

Soviets make bid for control of Pacific

by Linda de Hoyos

With the accusation, sounded in Moscow World Service July 31, that Japan has returned to "revanchism and militarism," the Soviet Union has embarked on a high-pressure campaign against Japan similar to the terror-blackmail it is waging against Western Europe, particularly West Germany.

The accusation is not a considered response to any shifts in Japanese policy. Although the Japanese have increased defense spending above the psychological benchmark of 1% of GNP, none of the diatribes against Japan's "militarism" appearing since July 25 note that. The motivation is different: Moscow is signaling that it is adding the Pacific theatre to its points of global confrontation with the United States and its allies.

The Soviet armed forces are upgrading their military capabilities in the region accordingly. Twice since the end of July, the Soviets have issued warnings to the effect that they would be engaged in military exercises which involved firing missiles from the Soviet mainland into the waters midway between the Marshall Islands and Hawaii.

In addition, reports appearing in the Soviet military newspaper *Red Star* July 31, indicated that the Soviets had appointed Army Gen. Ivan Moiseevich Tretyak as the new commander for its High Command-Far East. Tretyak succeeds Army Gen. Vladimir Govorov, who was promoted in late June to the post of deputy defense minister.

Govorov was the general who gave the order to shoot down the Korean airliner KAL-007 on Sept. 1, 1983, killing 269 civilian passengers. His successor is guaranteed to carry on this tradition. In a speech in late May before the national congress of Komsomol secretaries in the armed forces, Tretyak stated the commitment of his command: "Every Far Eastern soldier knows that through the fault of American imperialism, [the situation] is deteriorating in the Far East. . . . Our troops will always be ready to carry out the orders of the Motherland and to give a crushing rebuff to any aggressor if he should dare encroach upon our holy soil."

Pre-War propaganda

As in the fall of 1983, when the Soviets downed the KAL-007 and then cheered the North Korean bombing-murder of the South Korean cabinet on Oct. 9, the targets of the Soviet

pressure campaign are South Korea and Japan, for whom Seoul functions as the front line of defense.

The outline of the Soviet campaign against these American allies was put forward by Mongolia Foreign Minister Mangalyn Dugersurn in the August issue of *Kommunist*. Attacking what he describes as a "Washington-Tokyo-Seoul" alliance, Dugersurn claims that the United States is planning to place Pershing II and cruise missiles in both countries and calls upon the peace movement of both countries to follow the example of the Greens in Europe and stage massive protests to stop their deployment.

He also calls for a campaign to force the United States to return to the Carter Doctrine and withdraw its troops from South Korea.

Toward Japan, Moscow is now repeating the same Goebbels-like claims of preemptive attacks from the West that has characterized its on-going terror campaign against West Germany. "One thing is clear," asserts Moscow World Service. "Militarism and revanchism are being revived in Japan. Japanese leaders have already outlined their program for the near future to turn the country into an unsinkable aircraft carrier, into a military power, and to put vast areas of the world ocean under Japanese control."

On July 25, the Soviet daily *Izvestia* reported that joint U.S.-Japanese naval exercises carried out in Mutsu Bay have turned the bay into a "veritable arena of combat action." The purpose of the exercise, said *Izvestia*, was to lay mines along the northern tip of Honshu Island.

The concept being put forward by Washington that Japan should be able to protect the sea-lanes that lie in a 1,000-mile perimeter around it, "is not defensive at all," charged Moscow in a July 25 broadcast in Japanese to Japan. "According to the idea of the [Japanese] Defense Agency, the sea-lane defense concept even presumes so-called 'preemptive strikes' at enemy bases. As you see, it is an undisguised militarist scheme designed to extend the Japanese Navy's activities to the Sea of Japan, the Yellow Sea, and the East China Sea. It directly involves the interests of the Soviet Union, North Korea, and China."

It is noteworthy that China is included on this list of mortally threatened friends. The Soviets are bidding to pry China away from a fledgling military relationship with Japan and Washington. In his *Kommunist* article, the Mongolian puppet foreign minister Dugersurn accused the "imperialist powers" of trying to do "everything in their power to block an improvement in relations between China and the Soviet Union."

The carrot is being held out to Peking. It is also being held out to Tokyo. The Soviets are offering the Japanese participation in a multibillion-dollar project to tap undersea gas off the Sakhalin islands. This makes the Soviet strategy clear: Japan must capitulate to Soviet hegemony or bear the full weight of the steadily growing Soviet military might in the region.