I. War Danger

HELGA ZEPP-LAROUCHE WEBCAST

The Imminent War Danger Still Exists

This is an edited transcript of the Schiller Institute's January 28, 2022 webcast. The full video is available here.

Harley Schlanger: While the world was kept waiting for a couple of days for the United States' response to President Putin's demand that there be new security guarantees extended to Russia, the response was delivered on Jan. 26. Sergey Lavrov, the Russian Foreign Minister, said that while there's ongoing discussion, there was no response to the core issues. Helga, what's your thinking on where this leaves us?

Helga Zepp-LaRouche: The war danger clearly still exists, because it's very clear that there are elements who are not satisfied with the relationship between United States, and Russia, and China for that matter, to go in a civilized direction. But because of the systemic collapse going on in the Western financial system, the desperation is big. And there are, despite what is officially being said, there are always psywar ops, covert operations being threatened, it's a very complex picture.

To start off with what the Russian response has been, Lavrov, and the Russians in general, have said that they are very disappointed that the United States and NATO did not respond to the core issue of their demand that NATO should not further expand to the East, that no offensive weapons system should be placed along the Russian borders, and that Ukraine should definitely not ever be in NATO. These were the absolutely important issues, and they were rejected by both the United States and by NATO. And what was offered instead was all kinds of—what from the Russian standpoint are also—useful discussions, but not the essential ones.

Making offers for arms control, for continuation of the dialogue—all of that is useful, but I think it is to be noted that the basic position of the West [was] to not respond to the very legitimate security interests of Russia.

It's very difficult to say where this will all end up. But the bullying coming from people like Blinken, in particular, is so blatant, and the obvious neglect of the United States, not only for the security interests of Russia, but also the security interests of European countries like Germany, or economic interests, is also so absolutely clear, that this whole thing may end up in a complete backlash, in a blowback. Because if the United States insists on being the hegemon, and keeping a unipolar world, and then in the process of trying to ram that through, tramples over the interests of its so-called Allies, and creates open hostility with its so-called adversary—Russia and China—this may end up in not what the architects of the confrontation have intended,

U.S. Army/Timothy Brokhoff

One of more than 7,000 U.S. Army-led paratroopers in Exercise Swift Response, part of NATO's Defender-Europe 21, May 10, 2021.

but it may reveal the absolutely *uncivilized* behavior of those who are pushing this confrontation.

Lavrov said that compared to NATO, the response of the United States was almost diplomatic decency, while the response from NATO was so ideologically blatant that it leaves almost no room for any civilized discussion.

Now there are different voices. There is a lot of psywar and it's sometimes very difficult to know what is true and what is not. The latest flareup is this CNN report by Matthew Chance, who claims that in yesterday's phone discussion between President Biden and President Zelenskyy, Biden supposedly would have said that once the ground is frozen, the Russia attack will come, and he had supposedly told Zelenskyy that Kiev will be sacked, that he should prepare for a big impact—all language that is draconian and barbarian.

UN/Cia Pak

Vlodymyr Zelenskyy, President of Ukraine.

The White House denied that this was said. I think it's very unlikely—Russia has no interest for Russia to occupy Ukraine! They have an interest to protect the Russians in east Ukraine, but for sure, not to overrun Ukraine, where the entire west is filled with Nazis and neo-Nazis and it would be a complete mess to even think of occupying a terrible place like that.

So, I think there is incredible psywar going on. Zelenskyy himself said he does not think anything has changed, only the hype has increased. Papers like the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* say that they think there is a very low probability of a Russian attack. One has to differentiate between the confetti which is being thrown around, and the core question. And the core question is that a solution must come out of all of this which takes into account the basic security interest of Russia, and that is the bottom line.

Schlanger: I think, Helga, for the sake of our American listeners, who don't get any of this reporting, it's worth noting that what CNN said was not only denied by the Zelenskyy spokesman, who said that no one in the President's office said such a thing in the discussion with Biden, and described it as completely false, but U.S. National Security Council spokeswoman Emily Horne said that CNN's sources are leaking falsehoods. So that's what you're getting in the United States, with the psywar.

And speaking of psychological warfare, there is the British intelligence report that came out this week which said that they have evidence that the Russians are about to try to install someone to run the President's office in Ukraine, presumably as a coup, who's favorable to Russia. The Russians denied this, and the person whom they named said this is completely preposterous; but we're seeing this kind of psychological warfare.

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Vladimir Putin, President of Russia, videoconferencing with the Russian-Italian Chamber of Commerce, January 26, 2022. German business and manufacturing associations want a similar conference, despite the interfering opposition of the EU.

Now, countering the psychological warfare, there's been a continuing diplomatic offensive from Russia. Putin had an interesting discussion with the Russian-Italian Chamber of Commerce, and it appears that a German business and manufacturing grouping wants to

DoD/Phil Schmitten

Vladimir Yermakov, Director of Arms Control and Nonproliferation in the Russian Foreign Ministry, has demanded that all modernized nuclear weapons in Europe be withdrawn to the territory of the U.S. Shown: Four B-61 nuclear free-fall bombs mounted on a bomb cart.

have a similar discussion. And the EU has denounced this. This is part of what appears to be a growing split occurring within Europe, isn't it?

Zepp-LaRouche: I think it's deepening. Blinken is going around and talking about the "unity of the allies and NATO" and so forth. I think this is absolutely not true. As you say, the EU tried to pressure Italian businessmen and corporations not to go into this dialogue with Putin, and only two or three did back down, but the vast majority did have this dialogue.

And in Germany, the German Committee on Eastern European Economic Relations (*Ost-Ausschuss der deutschen Wirtschaft*), which is basically the core of German industry, they also came out and want to have a videoconference with Putin. And they also reminded people of the statements by former Chancellor Helmut Schmidt, that the most important good is the maintenance of peace. And they also made emphatically the point that the security interests of Russia must be respected. That is important.

Then you have in the Social Democracy (SPD) an appeal circulating that Germany has to remember and return to the Ostpolitik of Willy Brandt and Egon Bahr—détente. And there are similar other appeals circulating. There is a reawakening of the peace movement in several countries, and this is a reflection of the fact that people are becoming really. really freaked out about the possibility of war.

There is one demand coming from Vladimir Yermakov, who is the Director of Arms Control and Nonproliferation in the Russian Foreign Ministry, and he demands that the modernized nuclear weapons which are in Europe, the B61 and other types, that they all be withdrawn, back to the territory of the United States, and that the five non-nuclear members of NATO that are training for a nuclear attack on Russia, that that must be absolutely halted.

I think this will be a demand that will be picked up by peace-oriented people in Europe, because the fact that these weapons do exist on European soil makes the countries that have these weapons prime targets if it were to come to any kind of a confrontation. It is quite clear that there is no way that the United States and NATO could win a conventional war against Russia. The United States may have all kinds of modern equipment, and right now both the British and the United States are having continuous transport of so-called "lethal weapons" into Ukraine; and also from the Baltic states, whom the U.S. has given permission that they can transfer weapons which they got from the U.S. to Ukraine.

But if you look at the map, Russia has the advantage of territorial depth—Russia is a country with 11 time zones—and any time somebody tried to conquer Russia, starting with Napoleon, and continuing with Hitler, they got such bloody noses: The great Napoleonic army was decimated to a few hundred poor, lost souls who returned from that campaign. Hitler could not defeat Russia. It was a tremendous loss for the Russian people, but there was no way that Hitler could have won that war. A similar fate awaits any nation that would try to win a war against Russia.

So, the danger is that such a war would come to the question of the use of nuclear weapons.

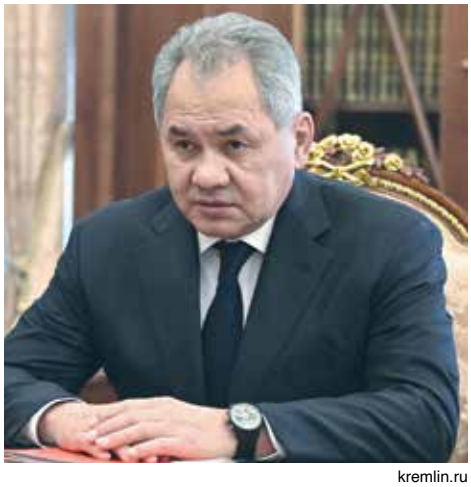
Now, we are still sitting on a powder keg. Russian Defense Minister Sergei Shoigu has warned that there is evidence of American or British mercenaries now operating inside the territory of Ukraine. There are reports about private military companies, in part these are the "gray zone" people, former soldiers now in private firms training people who have a crazy af-

fection for fighting wars. So, there is a big danger. A provocation or a false-flag operation could be launched at any moment. This is something to be watched very carefully.

Then there is the discussion that Xi Jinping supposedly asked Putin to wait until after the Winter Olympics are over before attacking Ukraine—which is ludicrous, but it increases the danger. People must really step back from this whole question and get back to their senses. One has the feeling that the people who are pushing this confrontation have gone completely mad: They're playing with the existence of civilization. We have to walk back from the brink of the potential annihilation of the human species.

Schlanger: There is one other aspect I want to bring up, which you mentioned before, which is the bullying by Blinken. We're seeing more signs of insanity from Congress in terms of sanctions that they're talking about, new economic sanctions against Russia. "Preemptive sanctions," which is being discussed by a number of different people—including some in Ukraine—saying the best thing to make sure that Russia doesn't invade is to have "preemptive sanctions." And then you have the threats against the diplomats, the fact that more diplomatic offices are being shut down—this is all part of what seems like a pre-war mobilization.

UN/Emmanuel Hungrecker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Sergey Lavrov, Russia's Minister of Foreign Affairs (left), has insisted that Russia has no interest in attacking Ukraine, and that if it is up to Russia, there will be no war. Meanwhile, Sergei Shoigu, Russia's Defense Minister (right), points out that American or British mercenaries are now operating in Ukraine.

Zepp-LaRouche: Well, I must say that this is not civilized behavior. The U.S. recalling its non-essential diplomats from Ukraine is an unfriendly act. There is no reason to do that. Then there is this talk about the Russian ambassador to the United States, Anatoly Antonov, that he may be forced to leave in April. Now, that would be a very, very dramatic escalation, to basically force the ouster of the most important diplomat in United States-Russian relations. And then, there was a readout from the White House, from unnamed "senior administration officials" discussing what the nature of potential economic sanctions against Russia would be, in the case of a Russian attack.

The Russians have stated again and again, they do not intend to attack. Foreign Minister Lavrov has said many times, that if it is up to Russia, there will be no war. And other officials have said the only people who are pushing a war between Russia and Ukraine are in the West. Russia has no interest in launching an attack. Russia has stationed troops along its border to make the point that the nation has a security interest and wants to have a solution. But Russia has never said it intended to attack.

Now, the White House officials' report is quite incredible. It is the full transcript of a Jan. 25 background press briefing. The "senior Administration officials" discussed a whole range of "severe economic measures" starting "at the top of the escalation ladder"—in other words, not moving up slowly, getting stronger and stronger, but going full blast from the beginning. One official said they say want to "hit Putin's strategic ambitions to industrialize his economy quite hard," by denying him access to all modern advanced technologies, like artificial intelligence, quantum computing, anything having to do with defense or aerospace. The aim is to prevent Putin's intention to "diversify" from exporting oil and gas, causing an atrophy of the Russian economy: "And so, as we build this effort with our allies and partners, we're willing to work with any country in order to deny Russia an input that it needs to diversify its economy." And on and on with this language.

The language of this is so brutal, basically saying: "Look, we managed with the shock therapy in the 1990s, with Jeffrey Sachs in the Yeltsin period, to turn a former superpower into a raw-materials producing, third world country, and now we will deny Russia the right to industrialize, by applying such measures." Now, that is a form of a declaration of war already! How can you deny a country [the right] to develop industrially? This is really big. People should read this, the official text from the White House. When you read the language, how this is written, you will see that it portrays a mindset that is the mindset of a party declaring war already.

I remember a report by the CIA in 1991, which had similar language, which basically said that Russia has more raw materials than the United States and they have better educated scientists, and therefore, any economic development of Russia must be discouraged. And that was the beginning of the shock therapy, which reduced the industrial capacity of Russia between 1991 and 1994, to only 30% of what it had been before. And the 1990s were a decade which the Russians regard as "genocide," because the demographic curve was reduced by 1 million people per year.

This is also not very realistic.

The Chinese economy, in the meantime, is in the process of overtaking the United States. While there may still be certain areas where such sanctions would be felt in a painful way by Russia or anyone else affected by it, the idea that you can deny Russia's [right to] industrial development by applying such sanctions, is a reflection of the same kind of arrogant mindset.

China put a rover on the far side of the Moon. No western nation has done that. So China could not have stolen that technology from anybody—they're the leader. They're also the leader in terms of fusion energy research and fast train systems and many other areas.

It shows you an intention. That arrogant mindset is reflected in the fact that U.S. Secretary of State Blinken thinks he can force the Europeans to go along with these sanctions, even if it would destroy their own economies. If you go in this direction, then Russia would cut off all oil and gas supplies, which would hit Europe, not the United States.

So this is really wrong, and I can only say that hopefully there will be some people inside the United States who will say this is not the true character of the United States, because you cannot build peace on the basis of doing the utmost damage to whomever you want to have a relationship with.

Schlanger: It's also a confirmation of what your husband, Lyndon LaRouche talked about in his 1998 "Storm Over Asia" video, in which he said the attempt to deny economic development to Russia and China is part of the traditional British geopolitical doctrine, which is dictated from the City of London. And the idea, obviously, that they're trying to stop any Eurasian integration with Europe is really one of the key underlying features.

Now, on that matter, there are some developments around Afghanistan. There's continued discussion of your proposal for Operation Ibn Sina. Why don't you let us know what you have on developments around Afghanistan?

Zepp-LaRouche: I think it's good that there was this conference in Norway, where a delegation of the Taliban met with representatives from the U.S., Germany, I think France, Italy. The fact that this took place, and there are now more organizations working with the Taliban and that there is a recognition that the only way to save the 25 million people whose lives are in acute danger, is to work with the Taliban—this is definitely a breakthrough.

I think the German head of UNICEF gave a report from Kabul, where he said 1 million children are in acute danger and are actually dying; 7 million children are in acute danger. And he said this is as many children altogether as there are in Germany. I haven't checked this figure, but it makes sense, and it shows you the incredible dimension of the need to change the thinking.

And as we have mentioned on this show several times, I launched the Operation Ibn Sina, which refers to the great physician from 1,000 years ago from this region. And I'm very happy that there are now more people picking up on it and really think this is a very good idea, to use Afghanistan as a model to create a modern health care system for every country in the world. And the speech I gave about it, is the cover story in the January 28 issue of *EIR*. You can download and circulate that, and circulate the video of the speech. Both are being tweeted by several influential people, who are sending it through their social media. These ideas are absolutely essential.

I hope this will lead to a really broad discussion and become the basis for actually implementing a modern health system for Afghanistan and every other country on the planet! Because the pandemic is still here, and despite what people hope, new variants are still a possibility. The horrible conditions of many, many countries in the developing sector means that there must be a development perspective. It cannot go on this way, that billions of people are on the verge of famine, losing their livelihoods, and in danger of dying. So, Operation Ibn Sina must be the beginning of a new paradigm.

And this becomes all the more urgent, because we're sitting on a powder keg. The reason for all the war danger is the fact that the financial system is about to blow up. There are many reports that the so-called "emerging markets," which is a synonym for the developing countries, that they may have a huge debt crisis if there is the slightest "tapering" of interest rates by the Federal Reserve. So, the urgency to go with LaRouche's Four Laws, and really go in a completely different direction, rebuilding the world economy by having actual development, starting with a world health system, is of the greatest urgency.

Schlanger: Among those issuing a warning was *Guardian* columnist Larry Elliott, who pointed out that almost 50% of the debt which could be lost in a wave of defaults from poorer countries that are heavily indebted, is owed to financial institutions and investments. That means, people's personal retirement funds are invested in this debt. David Malpass, the President of the World Bank, also warned that we could be seeing a trigger of debt defaults from the developing sector: So, in that sense, the interconnection between the war danger, the spread of disease and collapse of health care, and the overall economic system, really comes back to the importance of Lyndon LaRouche's proposal for a New Bretton Woods.

Zepp-LaRouche: There are many countries in the world that clearly are preparing for the eventuality of a sudden collapse. You see it in many details: Gold buying is up again, which always happens when the population starts to get hysterical, then you have large buyers of gold. You have more and more a tendency to go out of the dollar. So, even if Russia would be cut off from the SWIFT system, I don't think it will have that devastating an effect on Russia, but it could be a "nuclear bomb" for the Western capital markets—at least, that's what Friedrich Merz, the new head of the German Christian Democracy has been saying, and I tend to agree with him on that point.

So, I think we have to have a discussion about a new paradigm: We must completely change the orientation of colonialism, the idea to keep the developing countries poor and suppressed. We have to replace that with a new just world economic order, along the lines of what China is doing with the Belt and Road Initiative, and we must get the Europeans and the United States, hopefully, to cooperate with the Belt and Road Initiative, in the development of Southwest Asia, of Africa, of Ibero America.

If we join hands, there is no problem that cannot be solved! Look at the relationship between Russia and China, which has become a model of what relationships among nations should be. In other words, that each furthers the *best* interests of the other, respects its sovereignty, doesn't meddle in its internal affairs. China offered that many years ago as the model for a great power relationship between the United States and China. So, we have to have a new thinking, and the common interest of mankind must be put first.

If we cannot mobilize the thinking of people to that level, we may not make it as a species. If you want to help this effort, then join the Schiller Institute. We will soon have an international conference on all of these issues, probably in the week of February 7-11. Stay tuned.

Schlanger: Your presentation at the January 22 Schiller Institute meeting, "Can War with Russia Still Be Averted?"—was very effective at identifying what this new paradigm would be and how we would get there.

Helga, thanks for joining us. It's always good to get a note of optimism, but it's also important that people face the fact, as you say, that we're still sitting on a powder keg, and it's a little hard to be totally optimistic when you have a powder keg underneath your rear end: So, join us now, and let's see what we can do about it.

So, Helga, we'll see you next week!

Zepp-LaRouche: I hope so—next week.