

ON THE ANNIVERSARY OF SDI

Russians Answer Threat Of Thermonuclear War

by Nancy Spannaus and Jeffrey Steinberg

March 27—Russian President-elect Vladimir Putin and Defense Minister Anatoly Serdyukov chose the 29th anniversary of President Ronald Reagan's March 23, 1983 Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI) speech to deliver the most pointed warning to date that Russia is prepared to deploy weaponry based on "new physical principles" to defeat any military threats, including the continuation of President Obama's plans to deploy a missile defense system in Europe without Russian participation or collaboration.

Coming out of a March 22 meeting with Prime Minister Putin, Serdyukov announced ambitious plans to develop and deploy a wide range of weapons systems based on "new physical principles," including directed-energy beams.

The same day, on the eve of his final summit meeting with President Obama in Seoul, South Korea, outgoing Russian President Dmitri Medvedev delivered an even more pointed warning, directed at President Obama and NATO: "Time is running out," he warned, for resolving the European missile defense dispute. Implicitly addressing the non-stop drive for war against Russia and China, ostensibly over Iran and Syria, Medvedev denounced the "psychology of force" and the "increase in those wishing to use arms as a means of solving problems."

He warned, "This is extremely dangerous and an unacceptable tendency." He declared, point blank, that

Russia would not tolerate efforts to use "loopholes" to launch wars while bypassing the authority of the United Nations Security Council.

The strategic reality is that the world has so far averted thermonuclear holocaust because Russia, China, and high-ranking American military circles have pushed back against London's global showdown, which was launched last October with the assassination of deposed Libyan head of state Muammar Qaddafi. At that time, the British Empire had intended to proceed immediately with wars against Syria and Iran, which, in reality, aimed to force a capitulation by Moscow and Beijing to a new "post-Westphalian" order, in which the power of sovereign nation-states was forever surrendered.

The tough response from the leadership in Moscow and Beijing, and the persistent war-prevention intervention by the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff and other leading institutional forces in the United States, has blocked both the launching of thermonuclear confrontation, and the capitulation of Russia and China to London's desperate efforts to salvage their hopelessly bankrupt global financial system through the further looting of the two Eurasian superpowers.

Russians Are Adamant

Defense Minister Serkyukov's March 22 announcement follows directly from the war-avoidance policy



U.S. Department of Defense

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taken by the Russian leadership since the aftermath of the Qaddafi murder, when it became clear that they were the targets of the imperial drive to eliminate the institution of the nation-state. With one measure after another, they have signalled that capitulation to the demands of the British-Obama team which ran the Libya operation, is out of the question.

President Medvedev spelled out the overall policy in a special televised address to his nation on Nov. 23, 2011, conveying the stark reality that the Russian leadership anticipates the outbreak of global nuclear war, and is determined both to defend Russia under those circumstances and, by warning of this, to try to deter it. Medvedev spoke standing, and with great solemnity, from his Presidential office, flanked by the Russian tricolor flag in its version for the Supreme Commander-in-Chief, with the Russian double-headed eagle crest.

Medvedev underscored that Russia has continued to offer cooperation with the United States and NATO on anti-missile defense, and then outlined a series of defensive military measures, including modernizing and

beefing up radar facilities.

Just days before the Russian President spoke, on Nov. 17, Gen. Nikolai Makarov, the Chief of the General Staff of the Armed Forces, stated, "I cannot rule out that, in certain circumstances, local and regional armed conflicts could grow into a large-scale war, possibly even with nuclear weapons." Addressing the Russian Public Chamber, a Kremlin advisory body which includes numerous policy heavyweights, Makarov stated that "Russia could be involved in a conflict where weapons of mass destruction could be used. . . . The possibility of local armed conflicts virtually along the entire perimeter of the [Russian] border has grown dramatically."

During the same week, Russian military spokesmen announced that they would be sending Russia's only aircraft carrier on a port-of-call to their base in Tartus, Syria, as a de facto deterrent to any military action against NATO's next target.

This Russian hard line, combined with continuous offers for dialogue and peaceful cooperation to resolve conflicts in crisis areas such as Syria and Iran, has continued relentlessly, as shown in Russia's vetoes of UN resolutions for regime-change in Syria, and warnings against military action against Syria and Iran. Simultaneously, the Russian leadership has commenced preparations to deal with the potential U.S.-NATO "deployment of the global missile defense [which] considerably violates the power balance and strategic stability as a whole." A March 21 Xinhua wire on a March 20 conference of the Russian defense sector leadership outlined a series of upgrades being planned for Russia's ICBMs and submarine fleet.

Yet, President Medvedev and incoming President Putin have repeatedly combined such announcements with offers for joint collaboration, not only in missile defense (Russia will host a conference on that issue May 3-4), but also, joint exploration of space and regions such as the Arctic.

The Iran Front

As military leaders and American statesman Lyndon LaRouche have stressed, the main flashpoint, for a confrontation between the Empire-led forces and Russia, is Iran—including the real danger that the British puppet Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu will launch a preemptive strike against Iran, which would immediately bring in the United States, and escalate into a thermonuclear confrontation. Despite loud voices of oppo-

sition from the Israeli military-intelligence establishment, Netanyahu is loudly beating the drums for war, and making preparations through measures such as deploying anti-missile Iron Domes throughout the country.

At the same time, British pawn Obama has repeatedly refused to lay down the law to Netanyahu against such a strike, despite nods to the primacy of diplomacy, and has signed on publicly to the Netanyahu rejection of containing Iran. On the immediate agenda is the convening of the talks, between Iran and the UN Security Council permanent members plus Germany (P5+1)), which Russian government spokesmen have said should occur in April. Today, the Iranian foreign ministry announced that the opening of the talks would take place April 13, but that a location is still under negotiation.

It has thus fallen to senior military and intelligence officials to act. Among the most prominent, has been former Secretary of Defense Robert Gates, who, in a speech at the Jewish Federation of Greater Philadelphia recently, said, "If you think the war in Iraq was hard, an attack on Iran would, in my opinion, be a catastrophe," according to the account in the *Jewish Exponent*. He went on to discuss, as have others, the complications that would ensue from a bombing raid.

Another strong intervention came from former IAEA Inspector Robert Kelley, who had given an interview to *EIR* a few weeks earlier, warning of the dangerous role being played by the IAEA on the question of Iran's nuclear intentions and capability. In an article appearing March 23, the London *Guardian* quoted Kelley: "[IAEA head] Yukiya Amano is falling into the [former U.S. Vice President Dick] Cheney trap. What we learned back in 2002 and 2003, when we were in the runup to the war, was that peer review was very important, and that the analysis should not be left to a small group of people. So what have we learned since then? Absolutely nothing. Just like Cheney, Amano is relying on a very small group of people and those opinions are not being checked."

Kelley also revealed that Amano has shut down the external verification unit (Expo), which had been set up by former IAEA head Mohamed ElBaradei, to double-check reports on nuclear activities.

Not to be overlooked in the build-up to an Iran war, is the massive amount of military hardware which has been deployed into the region, including U.S. aircraft

carriers, the British carrier *HMS Daring*, and a raft of smaller ships and mine-sweepers—in addition to the military bases in the area. This concentration of firepower in such close quarters as the Persian Gulf, in itself, represents an explosive mix, with the potential for incidents which could set off a war.

Stymied in Syria

In Syria, the British imperial warmongers are talking very tough about removing President Bashar al-Assad, but have been stymied in their offensive plans, by a combination of Russian/Chinese vetoes of regime-change resolutions at the Security Council, and the opposition of U.S. military-intelligence officials who continue to point out the pitfalls of military action, including al-Qaeda involvement among the rebel forces.

On March 21, all 15 UNSC members adopted a non-binding statement, expressing "[the Council's] gravest concern at the deteriorating situation in Syria which has resulted in a serious human rights crisis and a deplorable humanitarian situation." The message was sent to both the Syrian government and the opposition, asking them to "implement fully and immediately" a six-point peace plan proposed by joint UN-Arab League envoy Kofi Annan, who visited Damascus recently, and held talks there, and, over the March 24 weekend, began trips to Moscow and Beijing for consultations.

The British gamemasters were by no means pleased with this UNSC action, because it contains no deadlines or "consequences" for Assad should he not follow their recommendations. This is in line with consistent Russian policy. The other major problem the British face is the fact that the opposition forces themselves are so divided and unprepared for facing the government crack-down that they cannot make headway. Even the Henry Jackson Society, which had tried to turn the Syrian National Council into their pet project, has now attacked the opposition for its Muslim Brotherhood connections (which of course they knew all along, but are now a political liability).

But don't think the British have given up. A March 26 CNN report quoted former U.S. Ambassador to Israel and Syria Edward Djerejian saying that the assassination of Assad was not an option. A crazed British Empire, which is determined to eliminate the nation-state by any means available, will stop at nothing; it is that Empire's power which must be destroyed.