

INSTEAD OF WORLD WAR III

Build a Eurasian Union From Vladivostok to Lisbon

by Helga Zepp-LaRouche

April 25—If we are going to eliminate the threat of a civil war in Ukraine, which could escalate quickly into a regional war, and even to a thermonuclear World War III, concrete solutions must immediately be placed on the agenda. The abduction of the OSCE (Organization of Security and Cooperation in Europe) observers today in eastern Ukraine underlines that time is running out.

Especially given the escalation of violence in eastern Ukraine, the OSCE and the signatories of the Geneva Declaration on Ukraine must return to the agreements of Feb. 21 and April 17, according to which all illegal armed groups have to be disarmed, and all illegally occupied buildings, streets, squares, or other public spaces must be vacated.

The interpretation of the Geneva Declaration by U.S. Assistant Secretary of State Victoria Nuland (infamous for her expletive “F—k the EU!”), that this only refers to the “separatists” in eastern Ukraine, but not to the Nazi occupiers in Kiev, who meanwhile have received “permits” and are no longer illegal, is as outrageous as it is arrogant. The interventions in Kiev of Vice President Joe Biden and CIA Director John Brennan, under whose patronage elements of the neo-Nazi Right Sector, interspersed with the “Ukrainian Army,” are militarily attacking the population in eastern Ukraine, shows that a different combination must be put together to solve the crisis. There is no reason why the Obama Administration should be a leading participant, since Ukraine is not a member of NATO. Further-

more, the United States has no strategic interests to defend in Ukraine, as U.S. Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Martin Dempsey told President Obama, according to informed sources. The EU and Russia must bear the main responsibility instead.

Natalia Vitrenko, a Ukrainian economist and chair of the Progressive Socialist Party of Ukraine, proposed in TV interviews this week, that Ukraine be temporarily placed under foreign receivership, jointly by the EU and Russia, since the current transitional government in Kiev is obviously too weak and also unwilling to enforce the Geneva Declaration.

Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov and German Foreign Minister Frank-Walter Steinmeier, speaking by phone today, agreed that the OSCE should play the central role in facilitating an understanding among all Ukrainian forces, to achieve de-escalation and an end to violence and the Army’s deployment—i.e., by disarming illegal units and fostering a dialogue between these forces about constitutional changes.

It is now obvious that the conditions simply do not exist to successfully conduct the presidential elections that are scheduled for May 25. Instead, a referendum on federalization of Ukraine and constitutional reform should be the immediate priority. Then the circumstances could be created for a presidential election that does not tear the country apart, but rather, creates the possibility of either retaining its territorial integrity, or proceeding with orderly ordinary partition, as occurred



Vice President Joe Biden in Kiev, April 22, trying to bolster the illegal and unelected Ukrainian government, which includes neo-Nazis from the Svoboda party in Cabinet positions.



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One of Biden's and Brennan's former friends: Aleksandr Muzychko, a leader of the Right Sector, which has now been incorporated into Kiev's "security services." In 2007, Muzychko pledged to fight against "communists, Jews, and Russians" for as long as blood flows in his veins. Muzychko was shot dead in March.



CSIS

CIA Director John Brennan made a secret visit to Kiev in April. Our sources have not yet disclosed what disguise he wore.

with the peaceful separation of the Czech Republic and Slovakia.

Geopolitics vs. Development

Even more important than these specific steps for de-escalation in Ukraine, however, is to change the strategic parameters that provide the backdrop for this crisis. It is not only Ukraine—where the average monthly income has shrunk from EU400 to less than EU300—that is economically at a dead end. The entire trans-Atlantic financial sector is bankrupt. Neither most of the American "systemically important" too-big-to-fail banks, nor a majority of European banks, which are currently undergoing a stress-test by the European Central Bank and the European Banking Authority, will be able to survive without continued bailouts—hyperinflationary money-printing and quantitative easing (QE). Meanwhile, the now-adopted law allowing "bail-ins," meaning the expropriation of deposits of ac-

count holders and the owners of bank shares and loans, would lead to the catastrophic collapse of the real economy.

It is this impending collapse of the trans-Atlantic financial system, dominated by London and Wall Street, that is the real reason for the acute danger of war. The same geopolitical impulses that led to the First World War are now reigning in London and New York. Just as the geopolitical ideology of an allegedly irreconcilable dichotomy of interests between the Eurasian "heartland" and the Atlantic "rimlands," propagated by Halford Mackinder and Lord Milner to prepare the chessboard upon which the First World War was

then fought, so the current imperial financial oligarchy sees Asia's relative growth as a threat.

The need for this financial empire—also known as globalization—to devour more and more parts of the world for the purpose of primitive accumulation of local resources, is ultimately also behind the continual eastward expansion of NATO and the EU, as well as the encirclement of China with a network of military alliances in the Pacific region.

The only way to effectively overcome the threat of war is therefore to put a stop to the casino economy of London and Wall Street. In the United States, a broad movement is building in favor of the reinstatement of the Glass-Steagall bank separation law, which was Franklin D. Roosevelt's response in 1933 to the criminal excesses of Wall Street that had been responsible for the Crash of 1929 and the Depression of the 1930s. The LaRouche movement is at the forefront of this fight. Several U.S. Senators and Congressmen have announced at public events in the last few days that they will be launching a coordinated initiative for Glass-Steagall in the coming week.

They are being supported by “Americans for Financial Reform” and more than 200 other Democratic grassroots organizations that together are circulating an e-mail, titled “Help Elizabeth Warren Change Wall Street and Pass the 21st Century Glass-Steagall Act,” which calls for “closing the Wall Street casino.” The AFL/CIO and numerous civil rights organizations are also part of this campaign. If Congress enacts the Glass-Steagall standard, as these Congressmen are determined that it will do, then Europe too, since the global financial system is tightly integrated, will have no choice but to do the same thing, and to say goodbye to the casino economy.

Meanwhile, Russia is preparing for tougher sanctions, which Gen. Harald Kujat (ret.), the former Chief of Staff of the Bundeswehr, rightly called “political bankruptcy” that would hurt Germany more than Russia. He was speaking yesterday on the talk show Berlin-Mitte with Maybrit Illner [see *Documentation*]. Indeed, Russian economist Sergei Glazyev, an advisor to President Putin, described the sanctions as manna from heaven, because they would force Russia to turn away from monetarist premises. Glazyev also presented a comprehensive proposal for a Russian credit system, which would aim at tripling of production, growth of approximately 6-7% of GDP, and stronger trade with Asia. [See article in *Economics*.]

In this period of greatest danger and the disruption of “business as usual,” Germany is confronted with more fundamental questions than has been the case since 1945. Germany can and must play a decisive role in overcoming the threat of war, by a courageous policy of dialogue and negotiations with Russia. The majority of German institutions are wrestling with this issue.

The West should accept the offer that President Putin has often made and has now repeated, at the height of the crisis in Ukraine. The vision of a unified Eurasian economic and humanitarian region, from the Atlantic to the Pacific, in which all EU nations and future participants in the Eurasian integration process will cooperate to their mutual benefit, is now within reach.

Chinese President Xi Jinping has put on the agenda the project for a New Silk Road and its complement, the Maritime Silk Road. This is a very important component of the Eurasian Land-Bridge program for economic integration of the Eurasian continent, which the Civil Rights Solidarity Movement (BüSo) has campaigned for in Germany ever since the collapse of the Soviet Union.

We have two options. Either we escalate the sanc-

tions against Russia, shooting ourselves in the foot economically and ending up in a third world war that will mean the end of humanity; or we choose the alternative: Together with United States, we put an end to the casino economy by Glass-Steagall-style bank separation; replace monetarism, which is impoverishing and killing the world’s people, with a credit system that will rebuild the real economy; and build the World Land-Bridge, which, in the tradition of the ancient Silk Road, will connect peoples and nations on a higher level.

That’s the only way the crisis in Ukraine can be overcome!

Translated from German by Susan Welsh

Documentation

Putin Speaks on Ukraine, Crimea with Constituents

In the annual “Direct Line with Vladimir Putin” TV town meeting on April 17, a four-hour call-in question-and-answer session, the Russian President laid out his position on the situation in Ukraine and Crimea, among many other topics. We excerpt highlights. The full transcript is available in English at <http://eng.news.kremlin.ru/news/7034>.

Asked about developments in eastern Ukraine, Putin replied:

Before I answer your question, I’d like to go back a little to review recent events in Ukraine. As you know, President Yanukovich refused to sign the Association Agreement with the EU. No, he did not refuse to sign it, but said that he could not sign it on the EU conditions, because it would dramatically worsen the socio-economic situation in Ukraine and affect Ukrainians. Yanukovich said that he needed more time to analyze the document and to discuss it with the Europeans. This provoked public unrest that eventually culminated in an unconstitutional coup, an armed seizure of power. Some liked it, and some did not. People in eastern and southeastern regions of Ukraine were worried about their future and the future of their children, because they saw a rapid growth of nationalist sentiments, heard threats, and saw that [the new authorities] wanted to

invalidate some of the ethnic minorities' rights, including the rights of the Russian minority. On the other hand, this description is relative, because Russians are native persons in Ukraine. But an attempt was made to invalidate all decisions regarding the use of the native language. This alarmed people, of course. What happened next?

Instead of starting a dialogue with these people, Kiev appointed new governors—oligarchs and billionaires—to these regions. People are suspicious of oligarchs as it is. They believe that they earned their riches by exploiting people and embezzling public property, and these oligarchs have been appointed to head their regions. This only added to the public discontent. People chose their own leaders, but what did the new government do to them? They were thrown into prison. Meanwhile, nationalist groups did not surrender their weapons, but threatened to use force in the eastern regions. In response, people in the east started arming themselves. Refusing to see that something was badly wrong in the Ukrainian state and to start a dialogue, the government threatened to use military force and even sent tanks and aircraft against civilians. It was one more serious crime committed by the current Kiev rulers.

I hope that they will see that they are moving into a deep hole, and that they are pulling their country along. In this sense, the talks that will start today in Geneva are very important, because I believe that we should get together to think about ways out of this crisis and to offer people a real, not sham, dialogue. The current Kiev authorities have travelled to the eastern regions, but who do they talk to there? They talk to their appointees. There's no need to go to Donbass for this, because they can summon them to Kiev for a meeting. They should talk with the people and with their real representatives, with those whom people trust. They should release the arrested [opponents], help people to express their opinion in an organized manner, suggest new leaders and start a dialogue.

People in the eastern regions are talking about federalization, and Kiev has at long last started talking about decentralization. But what do they mean? To be able to understand what they mean, they should sit down at the negotiating table and search for an acceptable solution. Order in the country can only be restored through dialogue and democratic procedures, rather than with the use of armed force, tanks, and aircraft. . . .



Russian Presidential Press and Information Office

President Putin during his four-hour discussion with citizens on April 17.

Coup d'État in Kiev

Yury Abisov, commander of Crimea's Berkut riot police: . . . Our squad was in Kiev when the Maidan took power from [President Viktor] Yanukovych. They burned us, threw stones, and opened fire at us. Dozens of fighters were killed, hundreds were wounded, but we had an order not to shed blood. After that we were betrayed.

You have known Mr. Yanukovych for a long time. Has he always been such a wimp and a turncoat?

Putin: You know, there is a Russian saying: "Heavy lies the crown of Monomakh." The burden of responsibility on the shoulders of a head of state, whether large or small, is great. In critical moments, one relies on his or her own personal experience and moral values.

As for Mr. Yanukovych, he fulfilled his duty in the way he considered possible and appropriate. Certainly, I spoke with him many times during the crisis and after he arrived in the Russian Federation. We talked about the possibility of using force, among other things. There can be different attitudes to this, but the essence of his answer was that he thought of using force many times but he said that he did not have the heart to sign the order to use force against his citizens. . . .

Another caller asked why Yanukovych fled the country.

Putin: First, I don't agree that Yanukovych fled. He had to leave, but he did not flee from Kiev; he was on a regional trip while the presidential administration and government buildings were taken over in Kiev in breach of a signed agreement.

When Yanukovych signed the agreement on Feb. 21, which was guaranteed by three European foreign

ministers, from Poland, France, and Germany, he believed that this agreement would be honored. Under it, Yanukovych pledged not to use the Army or other armed force against protesters, and to pull the Interior Ministry units, including the Berkut, out of Kiev, while the opposition was to withdraw from the occupied administrative buildings, dismantle the barricades, and disarm its fighters. Yanukovych agreed to hold early parliamentary elections, to return to the 2004 Constitution, and to hold presidential elections in December 2014. Had they wanted it, he would have agreed to hold presidential elections in a month or a month and a half, because he was ready to agree to anything.

But as soon as he left Kiev and pulled the Interior Ministry units out of the city, the opposition renewed its attacks, seizing the presidential administration building, among other government buildings, and accomplishing a coup d'état in the full and classical meaning of the word....

What Will Happen in Eastern Ukraine?

Irina Khakamada, a Russian politician who ran against Putin in the 2004 elections, asked whether a compromise between the U.S. and Russia could prevent war over Ukraine.

Putin: Is there a possibility of Russia reaching a compromise with the U.S. on Ukraine? A compromise should be reached by the various political forces *in Ukraine*, not third parties. This is actually the key issue here. We can only support and accompany this process.

Regarding the question of what should come first: a constitutional referendum followed by elections, or elections first to stabilize the situation and then a referendum: The essential issue is how to ensure the legitimate rights and interests of ethnic Russians and Russian speakers in the southeast of Ukraine....

I would like to remind you that what was called Novorossiia (New Russia) back in the tsarist days—Kharkov, Lugansk, Donetsk, Kherson, Nikolayev, and Odessa—were not part of Ukraine back then.... Russia lost these territories for various reasons, but the people remained.

Today, they live in Ukraine, and they should be full citizens of their country. That's what this is all about. The issue is not whether the referendum on decentralization or federalization is followed by elections or the elections come before the architecture of the state is changed. The key issue is providing *guarantees* to these people. Our role is to facilitate a solution in Ukraine, to

ensure that there are guarantees. People from southeast Ukraine will ask you, will ask us, and the current authorities in Kiev: Fine, the elections will be held on May 25, but do you want us to recognize their outcome? You will forget your promises the very next day and send new oligarchs to Donetsk, Kharkov, Lugansk, and so on. What about guarantees? We need answers. I hope that an answer will be found....

A caller from the Irkutsk Region asked whether Putin plans "to send a limited contingent of troops to southeastern Ukraine to protect its Russian-speaking population."

Putin: Despite the events in Crimea, we should not lose our heads, but should proceed from realities. First, we must admit that the ethnic composition of Crimea differs from that of southeastern Ukraine....

The ethnic composition of the population there is approximately 50-50. I have already mentioned that the final decision to return Crimea to the Russian Federation was only based on the results of the referendum. When I saw these results, and saw for myself that almost all residents voted for joining Russia, I repeat, we had no other choice and there could have been no other decision.

As for what is happening in southeastern Ukraine, we don't know for sure. But we believe that we ought to do everything we can to help these people defend their rights and determine their fate on their own. This is what we will fight for. Let me remind you that the Federation Council of Russia gave the President the right to use the Armed Forces in Ukraine. I very much hope that I will not have to exercise this right and that, through political and diplomatic means, we will be able to resolve all the pressing, if not to say burning, issues in Ukraine....

From Lisbon to Vladivostok

In reply to a question from German analyst Alexander Rahr, from Berlin, about shared values between East and West:

Putin: Russia's values do not differ dramatically from European values. We belong to the same civilization. We are different, and we have some features that are unique to us, but we have the same ingrained values. I believe that we must certainly strive to create a greater Europe from Lisbon to Vladivostok, as I have said more than once, including today. If we accomplish this task, we will be able to take our rightful place in the future world. But if we choose a different path, if we divide

Europe, European values and people, if we promote separatism in the broad meaning of the word, this will make us all insignificant and mediocre players who will have no influence over their own development, let alone global development. . . .

German Gen. Kujat: Talk to Russians, Not About Them

April 25—Former Bundeswehr Chief of the General Staff Gen. Harald Kujat (ret.) has been very outspoken about the Ukraine crisis in recent weeks, urging Germany to reject sanctions and work with Russia to find solutions. He told Bavaria 2 Radio on April 16:

Before the Crimea annexation, NATO offered no contribution to calm the situation. NATO could have done this. And, after the Crimea annexation, with certain statements, it actually added to the escalation of the crisis rather than to de-escalation. We heard too many different voices from the Western camp that talk about Russia but don't talk with Russia. No. NATO should have, from the beginning, from the first day, should have become active, because NATO has a strategic partnership with Russia and in the Fundamental Principles Treaty, upon which this Partnership is based, it is stated explicitly that in situations where the security interests of both sides come into question or differences of opinion come up, the NATO-Russia Council must convene to solve this problem through consultation. That can take place at the level of the foreign ministers, it can be at the level of the heads of governments. And that is what NATO didn't do.

General Kujat participated in a round-table discussion on the Maybrit Illner TV talk show on April 24, challenging the German government, as a NATO member, to demand the immediate convening of the NATO-Russia Council. He pointed out that NATO is comprised of its member-states, and that defending its

own members is one thing, but everything else is “escalation rhetoric”—a reference to recent provocative remarks by NATO Secretary General Anders Fogh Rasmussen. Here is an excerpt from the discussion.

Illner: Will Putin and the West wait for internal solutions [in Ukraine]?

Kujat: No. The longer the West temporizes and does nothing, and certainly, the longer it tries to control this crisis with sanctions or by “showing the fleet” in the Baltic Sea, the more time Putin has to let things

ripen and to use it for his own purposes. The West must come out concretely with proposals for what a solution would look like. It must declare that Ukraine is in no condition to become a NATO member, and won't be for a long time, nor can NATO accept it as a member, as it is in no position to guarantee the security of this country.

We are also prepared to talk about the future of Ukraine. Naturally there is a solution, as we have seen in the past. Czechoslovakia was separated into two states, voluntarily and without difficulty, without civil war. Why shouldn't that be possible in Ukraine? Or why couldn't there

be a federal system? Why isn't a federal system that is good for Germany not also be good for Ukraine? Why should it not function in Ukraine? And above all, in such a federal system, it must be clear that minority rights must also be guaranteed, and not only for Russians. There is a strong Polish minority in Ukraine, and other minorities that are not so big. . . . Why shouldn't that be possible? But above all the West has to finally pry itself out of its armchair, and stand up and approach Putin, and with proposals.

If we proceed further with sanctions, then we are only hurting ourselves. A country like Russia can much more easily deal with sanctions than we can, and at this very moment we are in the process of destroying all the economic connections with Russia which we have built up over many, many years, the trust we have developed, and threatening jobs in Germany. This isn't crisis management, it is a declaration of political bankruptcy!



Retired Gen. Harald Kujat, former head of the Bundeswehr.

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