

The Soviets slam Pugwash group as war gearup grows

by Rachel Douglas

In the first hours after a stormy meeting of the Pugwash "back-channel" disarmament forum in Geneva Dec. 12, word leaked out from distraught Western participants that Soviet military representatives had caused a "complete disaster" at the session. "The Russians walked into the meeting and said 'Nyet,'" according to one source. "The generals were stone-cold, and even said at one point that the utility of Pugwash had come to an end, and [Pugwash] *should be wiped out*. . . . They never did something like this before. The people at Pugwash are very depressed."

The elite Pugwash group, initiated by Britain's Bertrand Russell, has privately pre-negotiated with Russia in advance every strategic policy commitment undertaken by U.S. presidents since the late 1950s, dismantling U.S. defenses under the banner of "arms control," while Soviet strategic superiority grew relentlessly. Leading Pugwashers from the Western side include W. Averell Harriman, Henry Kissinger, and Robert S. McNamara (the latter attended the recent Geneva session).

The Moscow delegation came to the meeting to send a wave of terror shooting through the "back channel." The threat of a complete Soviet shutdown of the Pugwash channel immediately raised the spectre of a war the Pugwashites had held to be "unthinkable." Shock waves are already rippling through Britain, where one top Sovietologist is preparing an article entitled "What the Hell Is Going to Hit Us?"

Warsaw Pact war mobilization

Pugwash spokesmen were quick to insist that, despite the confrontations behind closed doors, nothing "serious" had occurred. At the final press conference, Pugwash official Martin Kaplan announced that the meeting had backed the eighteen points listed by Robert McNamara in a recent *Newsweek* article, including unilateral Western disarmament moves to comply with Soviet negotiating demands, and a "freeze" on deployment of U.S. cruise and Pershing II missiles in Europe.

But the reality of Soviet global actions during the past weeks reflects the pre-war atmosphere which in fact shaped the Pugwash confrontation. Soviet diplomats reportedly sig-

nalled that Moscow intends to break off the last of the main three arms-control talks, the Mutual and Balanced Force Reduction (MBFR) talks in Vienna, where NATO and the Warsaw Pact have been wrangling over conventional force levels in Europe for ten years. The Soviets have already terminated Soviet-American intermediate-range missile negotiations (INF) and refused to set a date to renew Soviet-American strategic arms talks (START).

The first Soviet short-range SS-21, SS-22, and SS-23 missiles have begun to be installed in East Germany and Czechoslovakia, according to the Yugoslav press agency Tanjug—a decision formally taken at the Warsaw Pact defense ministers' meeting on Dec. 4.

A meeting of Warsaw Pact member chiefs of staff had a three-point agenda: 1) development of new weapons and defense capabilities, 2) making these weapons available to the alliance, 3) reducing the time required to reach full combat-readiness.

In East Germany, Defense Minister Gen. Heinz Hoffmann announced a 7.2 percent increase in the defense budget, which he promised would be evident to every citizen by the reduction of consumer goods supplies.

The Soviets are increasing pressure on Finland to integrate completely into the Warsaw Pact defense structure and on Sweden to collaborate, according to reports in the Finnish press. Although Finnish military officials already announced that their air defenses would shoot down cruise missiles aimed at the Soviet Union and passing over Finland, the Finnish press speculates that the Soviets will now demand "military consultations" with the Finns, in view of the imminent threat of war. Such consultations are mandated under certain circumstances by the 1948 Friendship and Mutual Assistance Treaty signed by Finland and the Soviet Union; it provides for consultations in the event of a threat of attack against the U.S.S.R. "by Germany or Germany's allies." Although this clause has never yet been invoked, Nikita Khrushchev threatened to do so in 1961 in connection with the Berlin crisis, and the wording has never been changed.

The question of Soviet-Finnish military consultations and the demands on Sweden are being linked to NATO's deployment of cruise missiles in England, which would pass over Scandinavia en route to targets in the Soviet Union. The Soviets are also putting the British cruise sites under direct threat, with measures similar to what they have done vis-à-vis the United States, by placing nuclear-armed submarines off the coast. According to the London *Daily Telegraph*, former Navy Minister Speed has reported a shift of "significant numbers of [Soviet] cruise missile submarines from their Northern Fleet to the Baltic to put them closer to targets in this country and Northern Europe." Speed said a Soviet *Juliett*-class submarine, armed with four 250-mile-range cruise missiles, passed through the English channel in October and the cruiser *Slava*, with 16 cruise missiles, sailed around northwest Scotland in November.