

Showdown This Week on Three Global War Fronts

by Jeffrey Steinberg

April 9—This week is shaping up as a crucial moment in Britain’s drive for thermonuclear confrontation. On all three potential war fronts—Iran, Syria, and North Korea (DPRK)—there are deadlines over the coming days that could provide the immediate opportunity for the British to get a full-blown shooting war going that ends in exchanges of thermonuclear weapons—what Lyndon LaRouche has been warning about for months as a potential “extinction event.”

- Iran: Wrecking the P5+1 Preemptively -

Over the weekend, the British imperial launched a wrecking campaign to sabotage or prevent the P5+1 (UN Security Council Permanent Five plus German) talks from ever getting off the ground. As reported in the *Sunday Telegraph* April 8, the British are putting forward, through their puppet President Obama, a number of unconditional demands intended to stop the P5+1 talks from succeeding—including the demand that Iran permanently shut down the enrichment facility at Fordo *before* the talks even start. Iranian Foreign Minister Ali Akbar Salehi came out sharply this morning against any preconditions for the talks; and finally an agreement was reached to start the talks on April 14, in Istanbul, with the second round set for Baghdad. But the British intent is obvious.

That murderous intent was also on display in news coverage in the past 24 hours, confirming that it was Britain, along with Israel, that tried to sabotage the 2010 updated National Intelligence Estimate (NIE) that

reasserted Iran’s having stopped, and not resumed, its nuclear weaponization program in 2003. A senior U.S. intelligence source emphasized that, after the disastrous experience with Iraq, the intelligence officers involved in the NIEs have learned the lesson, and do not accept discrete “facts” on such sensitive issues as whether or not Iran is working on a nuclear bomb. On the basis of just such discrete facts, both Britain and Israel insist that Iran has secretly resumed work on a nuclear bomb. The U.S. intelligence community firmly disagrees.

With the announcement that the P5+1 talks will finally begin, the British have been handed a setback that they will not take lightly.

And President Obama is coming under pressure from the U.S. intelligence establishment to negotiate in good faith—something that has not been the case up to this moment. On April 8, Paul Pillar, the former head of the Middle East division of the National Intelligence Council and a 30-year career CIA intelligence officer warned that the Obama negotiating stance is a “deal-breaker” and will lead to war. He was referring specifically to the British-authored demand for the immediate shutdown of the Fordo facility.

“The Western message to Tehran,” he wrote in *The National Interest*, “seems pretty clear: we might be willing to tolerate some sort of Iranian nuclear program but only one consisting of facilities that would suffer significant damage if we, or the Israelis, later decide to

bomb it. In other words, we insist on holding Iranian nuclear facilities hostage to armed attack. Not the sort of formula that inspires trust among Iranian leaders and gives them much incentive to move toward an agreement.”

LaRouche responded to the Pillar document, warning: “This is even more significant than that. This is the British policy. The British policy is that they will not launch World War III—thermonuclear World War III—on the condition that the intended victims are helpless.

“And therefore, there is no intention for peace. And the best thing we can do, is have the Supreme Court lead on to the impeachment of Obama.

The people who want peace have got to cooperate with the Supreme Court in dealing with the case of the impeachability of Obama. Because it is the Supreme Court that has to be called in, usually, in an impeachment process of that sort. Congress really has to do the impeachment, but it has to coincide with the acceptance of the Supreme Court.”

Syria Remains in the Cross-Hairs

Today is the date that Syrian forces and heavy military equipment are supposed to be withdrawn from all the urban areas in the country. Over the weekend, the Syrian government asked that the opposition sign a document confirming that they will agree to an immediate ceasefire once the forces and heavy arms are withdrawn. The opposition immediately refused, because it would have been tantamount to recognizing the legitimate existence of the Assad government.

There are reports of shelling across the Turkey-Syrian border in both directions, so far unconfirmed. But as of the recent Friends of Syria meeting in Istanbul,



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In Syria, the opposition's refusal to sign a ceasefire agreement once the government forces are withdrawn from urban areas has stymied efforts to end the conflict there. Shown: a demonstration in Homs Feb. 3, 2012.

bul, there are reports of Turkish forces planning to conduct cross-border incursions to create a liberated zone inside Syrian territory. Such an action would be an act of war and could rapidly draw other NATO countries into the conflict.

Russian diplomacy is the key to war-avoidance at this late hour. The Russians are hosting Syrian Foreign Minister Walif al-Moallem in Moscow today and tomorrow, and two delegations from the opposition are to arrive in Moscow soon. Any military action against Syria would likely draw in Iran and Lebanon immediately, and spark a larger regional war, easily spreading to Russia and China.

Russian warships are now holding maneuvers in the eastern Mediterranean after a port call at Tartous, Syria. U.S. Navy vessels are heavily deployed in the Mediterranean and in the Persian Gulf, and the largest joint Air Force maneuvers in years are now underway near Bahrain, involving the United States, all of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) states, as well as Turkey and Pakistan.

The Russian diplomacy is being closely coordinated

with former UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan, who is the designated Arab League mediator.

North Korean Satellite Launch

As promised, North Korea has allowed foreign observers into the site where a rocket launch is scheduled for later this week, perhaps on April 12. The observers confirm that there is a rocket with a satellite at the launch site—not an ICBM. But U.S., Japanese, South Korean, and European security services are claiming that the solid fuel being used in the rocket was produced in Iran, as part of the Iranian-North Korean collaboration on advanced missile design.

Japan and South Korea, along with the U.S. Navy, have deployed anti-ballistic missile systems to potentially shoot down any debris from the North Korean rocket launch. This is a very fragile situation, which could easily lead to further military incidents between the two Koreas, quickly drawing in China, the U.S., and Japan.

China has warned, in the pages of *Global Times*, that the deployment of U.S. ballistic missile defense systems in Asia—as announced recently by President Obama—would force China to fundamentally alter its own strategic deterrents. The real targets of the American and allied (Japan, South Korea, and Australia) BMD system are China and Russia—not the DPRK.

A senior U.S. intelligence official, familiar with the North Korea situation, candidly admitted that the Obama Administration had been told, well in advance, of the planned North Korean satellite launch. The Feb. 29 U.S.-DPRK agreement, brokered by China, occurred well after the satellite launch was announced. Yet the Obama Administration failed to raise any objections during the bilateral talks, and only declared that the launch was a violation of the agreement, along with several UN Security Council resolutions, *after* the talks were concluded.

While this may be seen as a policy blunder, it also points to a much darker reality: Once again, President Obama—on British orders—has created a war-provocation that could easily spin out of control.

Russian War-Avoidance

While U.S. military and intelligence officials have been working overtime to prevent any one of these three nominally separate crises from triggering an out-of-control global confrontation, the Russian government has also continued to warn, in the starkest terms,

about the dangers involved in staging war provocations along its southern border.

On April 3, Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Sergei Rybakov called for the immediate convening of the P5+1 talks—before a war breaks out. “The pot can explode if the diplomatic valve is not opened,” he warned, according to *Russia Today*. “The situation is so acute that any incidents are possible. This is especially dangerous when big military, naval capabilities are concentrated in the area. We find the situation very serious and tending to aggravate. All foot-dragging must stop. We need these talks badly.”

Rybakov singled out “hotheads” in Israel who, he charged, reject out of hand the idea of a diplomatic solution. “Nobody,” he warned, “could win concessions from the Iranian side with a policy of threats, no more than with a policy of sanctions.”

meanwhile, Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov, was on a tour of Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Central Asia, warning that any military attack on Iran would lead to chaos in the entire Caucasus, Caspian, and Central Asian region.

Lavrov’s visit to Azerbaijan was of special significance, because of reports from credible Pentagon and CIA sources, that Israel has made a secret deal with the Azeri government, to give refueling and other access to the Israeli Air Force for an attack on Iran. Historian and author Mark Perry wrote in *Foreign Policy* magazine about the Azeri-Israeli deal, provoking a firestorm of denials and protests. Yet, sources inside the U.S. intelligence community fully backed Perry’s account, and agreed that any military actions so close to the Russian border would bring Moscow into the conflict and virtually assure a much broader war.

Shades of Sarajevo

All of these nominally “separate” situations are tied together, in much the same way that the complex series of alliances and conflicts led to World War I on the basis of what was nominally a limited incident—the assassination of Archduke Ferdinand in Sarajevo in August 1914.

This is a situation that requires tremendous patience and solid diplomacy. But we have a trigger-happy British-run U.S. President who has done everything possible to wreck relations with Moscow and Beijing at a moment when the slightest incident could trigger thermonuclear World War III. Is there any doubt that the only durable war prevention is Obama’s removal from office now?