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Daniel Estulin and the phony 'Bilderberg conspiracy'

Wednesday, September 1, 2010

Statement from the Party for Socialism and Liberation

The Bilderberg Group is an annual meeting of corporate executives and government officials from around the world. Until recently, most people probably did not know it existed. In the past week, the group and theories about its real purpose have been featured prominently in the news.

The main cause of this unprecedented surge in interest was the visit of author Daniel Estulin to Cuba on Aug. 26. Estulin has written two books about the Bilderberg Group. When in Cuba, Estulin met with revolutionary leader Fidel Castro, who had just written several articles citing Estulin's work. The meeting and Estulin's writings have been given extensive coverage in the Cuban press. This coverage has, in turn, been picked up by media outlets worldwide.

The Party for Socialism and Liberation stands fully in solidarity with the great Cuban Revolution. The revolution freed Cuba from U.S. domination and exploitation and brought into being the "first free territory of the Americas." Cuba's determined struggle and internationalism, under the leadership of Fidel and the Cuban Communist Party, have been an inspiration to those struggling for liberation everywhere.

We are concerned, however, that the publicity given to Estulin and his ideas could have a disorienting effect on some in the world socialist and progressive movements. We view Estulin's writings as anti-Marxist and rooted in right-wing conspiracy "theories" that lack factual support.

Since shortly after its founding in 1954, numerous extreme right-wingers, starting with the John Birch Society and Phyllis Schlafly, have theorized that the Bilderberg Group is really a conspiracy to take over the world, some saying that it already has.

Among them is Estulin, a virulent anti-communist who describes himself as "a Russian expatriate who was kicked out of the Soviet Union in 1980," and claims that his grandfather "was a colonel in the KGB and the counter-intelligence in the 1950s so I am privileged somewhat to get a lot of the information from secret service which are our best sources." (Infowars.com, May 27, 2005.) The accuracy of this or anything else that Estulin says about himself or the world is open to question, given his seemingly limitless capacity for fabrication.

Passing fiction for reality

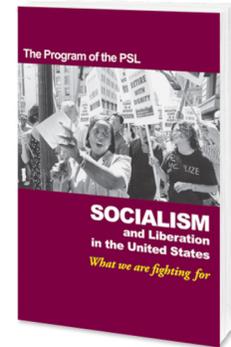
According to Estulin, the "Bilderbergers," as he calls them, are responsible for an extraordinary range of things he does not like, from the 1917 Bolshevik Revolution to the popularity of the Beatles. In his 2007 book, "The true story of the Bilderberg Group," Estulin asserts that the group has "become a shadow world government."

Along with other bizarre conspiracy "theories," the "Bilderberger" version totally rejects class analysis in favor of the notion that a small, supra-national band of men is pulling the global strings, creating everything from flu epidemics, to the housing collapse, to the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq.

Rather than seeing imperialism and capitalism—led by the United States—as the enemy of the world's workers and oppressed peoples, Estulin and his co-thinkers (including the notorious Lyndon LaRouche) propagate the fiction that a secret, all-powerful cabal has been running the world since before the dawn of the capitalist era.

In an interview with a blogger in Barcelona, Spain, Estulin said of the Bilderberg Group:

"It is essentially a private criminal enterprise which stretches across the globe, operating through a network of government agencies, private institutions and both publicly owned and private corporations and financial



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institutions. Now this extended network, which is called the fondi, stretches all the way back to the Middle Ages. Again the fondi is the combined wealth of these oligarchical families. ... At the heart of the fondi system, you have the powerful merchant private banks such as the Rothschild banks. And even more powerful than Rothschild is the Lazard bank. One of the reasons that the Bilderbergers have never been able to discredit me is that historically I can show you that what today is called the Bilderberg Club can be traced back in time to the Venetian Black Nobility, 500 years ago." (Lishman's Diary, Feb. 2, 2008.)

Estulin links the Bilderberg Group to the Trilateral Commission, and claims that both seek to suppress imperialist nationalisms in favor of a secret "New World Order." Here is more from "The true story of the Bilderberg Group":

"Without a doubt, the Bilderberg Group is the premier occult forum operating in the shadows of power, but a little understood entity—the Trilateral Commission (TC)—also plays a vital role in the New World Order's scheme to use wealth, concentrated in the hands of the few, to exert world control."

Estulin continues, "The powerful individuals who belong to the Trilateral Commission all share the same anti-nationalist philosophy, and try to prevent the national forces within their respective countries from exerting influence on policy. The Trilateral Commission was established in 1973. Its founder and primary mover was international financier David Rockefeller, longtime chairman of the Rockefeller family-controlled Chase Manhattan Bank."

Turning history on its head

In his 2006 book "Secrets of the Bilderberg Club," Estulin, like his fellow reactionary LaRouche (who is heavily referenced by Estulin) puts forward the anti-materialist thesis that the British are in control of the United States, the most powerful empire in history.

In Estulin's fantasy world the "Bilderbergers" organized and financed the Bolshevik Revolution in 1917 and "controlled" the leaders of the revolution. All of this, 37 years before the Bilderberg Group even came into existence! "Once again, it would be the networks of British military intelligence which would be the initiators, with CIA help via its ex-director William Casey and its contacts with Sefton Delmer of MI6, whose contact Bruce Lockhart was the MI6 controller of Lenin and Trotsky during the Bolshevik Revolution," asserts Estulin in the "Secrets of the Bilderberg Club."

In the real world, Robert H. Bruce Lockhart, the British ambassador to Moscow, was arrested in 1918 and nearly executed for his part in a plot to assassinate Lenin and overthrow the new Soviet state before being freed in a prisoner exchange. The British government was the main coordinator of counterrevolution in Soviet Russia from 1918-20, when armies of 14 imperialist countries joined the "White" forces against the Bolsheviks. The counterrevolutionaries were ultimately defeated in their attempt to "strangle the Bolshevik baby in its cradle," as Winston Churchill had urged.

A half-century later, the nefarious British "Bilderbergers" were still at work, alleges Estulin in comic-ominous tones. This time, they used music to corrupt the youth of the United States and control their minds. Estulin's "Secrets of the Bilderberg Club" continues, "For an unprecedented two Sundays in a row, on the Ed Sullivan Show, over 75 million Americans watched the Beatles shake their heads and sway their bodies in a ritual which was soon to be replicated by hundreds of future rock groups."

He then attempts to link—without the thinnest strand of actual evidence—the Beatles and rock music to Nazi propaganda. Referring to the wave of British groups that came to the United States in the following years, Estulin states, again with no supporting facts, that "it was demonstrated that this 'English invasion' had been well-planned and coordinated."

For Estulin and his co-conspiracy "theorists," nothing is ever as it seems, and all major world developments are the work of the hidden "Bilderberger" hand. Here is a clear example of his worldview from "The true story of the Bilderberg Group": "The Watergate crisis is a case of mistaken identity and a travesty of justice. The truth behind Watergate has never been revealed, but those who orchestrated the overthrow of the Shah, the war in the Falklands, the death of Aldo Moro and the downfall of Margaret Thatcher are again implicated."

The bombings of the Oklahoma City Federal Building in 1995, the World Trade Center in 2001 and a nightclub in Bali in 2002 were all mini-nuclear attacks carried out in the interests of the "Bilderbergers," according to Estulin. He does not seem to care that none of the bombings emitted any radiation—the main characteristic of a nuclear explosion.

Conspiracy "theories" like those put forward by Estulin, LaRouche and others produce false consciousness and cultism. They have a generally disorienting and demoralizing effect on people's consciousness and movements for change.

Marxism rejects conspiracy 'theories'

Conspiracy "theories" lead to a dead end. If taken at face value, people must believe that there is no hope for change; there is no opportunity to struggle and make things better for the mass of humanity who suffers. After all, how could anyone fight against a hidden, all-powerful enemy that controls every event of significance in the world? The sense of powerlessness that logically flows from conspiracy "theories" often leaves those who buy into them looking for a lone "savior," a role the same conspiracy proponents are more than prepared to fulfill.

Conspiracy “theories” lack any true analysis of the systemic class forces at work that oppress billions of people each day. They do not point to imperialism and capitalism as the main problems, instead ascribing society's ills to a few leaders from imperialist countries that are somehow above the class systems under which we live. Such “theories” are not only false, anti-Marxist and truly reductive of history—they are dangerous diversions that keep people from aiming their anger and hatred toward the system that actually causes oppression throughout the world.

Of course, we understand that actual conspiracies and intrigue do exist. They are used by the ruling classes to set people up, as pretexts to start conflicts or overthrow governments, and in myriad ways to serve the interests of capitalism. But actual conspiracies are much different than presenting crudely assembled facts as representative of broad social and political trends.

Revolutionary Marxism rejects such false conspiracy “theories.” Marxism not only has a radically different understanding of the causes of crises in contemporary capitalist society, it offers a real basis for optimism and solutions as well.

Marxism's class-based analysis of history offers an explanation of war and other crises rooted in reality, not fiction.

War has a particular cause in the modern epoch. Major wars are not conspiracies launched by a handful of people, but result from the constant search by capitalists to open up and dominate new markets to exploit for profits. Sometimes capitalist competition for these markets is the cause. Wars also result from the attempt by capitalists to destroy countries and peoples who seek to liberate themselves from imperialist domination and market exploitation.

Let's be clear: the struggle against war and exploitation is a struggle against the very system that breeds war—capitalism. It is not the struggle against the Bilderberg Group or some shadowy world government. In fact, no such world government exists.

The conspiracy “theories” espoused by Estulin offer no solutions. There is no light at the end of the conspiracy tunnel—just thousands of discreet facts jumbled together to create a rather incoherent reality that has little to do with the real world.

The real solution is something Estulin and other conspiracy writers would never advocate or contemplate: socialism. Humanity's struggle is to put an end to the destructive and dehumanizing capitalist system that rules in most of the world's countries today and replace it with a system based on meeting the needs of the people.

The first socialist revolutions in Russia, China, Cuba and other countries show that this hope is not a pipedream. Up until now, those revolutions have taken place in poorer countries, which posed huge obstacles to the workers' governments. The ever-present threat of imperialist attack has also made development difficult. Nevertheless, each country was able to make great, sometimes incredible, advances while building socialism.

Cuba's outstanding health and education systems and its renowned internationalism would have been unthinkable without a socialist revolution. Cuba has resisted counterrevolution and worked to construct socialism for over 50 years. Its ongoing revolutionary process has not been sanctioned by any capitalist government or by the Bilderberg Group. That is not why revolutionary Cuba exists today.

Cuba's people have been able to withstand the greatest economic hardships and imperialist threats because the system under which they live benefits the people, and seeks to end exploitation. They have had the invaluable, revolutionary leadership of the Communist Party.

The promotion of Estulin's ideas in Cuba does not diminish one iota the PSL's defense of the Cuban Revolution and its incredible ongoing achievements. It is our opinion, however, that Estulin's worldview is incompatible with revolutionary Marxism.

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