

Putin: Attacks on Ethnic Russians Are Nazi-Like

Aug. 29—Speaking to the annual youth event at Lake Seliger in northern Russia, President Vladimir Putin compared the actions of the Ukrainian authorities against Russian ethnics to World War II Nazis.

In a very personal, several-hour session, Putin told the youth, “Sad as it might seem, this reminds me of the events of World War II, when the German Nazi troops surrounded our cities, like Leningrad, and directly shelled those cities and their residents,” reported *Russia Today*. “Why do they [the militias] call this operation military-humanitarian? Because here’s the sense of their actions today: to drive the artillery away from the major cities, so that they can’t kill people. And what do we hear from our Western partners in reply: that they can’t do that, that they should allow themselves to be torn to pieces and killed, and then they will be good guys? They [Kiev] should sit down at the negotiating table.”

‘We’re No Fools’

From the quotes in *Russia Today*, the Lake Seliger event was a frank, open discussion that went after the Anglo-American policies.

“We’re no fools,” Putin said. “We saw symbolic cookies handed out on the Maidan [by Assistant Secretary of State for European and Eurasian Affairs Victoria Nuland—ed.], information support, political support. What does that mean? A full involvement of the U.S. and European nations into the process of the power change: *a violent unconstitutional regime change* (emphasis added).

He added that “the part of the country that disagreed with that [coup] is being suppressed with the use of jets, artillery, multiple launch systems, and

tanks.... If these are today’s European values, I’m gravely disappointed.”

Putin wryly retold the old joke that in the U.S.S.R., everything made “turned into a Kalashnikov,” to say that “anything the U.S. touches turns into Libya or Iraq.”

But the issues addressed were deadly serious: He said that the Kiev massacres of citizens in “Donbass, Luhansk, Odessa,” make “clear to us what would have happened to Crimea” if Russia had not “taken measures to provide free expression” to the people of Crimea.

He also issued a warning about the nuclear threat, saying, “Our partners, whatever shape their countries are in, and whatever foreign policy concept they are following, should always understand that it’s better not to tangle with us, in terms of a possible armed conflict. But, thank God, I think it’s not occurring to anybody today to launch a major conflict with Russia.... Russia is one of the most powerful nuclear states. It’s not words, it is the reality.... We are strengthening our nuclear deterrence forces, we are strengthening our armed forces. We are beefing up our potential and will continue doing so.”

But, this is “not to threaten anyone, but to feel secure.”

Earlier today, Putin issued a statement calling on the militia groups of eastern Ukraine “to open a humanitarian corridor for Ukrainian service members who have been surrounded, so as to avoid any needless loss of life, giving them the opportunity to leave the combat area unimpeded, and be reunited with their families, returned to their mothers, wives, and children, and to quickly provide medical assistance to those who were injured in the course of the military operation.”

In the same statement, Putin commended the militia for “achieving a major success,” and called on Kiev’s putsch government, again, to stop military action, call a ceasefire, and sit down at the negotiating table.