

How NATO Has Moved with BMD Plans To Bring on Conflict with Russia

by Carl Osgood and Nancy Spannaus

March 23—What began as a plan, under President Ronald Reagan 31 years ago today, to “make nuclear missiles obsolete,” has been turned into a NATO/U.S. strategy to effectively encircle and disarm the major obstacles to the British Empire’s plan to dominate the world. Today that plan is called Ballistic Missile Defense (BMD), and it represents what the entire Russian leadership, military and political, have repeatedly identified as an existential threat to Russia’s national security.

This BMD deployment, as President Putin referenced in his March 18 speech to the Duma (see *Strategy* this issue), is part and parcel of the threat which Russia sees advancing with the Western-sponsored Nazi coup d’état in Ukraine. It totally gives the lie to the line that Russia is the “aggressor” in the current crisis. Rather, the crisis has been long in the making, put into effect, step by step, since the Cheney-Bush Administration, and now coming to a point where the Russians can no longer let it proceed without intolerable risk.

The European BMD system, as now being implemented by the Obama Administration, consists of the forward stationing of four Aegis BMD-capable destroyers in Rota, Spain, as well as two land-based BMD sites in Poland and Romania. The *USS Donald Cook*, the first of the four destroyers, arrived in February and is now on its first patrol as part of the U.S. Sixth Fleet. The two installations in Poland and Romania will be based on the same Aegis radar and combat system as the ships, and will include 24 vertical launch cells for Standard interceptor missiles.

The Romanian installation is currently under construction and is planned to go into operation by the end of 2015, whereas the Polish site is scheduled to be completed in 2018. In comments on March 18, Lyndon LaRouche cited the active deployment of the *Donald Cook* as indicating that a change in NATO’s posture is underway, from an orientation to toward the Ukraine crisis, into one of general war.

Contrary to some Republican propaganda, Barack Obama’s Administration has refused every attempt by

the Russian government to avoid a confrontation over the BMD deployment. The administration has repeatedly, often rudely, refused to provide guarantees that the European BMD system is not aimed at Russia, while telling the Russians to “trust us,” that it is intended for defense against Iran and North Korea.

Indeed, there are few markers which more clearly point to the *intent* of Obama—in line with the strategy of his British masters—to bring on a thermonuclear confrontation which could destroy all mankind, and thus mandate his removal from office, than his BMD policy.

The following is a brief review of the highlights of Obama’s march on this road of provocation. Fuller details can be found in the archive of www.larouche.pub.com, and in *EIR*’s 2012 Special Report *The British Global Showdown and How To Overcome It*.

2009: Following a review of the BMD system upon entering office, Obama settles on a revised system which focuses heavily on the Aegis BMD system, which would be based both on ships and on land bases in Romania and Poland.

November 2010: NATO adopts the U.S. plan at the Lisbon Summit.

Aug. 8, 2011: Russian Ambassador to NATO Dmitri Rogozin asks again why the U.S. will not give guarantees that its fleet with Aegis interceptor systems won’t be deployed against Russia.

Sept. 15, 2011: Turkey, a NATO member on Russia’s southern flank, signs an agreement with the U.S. to host a missile defense radar as part of the NATO BMD system.

Oct 5, 2011: U.S. Secretary of Defense Leon Panetta announces the plan for forward base deployment of four BMD destroyers in Europe, starting in Rota, Spain in 2014.

Nov. 23, 2011: In an extraordinary address to the Russian nation, Russian President Dmitri Medvedev warns that if NATO goes ahead with its missile defense plans without taking account of Russia’s concerns, then



U.S. Navy photo

The USS Donald Cook, shown here shooting a Harpoon missile in 2009, has now been fitted with the Aegis BMD system, and is based at Rota, Spain.

Russia will station Iskander missiles in its Kaliningrad region (located between Poland and Lithuania), and otherwise, take retaliatory action.

Dec. 2, 2011: U.S. Ambassador to NATO Ivo Daalder dismisses Russia's concerns about the NATO missile defense plan and says that NATO will deploy its defenses "whether Russia likes it or not." He claims the reason is "a growing ballistic missile threat" from Iran.

Dec. 15, 2011: Romania gives its final approval for construction of a NATO BMD site on its territory.

2012

Feb. 3: Russian Prime Minister Vladimir Putin slams NATO's missile defense plans in a documentary aired ahead of the Munich Security Conference. "Today, neither Iran, nor North Korea poses a threat. . . . Today, it's missile defense that is certainly aimed at neutralizing Russia's nuclear missile potential," he says. He notes that the NATO radars to be installed near Russia's borders would shield the entire territory of European Russia, but that Washington officials "do not want to provide any guarantees" that their missile plans are not directed against Russia." Putin also notes that the U.S. is the only country to have dropped nuclear weapons on another country, as it did on Japan in 1945. "We cannot forget this, and we will always react to threats that would emerge near our borders," Putin says.

March 23: Russian President Medvedev warns in a speech in Moscow that NATO's missile defense plans will break existing nuclear parity with Russia and prompt it to retaliate. "No one has explained to me why we should believe that the new missile defense system in Europe isn't directed against us," Medvedev says, adding that the shield will "break the nuclear parity."

He adds, "By 2017-2018, we must be fully prepared, fully armed," referring to his earlier threat to aim missiles at the U.S.-led NATO missile shield if no agreement is reached, and that Russia isn't "shutting the door to dialogue" but warns that "time is running out."

March 30: The head of the NATO Liaison Office in Ukraine, Marchin Koziel, says that NATO is in talks

with Ukraine about Ukraine's participation in NATO's missile defense system. He notes that during the NATO summit in Lisbon, NATO heads agreed on the possibility of involving non-member countries—"third countries"—in the missile shield in Europe.

May 3: At a Missile Defense Conference in Moscow, Russian Chief of the General Staff Gen. Nikolai Makarov reiterates Medvedev's threat that if Moscow and the U.S. can't come to an agreement on missile defense, Russia will be prepared, if necessary, to destroy NATO missile defense installations by a *pre-emptive strike*. "A decision to use destructive force pre-emptively will be taken if the situation worsens," he said. (For more on this conference, where the Russians laid out the threat the BMD represents to Russia in detail, see the *EIR* archive.)

May 4: Russian Deputy Defense Minister Anatoly Antonov reiterates Russia's offer to avoid a potential confrontation, by providing the Don-2 radar system as "part of the potential system which could be used against potential medium and long-range missile threats."

May 21: At the NATO summit in Chicago, NATO chief Anders Fogh Rasmussen announces that the first elements of NATO's system are now operational. "In Lisbon, we agreed to create a NATO missile defense system. Today, in Chicago, we have declared that a re-

ality,” Rasmussen says. “We call this an Interim Capability.”

June 2: President Putin reiterates that he is willing to conduct a dialogue with the West on missile defense if Russia has guarantees that the system is not aimed at them. “We would like to receive military and technological guarantees fixed in legally binding documents,” Putin tells journalists after talks with his French counterpart François Hollande in Paris.

Aug. 20: Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov warns: “Any unilateral and unlimited buildup of the missile capability by one state or a group of states would lead to the preservation of Cold War hangovers, damaging strategic stability in violation of all the OSCE members’ obligations not to strengthen their security at the expense of others.”

Sept. 28: Russia and the United States could still reach agreement on the missile defense issue, but time is running out, says Deputy Foreign Minister Sergei Ryabkov.

“When the implementation of the third and then fourth and subsequent stages of the phased adaptive approach on the [U.S.] global defense system begins, the situation could alter for us,” Ryabkov adds.

He reiterates Moscow’s demand for legally binding guarantees that U.S. and NATO missiles will not be aimed at Russia, warning that otherwise unspecified “compensatory” countermeasures will follow.

Oct. 7: U.S. and Spain reach agreement on the stationing of four U.S. missile defense destroyers at the U.S. base in Rota.

2013

March 13: U.S. Secretary of Defense Chuck Hagel announces that he is cancelling Phase IV of the European Phased Adaptive Approach (EPAA) and its associated SM-3 Block IIB missile interceptor, so that the money can be used for the installation of 14 more Ground-Based Interceptors in Alaska.

March 18: Deputy Foreign Minister Ryabkov says there is no connection between Russia’s objections to the deployment of a U.S. missile defense system in Europe and Hagel’s announcement. Ryabkov tells the Russian daily *Kommersant*, “All aspects of strategic uncertainty related to the creation of a U.S. and NATO missile defense system remain. Therefore, our objections also remain.”

Oct. 24: After a meeting of the NATO-Russia Council, Russian Defense Minister Sergei Shoigu says

NATO is not considering Russia’s concerns. “We failed to work cooperatively on this issue and Russian concerns are not being [taken into account],” Shoigu tells a news conference. “Before studying missile defense projects, we want to have assurances that this U.S. missile defense system is not against Russia,” he adds.

Nov. 1: U.S. Acting Undersecretary of State for Arms Control and International Security Rose Gottemoeller, in a speech at an international conference on missile defense in Warsaw, claims that giving guarantees to Russia “could create limitations on our ability to develop and deploy future missile defense systems against regional ballistic missile threats such as those presented by Iran and North Korea.” She adds: “We have made clear that we cannot and will not accept limitations on our ability to defend ourselves, our allies, and our partners, including where we deploy our BMD-capable Aegis ships.”

Putin responds by dissolving the special task force focused on missile defense cooperation between Russia and the West.

Nov. 25: Russian Foreign Minister Lavrov comments during a trip to Rome, that now that a deal has been reached with Iran, there is no longer any reason for NATO’s BMD system.

Dec. 22: The lights are turned on for the first time in the new Aegis Ashore test facility at the Pacific Missile Range. The first SM-3 firing from the new facility is expected this coming spring.

2014

Jan. 31: The Aegis BMD-equipped destroyer *USS Donald Cook* departs Norfolk for Rota, where it will be permanently stationed as part of the European missile defense system. It is the first of four Aegis-equipped destroyers scheduled to be deployed through 2015.

Feb. 15: The Aegis Ashore installation in Moorestown, N.J. is being dismantled and packed up for shipment to Romania, where it will be the first of two land-based missile defense sites that will be part of the European missile defense system.

March 14: The *Donald Cook* departs Rota for its first mission in the Sixth Fleet area of operations since arriving in Spain on Feb. 11. While on patrol, “*Donald Cook* will perform numerous missions, including NATO missile defense, maritime security operations, bilateral and multilateral training exercises,” reports a Navy news release.