

ing the dissolution of the Russian empire along ethnic-national lines and even the possibility of some level of civil war conditions within Russia itself.

Valentin Rasputin's writings have, for decades, instilled Russians with the most raving anti-Western fundamentalism: xenophobia, an anti-technology bias, anti-Semitism, and an extreme love for the *Rodina* (Motherland). It was Valentin Rasputin who launched the eco-fascist campaign in the Russian Federated Republic to stop a Siberian river diversion project vitally needed by the arid Muslim republics of Central Asia, claiming that it would cause an ecological calamity in Russian territory. The Politburo's decision to stop the project has resulted in the deaths of thousands of non-Russian peoples of Central Asia because of severe water shortages and water contamination, and more face the same fate.

Valentin Rasputin's speech at the People's Deputies Congress, televised for millions last May, depicted the hatred many Russians feel towards the pro-Western Lithuanian and other non-Russian captive nations: "The chauvinism and blind arrogance of Russians is the fabrication of those who are playing on your national feelings. . . . Russophobia has spread in the Baltics and Georgia. . . . Anti-Soviet slogans are being combined with anti-Russian ones, and emissaries from Lithuania and Estonia travel with them to Georgia, creating a united front, and from there, local agitators set off Armenia and Azerbaijan. This is not a struggle against the bureaucratic mechanism; it is something else."

Venyamin Yarin, as co-chairman of the United Front of Workers of Russia, joined last September with Russian chauvinist anti-independent movements Yedinstvo (Unity) in Lithuania, Interdvizhenia (Interfront) in Latvia and Estonia, and other Russian populist-fascist groups, to form a new umbrella organization entitled "United Council of Russia," among whose main tasks is to rebuild a Russian Republic and coordinate anti-Popular Front activities in the other republics. Last year they started organizing strikes to protest against new laws aimed at strengthening the sovereignty of non-Russian republics. Today they support the use of military force in the Baltics and are threatening the Baltic states with an economic boycott, hoping to break their will and drive to become fully independent and sovereign nation-states.

Gorbachov draws on military

The institution of the Presidential Council, with leading Russian nationalist extremists on it, something unthinkable several months ago, is proof that the Bolshevik period is drawing to an end and a search for new forms of imperial rule is under way. However, whatever post-Bolshevik path Moscow chooses now cannot succeed unless control in Russia is consolidated.

How strong are Gorbachov's top priorities of consolidating Russia and the core empire, and upgrading the role of the military in these times of grave internal crisis, was demonstrated by his first act after being elected President of the

U.S.S.R.: He met with the entire bloc of over 100 top generals and officers, including the entire leadership of the Armed Forces who are deputies in the Congress of People's Deputies. *Krasnaya Zvezda*, the newspaper of the Defense Ministry, prominently displayed Gorbachov together with the officer corps on its front page. Standing next to a beaming Gorbachov was none other than Gen. Boris Gromov, the last commander of Soviet Forces in Afghanistan, and, as noted above, slated soon for big promotions.

The following day, on March 16, the next sign of the military's upgrading was displayed. Soviet television that evening announced that Marshal **Nikolai Ogarkov** had been named chairman of the All-Union Organization of War and Labor Veterans. The appointment is more than symbolic since this post—while he will nominally be in retirement—will give the 72-year-old Ogarkov the platform to make speeches for both military and civilian press.

The new imperial ruling body, the Presidential Council, lost no time in getting into action. Its first lengthy business meeting was held in Moscow on March 27, at the height of the crisis over Lithuania, a mere 48 hours after its membership was made public. Timed with that meeting, Venyamin Yarin, prominently interviewed by *Krasnaya Zvezda*, sounded a call for Russians to stand behind Czar Mikhail. He declared that perestroika must and will represent "the interests of the Army," and that he, "representing the Russian workers . . . stands by . . . President Gorbachov." The new direction of Czar, Army, and Russia could not be clearer.

Russian nationalism: playing with fire

by Herbert Quinde

Sometime in April in Virginia, the Central Intelligence Agency is scheduled to host a high-level seminar on "the future of the Russian Republic." The invited seminar leader is to be Dr. John B. Dunlop, a Sovietologist specializing in "ethnic Russian nationalism." He will lead a broad-ranging discussion, according to one source, examining the policy option of the United States cultivating firmer relations with a bunch of raving anti-American, anti-Western, anti-Semitic, blood-and-soil lunatics, better known as the "Russian party," whose representatives Mikhail Gorbachov recently inducted into his Presidential Council.

Dr. Dunlop is a well-published analyst and advocate of playing the Russian nationalism card. His date with the CIA therefore raises concern, since, with the CIA already suffering from Gorbomania, it is as dangerous as letting children play with matches.

The incompetent thesis now current among intelligence community circles with influence at the White House, State

Department, and the Pentagon, is that Russian nationalists generally are against the Communist Party apparatus, which the more thuggish Pamyat faction claims is infested with "Jews" and "Masons." The "center," so the ideology goes, has brought a great superpower to the brink of political, military, and economic chaos. The *Rodina* (Motherland) has had its sacred soil raped, its pristine rivers polluted, its cultural traditions, distinctiveness, and its simple way of life perverted by the importation of Western modernity. Yes, Russia has a great universal and religious mission to fulfill; but first it must get its house in order.

If the restive border republics want out of the U.S.S.R., let them go for now, says Russian nationalist Eduard Volodin in an article in the Jan. 24 *Literaturnaya Rossiya* titled "The New Russia in a Changing World," which Dr. Dunlop has characterized as "pathbreaking." After a Russian renaissance, Volodin argued, they'll come back on their hands and knees, anyway.

Ergo, this is all beneficial to U.S. and Western alliance security, and justifies U.S. non-intervention in the Lithuania crisis. Moscow is going to let Lithuania and the other Baltic states go, anyway, but on its own timetable. So, the argument goes, United States should not rock the boat.

Since the Russian nationalists are more concerned about getting their economy going à la perestroika, restocking empty store shelves, and dealing with environmental issues such as cleaning up their rivers and refurbishing their monuments, they won't have the energy or resources to maintain an imperialist empire. The "center," Moscow, has already let Eastern Europe go. An inward-looking Russia will be isolationist, and therefore no longer a military threat to the West. Finally, the United States can cash in on the "peace dividend" which congressional Democrats have been trying to cut out of the defense budget.

Riddled with fallacies

The first obvious fallacy in the analysis is that Russian nationalists are a distinct entity from Gorbachov reformers and military hardliners. In fact, Gorbachov's new Presidential Council demonstrates that they are all in bed together. Although it is true that the extremist-wing views Gorbachov as a "Westernizing Jew," Pamyat's grassroots base could not be unhappy with having two co-thinkers such as Valentin Rasputin and Venyamin Yarin appointed to Gorbachov's inner circle.

"Gorbachov is trying to 'make a very big tent,' to use a Lee Atwater term," commented former CIA official Donald Jameson. "Gorbachov is trying to create a group that represents all the significant shades of opinion. . . . [The inclusion of Pamyat supporters on the Presidential Council] is a concession to the Russian nationalists. . . . This body may evolve into a focus of policy in all matters. It is going to replace the Politburo. . . . It is a gesture calculated . . . to focus the power of this movement which over the years has been very

strong in the Red Army and KGB," explained Jameson.

The second potentially deadly axiomatic assumption of those advocating the "Russian nationalism card" is that Russia no longer poses a threat to the West. Prof. Charles Fairbanks, on the other hand, a leading Sovietologist with the Johns Hopkins University School for Advanced International Studies, has monitored the "upswing" in Russian nationalism which he believes is a "potential threat to the West." His educated speculation is that Gorbachov will not survive politically, since the Soviet economy is in a "severe crisis." As things disintegrate, not only will central authority break down, resulting in "internal civil war" as seen recently in Azerbaijan, but the likelihood of a Soviet military strike westward "is a real threat."

Advocacy for playing the "Russian nationalism card" is more fuel to the fire of self-delusion rampant among Anglo-American strategic policy influentials about their deal with Gorbachov, whether he stays or departs. It is this kind of Neville Chamberlain-style miscalculation that leads to world wars. Although Dr. Dunlop and others sympathetic to "enlightened" Russian nationalism express interest in purging or moderating its fascist-chauvinist wing, the momentum for making deals with the Devil is reflected in a report that Valentin Rasputin will be visiting the United States in the near future, with State Department clearance.

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