiastic about Rumsfeld's strategy - some even point out that Simeon used to be a representative of the French arms manufacturer Thales during his long exile. (If only His Majesty had done the decent thing and peddled Lockheed Martin Marietta's merchandise of death, then his NATO credentials would be beyond suspicion.) In any case, the ex-Communist Bulgarian President Georgi Parvanov has fallen into line as loyally as his old Party bosses did in the past.

For all their rhetoric about backing America because of their direct "experience of tyranny" (something which almost every signatory had served not opposed), a sense of déjà vu hung over the letter of the Vilnius Ten. With its combination of pathetic adherence to high ideals and hardly veiled threats of force, it recalled the Letters issued by Warsaw Pact heads of state in the run up to "internationalist" intervention against Czechoslovakia in 1968 or the threats to do the same to Poland in 1981 if "anti-socialist elements" were not restrained. Today it is the global order and market democracy which must be imposed by bayonets rather than the protection of the "integrity of the peace-loving Socialist Commonwealth" but the mentality behind signing up to a vassals' declaration of fealty is more Brezhnev than Bush - or at least so one might have hoped.

Like Soviet-era statements by the Warsaw pact puppets, the New Europeans were not left to draft their Letter unaided. Just as representatives of the International Department of the Soviet Communist Party supervised even the most abject Party barons of Eastern Europe, so America provides consultants to the New Europe to ensure every comma and stop is coordinated with the needs of the New World Order.

The master of ceremonies of the Vilnius Ten was Bruce Jackson, the Chairman of the neo-conservative globalist Project for a New American Century. He took that post after serving for years as vice-president of weapons manufacturer Lockheed-Martin, which he joined after years of service at the U.S. Defense department. Jackson also headed the Republican Party Platform subcommittee for National Security and Foreign Policy during the 2000 US presidential election campaign, drafting an explicit call for the removal of Saddam Hussein well before the neo-cons latched on to the argument that 9-11 had "changed everything." In fact, he is Chairman of the Committee for the Liberation of Iraq.

Mr. Jackson's ambivalent status as advocate of NATO entry and businessman was revealed in *The Baltic Times* on 15th November, 2001 when the newspaper interviewed him. It reported that as President of the U.S. Committee on NATO he was "lobbying hard for the expansion of NATO" but at the same time he was "vice-president for strategy and planning at... Lockheed Martin"! Asked about Estonia and Latvia's decision to buy Lockheed radars, Jackson replied: "I don't do sales... I am just the guy who files all the paperwork... You see, working for a corporation and working for a volunteer organization are two things we separate more clearly in the United States." It would require schizophrenia of superpower proportions to think that a human being can achieve that kind of separation!

Just as Mr Jackson insisted that he did not mix profit and politics, his local acolytes rushed to praise his contribution to their Letter and to claim the credit for drafting it for themselves! On 20th February 2003, the *International Herald Tribune* published extensive non-sequiturs from Baltic and other East European diplomats under the headline: **“U.S. lobbyist helped draft Eastern Europe’s Iraq statement.”** Thomas Fuller reported, “The idea for a statement first came up at a dinner at the Slovak Embassy in Washington attended by Jackson and ambassadors from most of the 10 countries, diplomats say. In a recent interview, Jackson said he was present at the dinner, but he played down his role in helping initiate the text.” According to Jackson, “The American influence in all this is vastly exaggerated... This was a product of the Slovaks and really the Latvians. They had the pen on this, and they coordinated the process.” But according to Fuller, “East European officials involved in the process give Jackson more credit.”

Needless to say, the passage most cited by US officials and CNN was not drafted by a Baltic hand. According to Fuller: “Rihards Mucins, counsellor at the Latvian Embassy in Washington, said Jackson suggested the following passage, one of the most compelling sections in the statement: ‘Our countries understand the dangers posed by tyranny and the special responsibility of democracies to defend our shared values.’...” Apparently, the New Europeans needed help coming up with that platitude.

The degree to which Jackson acts as a pro-consul of US power in the old Warsaw Pact was revealed by *Radio Free Europe’s* report on 10th February, 2003, that Jackson had demanded the dismissal of the Bulgarian prosecutor-general, Nikola Filchev, who had called the Letter-drafting consultant-patriot a “swindler”. Jackson said that Bulgaria’s chances of getting Senate confirmation for its NATO entrance would be enhanced by such personnel changes!

Fuller reveals that, despite its name, the Vilnius Ten are more likely to coordinate inside the Beltway than in the Baltics: “Today, when the Vilnius-10 coordinates its policies, officials of the group’s member states usually meet in Washington!” No wonder Jackson could assure journalists, “They clearly wanted to do stuff to impress upon the U.S. Senate the freedom-fighting credentials of these new democracies.” Their freedom comes from Washington not their own efforts.

In fact, the heroes of the New Europe openly explain that defence of their own territory rests with outsiders. They prefer to bet on American intervention than Old European aid. Imants Liegis, Latvia’s ambassador to NATO in Brussels, said he felt more confident of the United States securing his country’s safety than France.

“There’s this feeling that if ever there were any problems in our neck of the woods, perhaps it wouldn’t be the French who would be first there on the front lines.” Liegis told Fuller. “It would be more likely to be the Americans.” Well, maybe. Certainly America is much stronger but the recent record of US intervention to protect the weak is hardly less chequered than the French.

Governments and lobbyists in the New Europe may be in harmony about the need to toe the US line, but as the pro-US *Transitions on-Line* admitted on 10th February “public opinion in Central Europe is running overwhelmingly against the use of armed force in Iraq. Almost without exception, the opposition numbers across the continent are upwards of 70 percent against; this figure shoots up even higher if the question is posed with the United States proceeding militarily without United Nations Security Council sanction.”

Brian Mitchell of *Investor’s Business Daily* collated some polling data on 25th February, 2003 which showed how out of step with their own public opinion the New European ex-Communist leaders were. A “poll by Gallup International finds that [ordinary] ‘New Europeans’ don’t see the issue much differently than the French and the Germans. War with Iraq is most popular in Romania, where 45% are for it. It’s least popular in Bosnia, where 84% are opposed... The situation is much the same in Poland and Hungary. Large majorities oppose war - 63% in Poland, 82% in Hungary - but their ex-Communist leaders are backing the U.S.”

The former Slovene foreign minister, Zoran Thaler, an enthusiast for NATO and the EU, warned on 22nd February that, In the run-up to Slovenia’s accession votes, “Any exaggerated

pro-Bushism could be a dangerous nail in the coffin of the NATO referendum.” While the Latvian President, Vaira Vike Freiberga (the only non-ex-Communist in the Ten – some of her relatives were Nazi collaborators) told CNN on 17th February, 2003, that her country was “particularly aware of the price of not containing tyranny since we paid for it with half a century of totalitarian rule” When the interviewer put a recent poll saying that three-quarters of her population oppose official backing for an invasion of Iraq, Vike Freiberga replied, “I am surprised that it is only three quarters. I think that with the past we have, and many of us like myself remember war...Of course we are against war.” So even the supporters of war admit that their people are not with them.

Undiplomatically, but not incomprehensibly, President Chirac responded tartly to the New Europeans taking sides in clubs (NATO and the EU) which they have yet to join. Ratification of their admission should be delayed and Chirac was not wrong to say to the Vilnius Ten, “If they wanted to find a way to reduce their chances to enter Europe, they could not have found a better way” because Europe really needs to pause before taking the momentous step of admitting into its ruling counsels and sovereign legal bodies the New Europeans. The United States may be happy for a Trojan Horse of cynical apparatchiks to enter the EU as well as NATO, but West Europeans have much more to lose from sharing power with Rumsfeld’s Fifth Column. Take a look at who they are and what they say.

On 19th February, 2003, *Radio Free Europe* quoted the ex-Second Secretary of Ceausescu’s Communist Party, now Romania’s numero uno, President Ion Iliescu as rejecting Chirac’s criticism, saying that the age of “you are either for us or against us” is past - but has anyone told President Bush that! What Iliescu meant is that only superpowers can demand subservience and France is not one of them.

For instance, Poland’s President, Aleksander Kwasniewski, a minister under General Jaruzelski in the 1980s (when his current premier was in the Politburo) now he declares, “If it is President Bush’s vision it is mine.” Donald Rumsfeld is happy to embrace Polish prime minister, Leszek Miller, a member of the Politburo until the bitter end, but then Rumsfeld was happy to shake hands with Saddam when it suited him. Slovakia’s long-serving Foreign Minister, Eduard Kukan, who is always in the front row backing the US use of force, received his diplomatic training in Communist Czechoslovakia when he served as ambassador to Mengistu’s Ethiopia. Other prominent ex-Communist apparatchiks across the region repeat oaths of fealty to America as once they parroted the Brezhnev line.

Although the New European media hurried to pour scorn on France and accuse President Chirac of acting like their government’s former patron, Leonid Brezhnev, the reality is that France clearly lacks the network of willing agents which the United States has built up in the former Communist bloc since 1989 (at the latest) to do its bidding. In fact given the CIA’s role in funding the so-called “independent” media in the last days of the Warsaw Pact, it is hardly surprising that across the region journalists whose outlets have received generous handouts scurried to praise the paymaster behind their paper or station and to denounce French “bullying.” For instance, Western intelligence provided the equipment and money which made the Polish *Gazeta Wyborcza*’s Adam Michnik into a dollar multi-millionaire after 1989 and a voice for Big Brother. (He is also one of the loudest ex-dissident voices calling for reconciliation with Jaruzelski while scorning Poland’s equivalent of the Christian Right, but that doesn’t worry George Bush.)

Media control is vital in any political order. As capitalism demands as much sacrifice and social upheaval as Communism once called for, it is little wonder that Orwellian “free media” programmes sponsored by the USA have almost invariably concentrated media control in the hands of an unholy alliance of ex-dissidents and ex-Communists, such as in Poland.

The costs of joining NATO are not inconsiderable and the United States has repeatedly twisted the arms of the New Europeans to ensure that they meet their NATO defence upgrades by buying only US weapons, radars, etc. The Czech Republic, for instance, had originally preferred the Anglo-Swedish Grippen fighter plane, but after intervention in the 2002 parliamentary elections by the usual surrogates (the US-funded and organised NGOs,

security institutes, and minority but affluent parties) switched its purchasing policies to U.S. companies.

Poland, for instance, has savagely cut health services but is to spend more than US\$3.5 billion on F-16s! Cheaper European models were rejected.

Bulgaria was so loyal to the old Kremlin that it was routinely derided as the 16th republic of the Soviet Union. Today it is desperate to achieve that status of 51st state in the Union. Even its sale of the state tobacco monopoly to a German predator had to be revoked after the US embassy reminded Sofia that Bulgaria was not yet in NATO. Needless to say, the re-run of the auction produced an American buyer.

Of course, more than a decade after the fall of one-party rule even in the New Europe another generation is coming up. Unfortunately, youth does not guarantee a skeleton-free cupboard. Almost invariably, the next generation of ascending politicians and bureaucrats favoured in the New Europe by Bush and Blair would have been on the upward slopes any way because they are the children of the old Communist nomenklatura. Born into privilege they went to the special schools which taught fluent English well before 1989, and then onto the elite institutes which already housed programmes in capitalist economics and methods. They were well-prepared for the end of Communism and able to ditch the Komsomol for a preppy style without batting an eyelid. Naïve Westerners inculcated with a Rousseauist belief in the innocence of youth routinely swooned when some Polish scion of a Communist dynasty wafted into their institutes and offices mouthing in impeccable English Thatcherite nostrums - only to drop the old bird once she was out of power and to reveal themselves born-again Euro-integrationists - but of course always in tune with Washington's line.

US tax-dollars have played a major role in churning out this next generation of the New World Order. The Soros foundations too have closely cooperated with Western governments in selecting the crème de la crème for special training. I remember in 1996 the British Foreign Office and the Soros Foundation jointly funding scholarships at Cambridge for Albanian graduate students. The regime there had only collapsed in 1991 and its restoration was well under way (achieved in 1997), but what was striking was how far the pre-selected candidates from Albania had only one thing in common: 100% success in their Marxism-Leninism courses at school and university before 1991! The locals staffing the US and Western European polit-NGOs in East-Central Europe almost invariably come from old Party backgrounds. They have gone from being Stalin's grandchildren to George W. Bush's favourite kids but has the mentality of inherited privilege and power changed?

Just as the Party line changed several times in the past (1921, 1928, 1939, 1956...) and each time the nomenklatura expected the proles to follow their about-face without question, so the transformation of the Communist elite after 1989 into the natural representatives of the West has followed the same assumption of infallibility. Whatever the elite believes must not be questioned until it changes its mind, then everyone must fall behind the new direction.

East is East, and West is East

If ex-Communists and their kids are the avant-garde of the New World Order in the east, what about Western Europe?

Although Tony Blair was never a member of the British Communist Party (CPGB) or any of its Trotskyite rivals, it is striking how all of his most belligerent ministers were one-time Party-members (and that lack of enthusiasm for war is expressed - if only by silence - by non-ex-Communists). Blair's appointee as chairman of the Labour Party, Dr. John Reid was a Communist and is now the public face of New Labour's New European-style aggressiveness. (In the early 1990s, Dr. Reid was one of the most vocal advocates of the Bosnian Serb cause and a drinking partner of the indicted war criminal, Dr. Radovan Karadzic, before a volte-face - typical of his career - when he became one of the most vocal New Labour advocates of bombing Yugoslavia in 1999.) Other belligerent Blair cronies with a hardline Marxist past include his propaganda guru, Peter Mandelson, along with Dr. Charles Clarke, Secretary for Education and Blair's recent appointee as Chair of the Commission for Racial Equality, Trevor Phillips, who visited Cuba to show solidarity with Castro before entering the Labour Party.

In the media a similar sociological phenomenon is observable. The *Independent's* columnist, Johann Hari, himself a supporter of war, asked what did so many of the most aggressive voices in Britain backing a war against Iraq have in common? "There is an intriguing commonality: almost all of them are former Communists." The former Communist activist and son of a CPGB stalwart, David Aaronovich, has been a loud voice backing US policy in television debates and in his *Guardian* column. John Lloyd, well-known to readers of the *Financial Times* and the *New Statesman*, explicitly linked his pro-war stance to Marx's own support for the British Empire against backward nations: "It's that side of Marx that argues that imperialism was good for India." This former member of the CPGB's Central Committee remains loyal to "the side of Marx that disliked soft liberals and said that if you're going to make the world better, you have to go through a number of necessary evils." [See Johann Hari, "Whose side are you on?" in *The Independent Review* (25th February, 2003), 8-9.] As Iraqis are soon to discover the Leninist dictum that "you cannot make an omelette without breaking eggs" is still current even if any humane Socialist residue has long since dried up in the New Labour war-room.

While old Lefties cling to utopian visions of social equality and transfers from rich to poor, the Leninist elite from Vladivostok to Vauxhall Bridge has transferred its cynical and manipulative attitude towards ordinary people from the left end of the political spectrum to the right side without losing a moment's sleep over the shift. In fact this acceptance by the Cold Warrior Right of its erstwhile Leninist rivals into the counsels of the New World Order and as satraps in the media and politics on the ground is one of the few genuinely global phenomena of our time.

The alliance between what Orwell called the "Inner Party" and the American Right is repeated around the world from New Europe via New Labour down into the southern hemisphere. For instance, America has found surviving post-Communist regimes like the Soviet and Cuban installed governments in Angola and Mozambique suitably subordinate allies. Unlike genuine freedom movements in Africa (which increasingly attract U.S. opprobrium for not marching in lockstep with the Pentagon), Angola's MPLA and Mozambique's Frelimo regimes learned subservience to Big Brother under Brezhnev and have transferred their fealty to Bush without batting an eyelid.

Democracy good, deference better!

The only prominent post-Communist politician to buck the trend to blind loyalty to Big Brother was the Czech Republic's pioneer of market reform, Vaclav Klaus, who refused to vote for a resolution backing war with Iraq. But then Klaus was never a member of the Party, and so doesn't need to prove his pro-Western credentials. Yet to the evident shock of the US embassy he was elected President of the Czech Republic in succession to Vaclav Havel, whose mixture of vague socialism with hardline support for war against Serbia, Iraq, et al. had made him the darling of the New World Order.

Seen it all somewhere before?

After 1945, America created a Euro-Atlantic ruling class without scrutinising too closely the past records of Western Europe's younger generation of ex-fascists. Many critics of post-war U.S. policy emphasize the willingness of the Americans to recruit ex-Nazis and Fascists as well as their erstwhile wartime collaborators as tension with the Soviet Union mounted. Certainly the Western Allies were cynical about who could be treated as a "good democrat" in the early Cold War years. But even if Truman and Attlee were none too choosy about which of Hitler and Mussolini's henchmen made the cut into their service, important differences remain with what has been happening since 1989.

For the last decade the US has pursued the same policy and ideological re-tooling across Eastern Europe. Like the youthful post-war politicians for whom 1945 was treated as Year Zero if they toed the trans-Atlantic line, so now the official biographies of Eastern Europe's leaders begin in 1989. Spain went through a similar process after 1975. Many US media

outlets say that America's favourite European leader is not Tony Blair, but Spain's Jose Maria Aznar. Aznar may come from the opposite end of the political spectrum to Eastern Europe's born again post-Communists, but the mental leap from young Falangist under Franco to free marketeer today is much of muchness with the transformation from eager *Komsomolchik* to market democrat.

But there were significant differences between 1945 and 1989. Firstly, the United States and its allies were in genuine competition with a military superpower after 1945. The Soviet Union was a rival to be feared - after all it was Stalin's troops who had captured Berlin and, as Churchill put it, it was the Red Army which "tore the guts out" of the *Wehrmacht*. Since the end of the Cold War the United States has faced no remotely comparable rival. The recruitment of ex-Communist apparatchiks into the ranks of its most favoured allies is a gratuitous decision. Whereas Stalin had a Manfred von Ardenne working on high-tech weapons in the Urals at the same time as Werner von Braun was carrying on for the Pentagon where he had left off for Hitler in Peenemunde, there is no state in the world today competing with American military technology.

America sponsored real economic recovery through the Marshall Plan rather than the cynical asset stripping which has gone on in the East since 1989. A genuine free market supervised by democratically elected politicians in West Germany where the top political leaders had opposed Hitler, for instance, produced very different results from the nomenklatura privatization sweetheart deals favoured since 1989.

Today, the recruitment of yesterday's servants of tyranny as favoured sons cannot be justified by necessity (if it ever could). Sadly, their service to Washington has been promoted because it is useful to U.S. goals to have natural vassals not nature's democrats running Eastern Europe. Such people will soon provide a Trojan column in the EU where they will link up with the ex-Communists around Tony Blair, for instance. The soft left with their egalitarian and humanitarian illusions so despised by Marx, Lenin and John Lloyd will continue to exist (along with genuine conservatives and liberals) but the commanding heights of the continent will be held by Market Leninists.

Spies who came in from the cold

Some people will ask how could our security services allow this?

The end of the Cold War has seen the convergence of east and west in intelligence and security matters too. George W. Bush famously looked into Vladimir Putin's eyes at their first summit in Slovenia in June, 2001, and saw a soul-mate. Putin has repeatedly emphasized that his KGB past makes him a natural Bush ally: On 26th December, 2001 *The Times* reported that during Vladimir Putin's live webcast he replied to a question about how it felt as a former KGB spy to be sleeping in the Bush ranch at Crawford, Texas, "The US President is son of a former CIA director, so one can say that we were in a family circle." For the moment, Putin may try to play master of a real power, but enough of his type and underlings have swapped allegiances since the late 1980s to make any prolonged defiance of the CIA improbable, or at least risky.

Throughout the 1990s, the US government, media and NGO apparatus was deployed in the EU candidate countries to prevent Lustration - the cleaning out of secret policemen and communist-era informers from the region. Reverting to the anti-McCarthy rhetoric of their own country, American apologists for former KGB officers and their marks denounced "witch hunts" (while gleefully reporting any skeletons discovered in the cupboards of politicians in the region who lacked the imprimatur of the New World Order).

The role of the security services in the candidate countries is rarely discussed as the EU's Commissioner for enlargement, Gunther Verheugen routinely hands out marks for democratization and human rights as criteria for entry. Contrary to many Western assumptions, the old Communist-era secret services were by no means completely dismantled after 1989. Recurrent scandals about secret police bugging and active measures to discredit opposition politicians or even just to extract economic advantage have occurred in

countries as different as the Czech Republic, Hungary, and Lithuania. Five years ago, when Poland boasted that its first wave of NATO officials would be entirely made up of former Warsaw Pact intelligence operatives whose knowledge of the Western Alliance's bureaucracy, methods and English made them ideal partners for their erstwhile Cold War rivals, no-one in Washington blinked an eyelid. Oceania, you see, had always been allied to Eurasia.

For Washington this gaggle of ex-Communist apparatchiks, secret policemen, informers and *Komsomolchiki* may just be useful pawns on the geo-strategic chessboard. Buying their cooperation in the New World Order means no more inside the Beltway than paying off warlords in Afghanistan or Saddam's generals and torturers in Iraq to become the "new democrats" of tomorrow, but for those of us who will have to live in a Europe partly governed by Washington's new friends the prospect is not so rosy. President Bush's gun-toting, Bible-bashing constituency will not be subject to a supreme court with judges nominated by ex-Politburo members and KGB agents. We in Western Europe, however, face that prospect imminently. The U.S. Federal Reserve is not going to have members named by a Warsaw Pact secret agent who spied on the IMF and the World Bank before 1989. The European Central Bank, however, will not be able to ignore Mr Medgessey's nominations quite so easily.

Sadly, using foreign puppets suits democratically-elected political leaders as much as despots. Domestic oversight simply does not extend abroad.

Just as imperial Britain had puppet states despite its own domestic constitutional government so the United States has today. Foreign policy is not democratic; the *arcana imperii* are in the hands of politicians and professionals. It is just that in societies which are run in a democratic way the domestic audience is sold the pretence that foreign policy is also subject to popular approval.

Whereas the United States has cajoled the New Europeans into granting U.S. citizens immunity from the International Criminal Court, the Vilnius Ten have not granted any special privileges to the Old Europeans. So America has persuaded or cajoled a phalanx of candidate countries from Estonia to Romania and Bulgaria into granting U.S. citizens immunity from prosecution under the ICC even though they will impose its jurisdiction on their own people, EU citizens and indeed the rest of the world.

Grim realities of the New Europe

While the Vilnius Ten were boasting of their willingness to bear any burden in alliance with Washington, conditions in their post-Communist states back home have been steadily worsening. While New World Order media publish trade statistics for the New Europe as imaginary as Stalin's production statistics grim reality as well as the grim reaper are winnowing out the ailing peoples of the East.

While defence spending, especially on US-manufactured equipment is shooting up, the demographic situation in New Europe is turning dangerous. The threat to the New Europeans does not come from terrorism but premature death from untreated disease and pollution, and from switching public spending from welfare to warfare at the behest of American weapons manufacturers and NATO advocates

The poverty resulting from the implosion in the majority of people's standard of living across the New Europe is causing a mounting demographic crisis. "Old Europe's" population may be stagnating, but far from flourishing "New Europe" is losing people at a dramatic pace. A combination of increasing death rates among the elderly and poor plus an outflow of migrants from among the best qualified and young is plunging "New Europe" into a demographic crisis that can only spur deeper economic woes.

By 2000, censuses in Latvia and Estonia showed that since independence Latvia's population decreased by 11 percent and Estonia's by 12 percent. The UN reported at the end of February, 2003, that its experts projected a fall in the population of Bulgaria, Estonia and Latvia, for instance, of at best 30% but at worst 50% in the coming 50 years - and that is

without war. On 7th November, 2002 *Radio Free Europe* also reported the population implosion in the Baltics States: "Provisional results from the 2001 census shows the number of people living in Lithuania has fallen by 5 percent in the years since 1989. Censuses in Latvia and Estonia conducted a year earlier show that during the 1990s Latvia's population decreased by 11 percent and Estonia's by 12 percent."

In Estonia, for instance, child allowance is the princely sum of \$11 per month in a country with a cost of living index closer to the European norm than the poverty-level wages paid to its employed people might suggest. In short, instead of being the laboratory of true Milton Friedman Chicago School economics lauded in *The Daily Telegraph* on 1st February, 2003, where low wages and costs should be mirrored in low prices, Estonia is in fact a highly manipulated and controlled economy which makes it expensive and poor simultaneously. This has been the recipe for social decay in many Third World states. An Argentinian meltdown is threatening much of the New Europe as synthetically high interest rates sustain inflated exchange rates. Introduced to prepare for EU entry they serve to crush domestic economic activity.

Both Romania and Bulgaria, have seen their populations fall by well over a million since 1989 which means that Bulgaria's population has fallen by almost 15%. Many Romanians and Bulgarians have migrated from poverty and prospects blocked by corruption and the misnamed reforms to do menial work in "Old Europe." There they join - and compete with - Poles, for instance, whose lack of opportunity in the heartland of "New Europe" has led university-trained technicians to seek work picking mushrooms in dark sheds next to the RAF airbase at Brize Norton.

Even relatively successful states like the Czech Republic or Hungary register net outflows of their workforce as well as declining birth rates. When the then Hungarian Prime Minister, Viktor Orbán, proposed policies to reverse the negative trend of the Hungarian population, US and West European advocates of the New World Order decried his allegedly neo-fascist natalism and urged Hungary to do what America does - import labour from an even poorer country. What was actually happening at the time was that jobs were actually migrating from Hungary to even worse paid locations further east as Western investors jibbed at paying Hungarian workers' "bloated" mean monthly salaries of \$500!

Disillusionment with the political class is common across the New Europe. Voter turnout is falling, frequently to levels below those required to validate elections. On 13th November, 2002 ToL's Tatiana Majcherkiewicz of Krakow's University of Mining and Metallurgy berated Poland's voters for turning out in too few numbers and voting the wrong way in local elections: "Many Poles have clearly not managed to overcome the communist legacy--when low turnout was a symbol of protest--and still see public life as an abstract institution ruled by outsiders." In other words the vast so-called apathetic majority of Poles see the new elite as the same as the old Communist one and boycott the polls as they did before 1989 when the Communist regime held bogus demonstration elections _ even with more than one candidate in the 1980s.

A central reason for the disillusionment with the New Europe's political establishment is its rampant corruption. *Radio Free Europe* reported on 7th November, 2002, Brussels, that George Soros's Open Society Institute (OSI) had issued a first "corruption report on European Union candidate countries [which] paints a gloomy picture. " The report "concludes that corruption remains a 'serious problem'" in most candidate countries years after the European Commission first recognized it in its own annual progress reports on the applicants in 1997."

RFE reported that "OSI researchers say the accession of a number of new members with persistent corruption problems would represent a 'significant threat' to the EU's democratic institutions, undermine its laws and political values, and do harm to its entire economy." The editor of the OSI report, Quentin Reed, argued that the EU had paid "little heed to the wider political problem known as 'state capture,'" the state of affairs when law-making is controlled by politicians funded by corruption.

The OSI report echoes conclusions by its sister NGO, the global anti-corruption watchdog Transparency International and the World Bank – all institutions which favour EU enlargement despite their own evidence of corruption. Reed concluded that "What these [studies] suggest -- or at least what Transparency's results suggest -- is that all the candidate states are more corrupt than all the member states, except for Estonia, Slovenia, and Hungary..."

The OSI report says despite political declarations and formal anti-corruption policies little has been done in practice to fight graft in government: "Overall, various corruption measures show little improvement in most candidate countries over the last five years." Even in the least corrupt state, Estonia "corruption is suspected to be significant at the local-government level."!

Rumsfeld's natural allies in the New Europe are hardly exemplars of good or honest governance (even if Berlusconi's Italy is more corrupt than 3 of the ten). According to the OSI report corruption is a "serious problem" in Lithuania, Poland, and Slovakia. OSI says that Latvia has a "major problem" with corruption that is exacerbated by the pervasive influence of private interests on the legislative process! Reed reports that "the situation is even worse in Bulgaria" and that Romania is the EU and NATO candidate "most seriously affected by corruption."

Endemic corruption has gone hand-in-hand with the willingness of these New European states to buy American weapons-systems not only at the expense of their European rivals but also at the expense of domestic healthcare and education.

If ordinary workers are the victims of the de-industrialisation of the post-Socialist "New Europe", some idea of the desperate conditions for well-educated people in the former Soviet bloc can be gained from the "deluge" of job applications pouring into the EU Commission. 21,000 highly-qualified CVs have been received by Neil Kinnock's office (he is the responsible commissioner for expanding the bureaucracy in Brussels) for fewer than 1,000 temporary jobs. [See Stephen Castle, "Brussels receives 21,000 CVs from eastern Europe in recruiting drive" in *The Independent* (20th February, 2003), 11.] The lowest salary - €25,197 is about 10 times the average annual income in Poland and the actual salaries on offer rise to €184,973 with many special allowances and a lower rate of income tax than for any other EU citizens. Mr. Kinnock said he doesn't want to encourage a "brain drain" to Brussels, but....

Poland is set to fill 1,341 posts in the EU Commission's bureaucracy. Given the routine buying of favours to get positions in Poland itself, what are the chances that the common EU civil service will be choosing applicants proposed solely on merit? I well remember a UN official remarking to me in Tbilisi in January, 1999, after Georgia was admitted to the Council of Europe and the government began the process of selecting the country's judge to sit on Europe's highest court of appeals: "There'll be some auction for that job!" At the end of February 2003, the EU Commission issued a statement saying that it would monitor and prevent nepotism in appointments to EU institutions from the New Europe. That was hardly a vote of confidence in their likely contribution to institutions already widely accused of corruption and favouritism.

The progressive stripping of the ex-Warsaw Pact states by both the EU and US of everything from their assets to their bureaucrats and prostitutes is now reaching a crisis point leaving these societies terminally sick. So far as Washington is concerned, all that matters is that in a host of international bodies these shadow states will continue to vote according to the American line. A synthetic majority is created because countries like the Baltic States, Poland or Bulgaria will sit on the map and at the conference table even if life and economic activity are draining away from them. The triumph of the "market democratic community" will continue to be celebrated in the US media and its global surrogates even if the locals east of the Oder will feel more like participants at a wake in honour of their own demise.

However, for the existing EU states the terminal decay of the New Europe poses a host of political, social, economic and moral dilemmas.

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