

Hit on South Ossetia: A British-Led Action

Lyndon LaRouche was interviewed on Aug. 21 by the English-language Russian TV channel Russia Today; this followed the previous day's airing of part of an interview with EIR senior editor Jeffrey Steinberg, recorded in Washington on Aug. 19. The interviews, which were illustrated with footage from the South Ossetia war zone, are archived on Russia Today's website, at <http://www.russiatoday.com/guests/video/1478> for LaRouche; and <http://www.russiatoday.com/guests/video/1470> for Steinberg. The Russia Today service was launched last year under Russian Information Agency Novosti auspices, with official backing, to counter distortions of Russian realities and policy, appearing in the world press.

Here are the edited transcripts.

Russia Today: To talk more about the war in South Ossetia and its repercussions for the world community, we are now joined live from Germany, by American philosopher, economist, and political activist, Mr. Lyndon LaRouche.

Thank you very much, Mr. LaRouche, for joining us. Let's focus on what happened in South Ossetia: Do you think the war in South Ossetia was started to alienate Russia, and was it a well-staged provocation?

Lyndon LaRouche: It's part of a British-led operation with American support, which was intended to crush Russia by a series of encirclement actions, typified by what happened in Poland just recently.

Dishonest Media Coverage

RT: What do you think of the media coverage of this conflict?

LaRouche: For some time now, in the United States, we've had the most dishonest coverage, of all kinds of things, that I've seen in a long time. Most of the European and American coverage was pretty bad. It was far from the truth in most of these instances.

RT: But why do you think the West turns a blind

eye to who started this war?

LaRouche: Well, the war actually started as an attempt, immediately, to eliminate Russia as a significant factor, to isolate it, to surround it, and break its will. I think that the Putin government responded quite appropriately, and had a correct intelligence estimate of what the nature of the situation was.

RT: What interest, in your opinion, does the United States have in the Caucasus?

LaRouche: It has no particular interest. This is not really a U.S. interest matter. It's a matter of certain international forces. Take the case of George Soros: George Soros is a British national, who operates against the United States, and operates in many parts of the world; he was the key author of the present government of Georgia, and is the representative of a branch of the British Foreign Office, which actually coordinated this entire operation.

RT: But how might the conflict affect the balance of powers in the world in the long run?

LaRouche: I think we're headed for the potential of a new missile crisis, comparable to what happened in 1962—but worse. And this is the danger: We are on the verge, both of a general breakdown of the world's monetary-financial system, and in such a period, we are again looking at the "Guns of August." We're looking at the threat of World War III.

Steinberg Interview: Russians Called Their Bluff

Jeffrey Steinberg: [Discusses the British strategic miscalculation, which shaped the actions of the Georgian government. The broadcast clips from the interview start mid-sentence.]

...that the Russians would blink and not respond with force in the face of this provocation. They had some naive idea, that the U.S.-Russian relationship was so important that Russia would take steps that would be actually suicidal in terms of their constitutional obligations to defend Russian citizens.

The Georgians were using updated versions of old, World War II-era, Katyusha rocket batteries. And any military expert knows that these are not precision-guided weapons. They fire off six to a dozen rockets at one time; they go to a sort of a broad field of fire, and

you know, if you're using those weapons, that you're going to cause massive civilian damage. And so, my understanding is that the capital city of South Ossetia has been completely leveled.

There are tens of thousands of refugees who fled north, into North Ossetia [part of Russian territory—ed.]. We don't know the final casualty figures, but numbers in the range of 15-20,000 have come up. And this was all as the result of the initial assault coming from the Georgian forces, before the Russians responded with overwhelming force, that forced the situation to come to a halt, that lasted only about three or four days. And basically, the Russians called the bluff of the Georgians and those in the West, typified by people like George Soros, and Sir Mark Malloch Brown of the British Foreign Office, who were behind [Georgian President Mikheil] Saakashvili from the beginning of his political career, promoted him, and obviously were pushing him to take a provocative action, that didn't work out the way they thought it would: Russia did not simply roll over and play dead, and ignore an active aggression and an act of brutality against Russian citizens.

And there's very good reason to believe that this is a classic case of what, here in the United States, was referred to as the "carpetbagger government": people who came in from the outside, who had a sort of a limited association with the country, but who came in, and imposed a policy that was not necessarily in the interests of the majority of the Georgian people. So, you've had foreign interests, not Georgian interests, setting the agenda of the Saakashvili government.

And frankly, that government was losing a great deal of popular support. And I think one of the immediate motivations, from Saakashvili's standpoint, for going with this adventure, this provocation in South Ossetia, is that the opposition was gaining strength. If there were early elections, he was going to lose and be out of power. And so, he used the ploy of moving to seize South Ossetia, back from the status of an autonomous region, to being fully integrated back into Georgia, as a way of bolstering his nationalist credentials, to try to save a presidency that was collapsing.

And from a larger standpoint, you had British and certain American factional interests, playing this game to run a provocation against Russia. Because some people in the West would like to get a new Cold War going, at this point, to distract attention away from issues, like the financial crisis and other things like that.