
I. Bold Motion in Asia

Is Japan Really Going To Do This?

by Michael Billington

May 21 (EIRNS)—New initiatives emerged in East Asia this month, largely through the efforts of Russian President Vladimir Putin, with consequences that have greatly damaged the ongoing Anglo-American war drive, while opening up the potential for the integration of all East Asia into a “zone of peace,” defined by the economic development perspective of the New Silk Road and China’s “One Road, One Belt” policy.

On May 6, Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe held an extremely successful summit with Putin in Sochi on the Black Sea, despite intense pressure from the Obama White House to cancel the visit. Sources close to the negotiations have informed *EIR* that Abe and Putin agreed on a path towards solving the territorial dispute that has prevented the signing of a peace treaty to end World War II between Russia and Japan.

The two leaders also discussed a wide range of potential Japanese investments, mostly in the Russian Far East, in oil and gas production, energy generation, medical facilities, transportation, ports, and more. The launching of such extensive joint development will also have significant implications for the Korean Peninsula, because the potential for joint China-Japan-South Korea-Russia projects in the Russian Far East, involving skilled North Korean labor, is a necessary basis for re-



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Despite intense pressure from the Obama White House, Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe (left) and Russian President Vladimir Putin (right) at their May 6 summit in Sochi, Russia, discussed proposed Japanese economic joint development projects in the Russian Far East, which have the potential to undermine the geopolitical drive for war being championed by Obama.

solving the other crisis spot left over from World War II.

Then, on May 19-20, President Putin hosted the summit of Russia and the Association of Southeast Asia Nations (ASEAN), also in Sochi. The title of the summit, “Towards Strategic Partnership for the Sake of the Common Good,” is, in and of itself, a strategic statement of the utmost importance, and it makes clear that Russia’s intention is not to turn ASEAN against the United States, but against *geopolitics* itself. Before the summit, the government leaders of nearly all of the ASEAN nations issued strong endorsements of Russia’s crucial role in Asia, calling for expanding Russia’s relatively low level of trade and investment in the region.



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President Putin hosted the summit of Russia and the Association of the Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) on May 19-20 in Sochi, in a further move against geopolitics. It was entitled "Towards Strategic Partnership for the Sake of the Common Good."

U.S. President Barack Obama will be in Asia from May 21 to 28, visiting Vietnam and Japan. As a result of Putin's initiatives, this trip will now take place in an environment in which his carefully nurtured anti-China alliance is beginning to fracture and collapse. It was in October 2011 that his anti-China policy, which Obama dubbed his *Pivot to Asia*, was first announced by his sister-in-law Hillary Clinton, in an article in *Foreign Affairs*, the journal of the Council on Foreign Relations (CFR), entitled, "America's Pacific Century." Obama's approach is that of the British Empire—imperial geopolitics—based on the notion that nations function in the same manner as the Hobbesian view of individual men and women: *bellum omnium contra omnes*, "the war of all against all," or each against all. This bestial view of man is the bedrock of the imperial strategy of divide and conquer.

As a result of Vladimir Putin's flanking initiatives, Obama's intentions have been dealt a huge blow over these recent days. Russia, in conjunction with China's leaders, has moved decisively to defeat not only

Obama's war plans, but geopolitics itself. The ability to manipulate nations against each other depends on convincing those nations that the degraded imperial view of man and nations is true, that a nation's self-interest requires the forming of military and economic blocs to protect against stronger neighbors, that there is no such thing as the common aims of mankind.

China is seen as a threat to the Anglo-American imperial alliance precisely because the New Silk Road concept introduced by Chinese President Xi Jinping—together with the BRICS New Development Bank and the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB)—is based on a win-win concept of mutual development for all nations. This challenges Obama's "we make the rules" mentality, and his effort to encircle China with U.S. military bases and real or imagined U.S. allies ready to join in a U.S. war on China. This war policy depends on Japan as the core of the military alliance.

But Putin has now weighed in with a brilliant flanking operation in East Asia, just as he flanked Obama

through Russia's intervention in Syria, which exposed Obama as the backer of the very terrorists he claimed to be fighting.

Putin-Abe Breakthrough and Imperial Reaction

At the May 6 Sochi summit, President Putin invited Prime Minister Abe to attend the second Eastern Economic Forum in Vladivostok on Sept. 2-3. Abe is expected to attend, and to hold a second summit with Putin. The forum will bring together international business and government representatives to discuss the economic potential of Russia's Far East and the Asia-Pacific region, and the investment opportunities.

Yury Trutnev, the Russian Deputy Prime Minister and Presidential Plenipotentiary Envoy to the Far Eastern Federal District, followed the Sochi summit with a visit to Tokyo this past week. At the same time, the Chief Executive Officer of the Far East and Baikal Region Development Fund, Alexei Chekunkov, announced, "The Far East Development Fund has updated its portfolio of promising projects. We are offering 29 projects worth a total of \$16 billion to Japan's investors," according to TASS.

Putin and Abe also agreed that Putin will visit Japan before the end of the year, and will meet with Abe in Yamaguchi Prefecture, Abe's home region.

In a frantic response to this dramatic intervention by Putin, the trans-Atlantic establishment is warning that the West has lost sight of Russia's potential role in Asia, describing it as extremely dangerous. *Foreign Affairs* released an article May 17 warning of "an emerging geopolitical reality: no Western leader knows quite what to do about Russia as it wields its strategic influence across Eurasia. . . . Russia, declining as it might be, is yet a serious Eurasian power to be reckoned with. The West has essentially treated Russia as a rival European power, largely failing to manage its Eurasian challenges since 2014. . . . From Serbia to Afghanistan, Russia is using a combination of energy deals, arms supplies, and covert actions to solidify its stakes in Eurasia's arc of instability."

Authors Joshua Walker of the German Marshall Fund (and a former State Department officer) and Hidetoshi Azuma of the American Security Project protest in the article that not only is Putin threatening to destroy Washington's effort to get Japan's military on the side

of the war against China and Russia, but he even has the gall to speak out on Obama's provocative operations in the South China Sea: "As Beijing's latest solicitation for Moscow's support for its South China Sea policies demonstrates, Russia is also emerging as a significant actor in Asian seas, the stability of which is crucial to European economies."

The CFR duo try to find some light in the matter by pathetically claiming that Abe is trying to bring the United States and Russia together, based on cooperation against "the rise of China, where Russian and Western interests are aligned."

Even here, Abe has taken an important step to *improve* the tense relations with China due to China's legitimate concern over Abe's effort to change the Japanese Constitution to allow Japan to join the United States in a war on China. In fact, however, there has been no decline in the extensive economic relations between the second and third largest economies in the world. China is Japan's largest trading partner, and Japan is China's second-largest. Japan is the largest investor in China, with direct investment of more than \$100 billion as of 2014, or \$30 billion more than the next largest source, the United States.

Now, Abe has appointed a new Ambassador to China, Yutaka Yokoi, who is a China expert with deep experience in China, and is fluent in Chinese. In his first press conference at the Japanese Embassy in Beijing on May 16, Yokoi said, "I will do my best to move the gears steadily forward. I want to boost mutual trust by communicating well with the Chinese side and cooperating on many common interests and challenges." *China Daily* wrote an editorial calling Yokoi "a precious asset for handling the tricky relations at such a sensitive juncture."

In discussions this week, Lyndon LaRouche pointed to the profound implications of these recent developments. He asked, Is Japan really going to do this? If so, he said, what is in prospect is the closest, trusted cooperation among Russia, India, China, and Japan in Asia, in the political, economic, and security dimensions, which will revolutionize Asia and the world.

Putin-ASEAN

While Japan is supposed to be the core of Obama's anti-China bloc in Asia, the Philippines and Vietnam are the two front-line states in his effort to pro-



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Vietnam has maintained close relations with Russia over the last decades. Here, newly appointed Prime Minister Nguyen Xuan Phuc meets Putin in Moscow shortly before the ASEAN summit.

Obama's drive to destroy China's leadership of a new global economic order based on win-win development. In particular, Aquino set in motion the extremely provocative and dangerous re-occupation of the island nation by the U.S. military.

But Vietnam has also been courted by Obama to join in the military confrontation with China and Russia. Obama will be dangling the potential of lifting the U.S. ban on arms sales to Vietnam, which has existed since the ringing defeat of the United States in Vietnam War of the 1960s and 1970s. The arms sales are intended to endear Vietnam to the U.S. military confrontation with



Ministry of Defense

The newly appointed Vietnamese Defense Minister, Ngo Xuan Lich, made Moscow his first foreign visit, from April 23 to 29.

China.

Vietnam has in fact been in conflict with China over conflicting sovereignty claims in the Paracel (Xisha) Islands in the South China Sea, including some minor military confrontations at sea. While Vietnam will welcome the dropping of the arms sale ban, it has had no trouble finding other sources of military supplies—it is the eighth largest arms importer in the world. Nor has Vietnam allowed relations with China to collapse, as in the Philippines.

Here again, Putin's initiatives with both Japan and ASEAN have thrown a huge monkey wrench into the Anglo-American war drive, as the potential for great economic development projects, including the participation of Japan, has redefined the dynamic and potential direction for the entire region.

voke a war over the South China Sea, where these two members of ASEAN have significant, conflicting territorial claims with China. The Philippines has been central to aggravating tensions, where outgoing President Noynoy Aquino has served as a willing tool of

Vietnam has continued to maintain close relations with Russia over the past decades, and newly appointed Prime Minister Nguyen Xuan Phuc traveled to Moscow before the summit for bilateral meetings with Putin and Prime Minister Dmitri Medvedev. The newly appointed

Defense Minister, Ngo Xuan Lich, made Moscow his first foreign visit from April 23 to 29.

At the same time, the Chinese Ambassador to Vietnam, Hong Xiaoyong, met with Defense Minister Ngo on May 19 in Hanoi, where the two sides agreed to further strengthen military cooperation. Defense Minister Ngo praised the “friendly neighborliness, comprehensive cooperation, long-term stability,” while looking towards the future as “good neighbors, good friends, good comrades, and good partners.”

Even the Philippines

The results of the May 9 presidential election in the Philippines has been a wake-up call for the western sponsors of the semi-colonized Philippine nation. Outgoing President Aquino ignored his own nation’s constitutional ban on foreign bases on Philippine soil by opening up military bases to U.S. occupation. Aquino was also praised by his sponsors for the nation’s supposedly great economic progress, with the highest rate of growth in ASEAN. The fact that that “growth” appears on the books purely as a result of financial speculation, helps to account for the fact that the poverty and hunger rates have increased under Aquino’s rule, while foreign control of the economy has increased.

The result is that a political outsider, Rodrigo Duterte, the Mayor of Davao City on the impoverished southern island of Mindanao, swept the election against the chosen candidates from the elite who have largely ruled the nation on behalf of Wall Street since the U.S.-orchestrated coup against nationalist President Ferdinand Marcos in 1986. Duterte is a wild card—and a bit of a wild man—whose policies are unclear. However, among his many promises—which include such outrageous promises as to kill all the criminals and feed them to the fish in Manila Bay—are several serious ones, which threaten to sever Obama’s control over the nation and potentially to stop Obama’s intention to use the country as a base for war on China.

One of Duterte’s first meetings was with China’s Ambassador to the Philippines, Zhao Jianhua, on May 17. Duterte had said during the campaign that he wanted to cultivate friendly relations with China, and was open to direct talks over the issues in the South China Sea. “If



Office of the City Mayor, Davao City

Rodrigo Duterte (right) has been elected President of the Philippines, sweeping past the candidates chosen by the elites who have collaborated with Obama in war provocations against China. Duterte, who said during the campaign that he wanted to cultivate friendly relations with China, is shown here receiving a book on Chinese President Xi Jinping from Chinese Ambassador to the Philippines, Zhao Jianhua, May 16.

the ship of negotiations is in still waters and there is no wind to push the sail,” he said, “I might just decide to talk bilaterally with China.”

Following the meeting, Ambassador Zhao said that Duterte has expressed his willingness to improve and develop relations between China and the Philippines, and strengthen bilateral cooperation to benefit the peoples of the two countries.

This is sending fearful tremors through the war party in Washington. It has spent the past months preparing to use the expected ruling against China by the Permanent Court of Arbitration in the Hague, in a case brought by the Philippines over sovereign rights in the South China Sea, as justification for a major military confrontation with China.

But the question of real development, through win-win agreements among nations—rather than geopolitical confrontation and austerity under the collapsing economic financial system of New York and London—has led the Philippines, at least potentially, to choose progress over war. Duterte has called on China to invest in his country through its New Maritime Silk Road and the AIIB, for the development of railroads, ports, and other infrastructure, a process desperately needed in the Philippines. This is not only progress, but the end of imperial geopolitics.