

# ‘Immortal Regiment’ Commemoration of World War II Victory Day

by Elliot Greenspan and David Shavin

May 14—As part of Russia’s annual celebration of Victory Day on May 9, commemorating the Soviet Union’s central role in vanquishing the Nazi threat in World War II, families display photos of relatives who had fought. Called the “Immortal Regiment,” this commemoration has come to be observed around the world and to include the honoring of all who fought to defeat Nazism.

However, of note, 27 million Russians, civilian and military, died in the war, which was then about one in every six people. Very few families were left untouched.

On May 9 this year, according to Russia’s Interior Ministry, over 1,000,000 people turned out in Moscow’s Red Square, helping to keep Russia’s Immortal Regiment alive and on the move. There were similar regiments appearing throughout the country, with over 200,000 in Novosibirsk and over 100,000 in Siberia’s Omsk. In Moscow, hundreds of thousands also took part in the 4-5 mile procession through the city center to Red Square.

In Israel, a remnant of surviving World War II Jewish war veterans gathered at Israel’s Herzl Memorial to the Second World War dead.



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*Despite an official U.S. government ban, a contingent of brave Russian-Americans—bearing the 1945 Soviet Banner of Victory—walked across the Brooklyn Bridge in New York City to celebrate the annual Victory Day over fascism in World War II, and to honor the Immortal Regiment of all those who fought, so many of whom died, May 9, 2022.*

As Russian President Vladimir Putin reminded Israeli Prime Minister Naf-tali Bennett recently, more than two million of the Jews that the Nazis slaughtered were Russians. Unfortunately, Israeli veterans’ groups in various parts of the country generally refrained from their normal public celebrations—not from any change of heart, but, as they reported, from concern that their public presence might bring assaults down upon them.

In his remarks at the Victory Day parade in Moscow, Putin emphasized, “There is no family in Russia that was not burnt by the Great Patriotic War; its memory never fades.” In the context of the current Russian “Special Military Operation” to “demilitarize and de-Nazify” Ukraine, he said, “I am addressing our Armed Forces and Donbass militia. You are fighting for our Motherland, its future, so that nobody forgets the

lessons of World War II, so that there is no place in the world for torturers, death squads and Nazis.”

President Putin also issued a profound overture to Americans, which went largely unnoticed and unreported in the U.S.: “We are aware that U.S. veterans who wanted to come to the parade in Moscow were



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*On May 9, hundreds of thousands of citizens in Russian cities and abroad commemorated the Immortal Regiment of those who fought in the Great Patriotic War, marching with portraits of their family members. Here, Russian President Vladimir Putin holds a photo of his brother as he walks with the crowd of over 1,000,000 through Red Square in Moscow.*

actually forbidden to do so. But I want them to know: We are proud of your deeds and your contribution to our common victory. We honor all soldiers of the allied armies—the Americans, the English, the French, Resistance fighters, brave soldiers and partisans in China—all those who defeated Nazism and militarism.”

Putin’s message to Americans is particularly important and poignant, given the unhinged Russophobia in the U.S. and NATO countries generally, and in light of the U.S. and UK banning of the Immortal Regiment procession with portraits of veterans of World War II this year.

### **Commemorated in the United States**

In the United States, a commemoration of the Immortal Regiment was held (despite the official U.S. government ban) on May 8, the date equivalent to May 9 in Russia (reflecting the 1945 time difference of the German surrender in Berlin) in concert with the Victory Day events in Russia and internationally. The national event was held on Zoom, and the Schiller Institute was among the invited participants.

The ceremony featured Anatoly Antonov, the Russian Ambassador to the U.S., who had spoken at the Schiller Institute’s April 9 international

conference on working for a new world framework for peace, security, and economic benefit for all. Also speaking was U.S. activist Ray McGovern, of the Veteran Intelligence Professionals for Sanity, who joined the Ambassador in singing a song in Russian.

Prior to the many Russian-American speakers who followed, two American veterans of World War II gave remarks. One was 97-year-old Al Korby, from New Jersey, a longtime activist with the LaRouche Organization, who said:

I am Alfred Korby, originally from Bayonne, N.J. when I enlisted in the U.S.

Army at age 18, soon after Pearl Harbor. Bayonne today is the site of the Tear of Grief Me-



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*Al Korby with his photo from the time of his U.S. Army service in World War II, New Jersey, May 8, 2022.*





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*Russian-Americans present to World War II U.S. Army veteran Al Korby a replica of the Soviet Banner of Victory, which was raised May 1, 1945, over the Reichstag in Berlin, the day after Hitler's suicide. New Jersey, May 8, 2022.*

memorial to the Struggle Against World Terrorism, a gift of the Russian Government to the USA, in memory of the victims of 9/11. I served for three years in the U.S. Army as an airplane mechanic, in the U.S. and in the Pacific Theatre.

I am honored to participate in the Immortal Regiment, and I join you to salute the memory of the war veterans whose indomitable courage and determination defeated the Nazi scourge. And I fervently hope we can rekindle the “spirit of the Elbe” for our two great nations to address the common interests of mankind again.

May our two peoples cooperate again as I and my colleagues of the international Schiller Institute (led by Helga Zepp-LaRouche) seek to establish a new Security and Development Architecture for all Nations—instead of more war.

Peace through Development. Thank you.

Following Mr. Korby, moderator Igor Kochan, referencing the Schiller Institute’s activity, introduced a video recording of a Russian folk song, performed at the Tear of Grief Memorial in December 2021, by Schiller Institute NYC Chorus soprano Michelle Erin. This annual December memorial originated in 2016, with the Schiller Institute as co-sponsor, with area police and fire departments, clerics, and others, to honor the Alexandrov Ensemble, the famous men’s chorus of the Russian Army, whose plane went down on Christmas Day 2016, as they flew on a humanitarian mission to Syria.

Three Russian-American activists visited Mr. Korby at his home May 8, and presented him with a replica of the Soviet Banner of Victory—the banner raised by the Red Army soldiers on the Reichstag building in Berlin on May 1, 1945, the day after Hitler committed suicide. They wrote on the back of a Victory Day card, “Dear Al Korby, Thank you for your service. Happy Victory Day! We remember! We celebrate! We are proud!”