

China, Russia Respond to Anglo-American War Threat

Special to *EIR*

FLASH: *On Oct. 31, Russian President Vladimir Putin invalidated a 2011 order that created a group tasked to work with NATO to develop cooperation on missile defense. The action follows years of refusal by the Obama Administration to provide written guarantees that it is not targeting Russia with its own missile-defense program. The latest such refusal was delivered by U.S. Acting Undersecretary of State for Arms Control and International Security Rose Gottemoeller at a conference in Warsaw on Oct. 31.*

Nov. 3—Russia and China are moving forward with a strategic defense alliance in response to growing concerns that the Anglo-Americans are heading toward a confrontation. Whether or not the Russian and Chinese leadership equate the growing war provocations with the financial and economic disintegration of the trans-Atlantic region, it is precisely that breakdown process that is driving the world toward a conflict that could escalate into a thermonuclear war of extermination.

Both China and Russia, each in its own way, have been upgrading their conventional and strategic nuclear forces to be ready for war, as a component of their resistance to the Anglo-American provocations. Moreover, the two countries are conducting their preparations in coordination with each other, as the meeting between President Putin and Vice Chairman of China's Central Military Commission Xu Qiliang on Oct. 31 underscores.

Putin indicated, according to Xinhua, that military

cooperation plays a pivotal role in the strategic partnership between Russia and China, and he expressed the hope that the two defense ministries could improve their coordination to advance bilateral ties in the future. Xu replied that the China-Russia strategic cooperation has entered a new phase because of the efforts of both countries. Xu added that China is willing to deepen the military exchange and expand cooperation with Russia to boost bilateral ties to a new high.

China Sends a Signal

China, for the first time, went public Oct. 28, about its strategic nuclear missile submarines, when a number of articles began appearing in the Chinese media. *People's Daily*, on Oct. 31, quoted Chinese military expert Yin Zhuo characterizing China's strategic missile forces as components of a "counterattack strategy." That is, "Only when our opponents use nuclear weapons to attack us, will we use nuclear weapons to counterattack them."

While China, like Russia and the U.S., operates a nuclear triad, the strategic missile submarines are considered the most important leg, because their chances of survival, should a conflict break out, is in the realm of 85-90%, compared to no more than 5-50% from the land-based missile and bomber forces.

The Chinese were also clear as to whom they are deterring, as a *Global Times* article on Oct. 28 made the point. A Chinese nuclear attack on the U.S. would mainly target population centers. Submarine-launched

missiles fired from the Pacific would mainly be aimed at West Coast cities, while the land-based DF-31 ICBMs, fired over the North Pole, would primarily be aimed at major East Coast cities. The message in such statements is clear.

Russian Preparations

The Russians, meanwhile, have been conducting their own preparations. This week, President Putin ordered a no-notice snap exercise of the strategic missile and submarine forces, combined with an air and missile defense exercise on the Kapustin Yar testing range. Two ICBMs and two submarine-launched missiles were fired, as were about 15 S-300 and S-400 air defense missiles, during the exercise, which was overseen by Putin himself. Putin has ordered at least four such no-notice snap drills this year, and both he and Defense Minister Sergei Shoigu have indicated that there will be more. The purpose of the drills is to test the war readiness of Russian forces.

While the strategic forces exercise was taking place, two TU-160 nuclear bombers were operating in South America. They arrived in Venezuela on Oct. 28, after a 13-hour flight from their base in the Volga region. On Oct. 30, they landed in Nicaragua, and are scheduled to carry out patrols over the region.

These Russian and Chinese actions coincided with long-scheduled NATO maneuvers that were aimed explicitly at targets in the East. Entitled "Steadfast Jazz," the maneuvers purport to test measures to defend NATO's eastern flank, i.e., the one that faces Russia. According to quotes reported in Polish newspapers (Poland and Latvia are hosting the maneuvers), the NATO exercise will be taking place in areas *less than 30 seconds* flight time by jet from Russian territory.

While these superpower machinations were playing out with little public notice, a much more visible conflict has been underway between U.S. national security circles and the Saudi monarchy. The Saudi leadership is furious at the Obama Administration for backing off from promises to launch military action against the Assad government in Syria, and taking up the Putin proposal for Syria to dismantle its chemical weapons program.

The Saudis, along with the other Gulf Cooperation Council countries, believe that the U.S. has not only entered into a deal with Russia to prevent a new U.S. military action in Southwest Asia. They believe that the Obama Administration is prepared to make a deal with

Tehran that will give Iran cover to continue covertly building toward a nuclear weapon, while the U.S. expands its regional clout with an end to Western sanctions. What the Saudis and the others stubbornly refuse to realize is that the pushback against war is coming from the American military and some factions in the intelligence community, who are themselves terrified that a desperate President Obama will bring the world to the brink of general war.

Steps Toward Peace

As of this moment, the P5+1 is scheduled to meet again with top Iranian negotiators in Geneva Nov. 7-8 to continue the talks that resumed in that city in early October. Last week, Iran's top nuclear negotiator met with the IAEA in Vienna, Austria, and both sides agreed that substantial progress had been made in solving the remaining issues of dispute. A follow-up meeting is scheduled later this month in Tehran.

Secretary of State John Kerry was sent on short notice on an 11-day, 9-nation tour of the Middle East, to tell Israeli and Saudi leaders, among others, that the United States is not about to sell them out in a deal with Tehran. Kerry will attempt to assure the regional allies that Washington will not ever allow Iran to get close to obtaining a nuclear weapon, and that all countries of the region would benefit if a deal were reached assuring that Iran will never get be allowed to develop such weapons. This will be a tough sell in both Riyadh and Tel Aviv, where Obama is seen as having betrayed his closest friends by failing to bomb Syria, by abandoning longtime American ally Hosni Mubarak in Egypt during the January 2011 revolution, and most of all, by negotiating with Iran.

Israel is also furious at the U.S. for leaking evidence to the media that Israel carried out missile strikes against a Syrian airbase near the coastal city of Latakia last week. This is the second time that the United States made clear that Israel had carried out the covert assaults, in order to distance Washington from the Israeli actions.

Even though the U.S. is working with Moscow and Beijing on the P5+1 talks with Iran, and is also working bilaterally with Russia on upcoming Geneva II talks aimed at ending the Syria conflict, the level of distrust of Washington is high, and will continue to be so, as long as Obama is in office, and the U.S. opposes the kind of Glass-Steagall reform of the entire financial system that is the only durable war-avoidance and war-prevention option.