

Neo-Cons Knee Deep in Caucasus Provocations

by Jeffrey Steinberg

Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov on Sept. 8 delivered the most unambiguous attack on Western countries in recent memory, when he declared that they “bear direct responsibility for the tragedy of the Chechen people when they give political asylum to terrorists. When our Western partners say we should re-examine our policy, what you call tactics, I would advise them not to interfere in our Russian internal affairs.”

The immediate focus of Lavrov’s attacks on Russia’s “Western partners” was the actions of the United States and Great Britain, which have given political asylum to two Chechen separatist leaders, Ilyas Akhmadov and Akhmed Zakayev, who are now living, respectively, in Washington and London. Both men have been linked to Aslan Maskhadov and Shamil Basayev, who head two of the leading Chechen factions peddling independence from Russia.

But the fact that British and American authorities have chosen to give safe haven to people linked to the recent spate of terrorist attacks against Russia, is just the tip of a much uglier iceberg. *EIR* is in the process of assembling a dossier on the heavy involvement of U.S. and British neo-con “liberal imperialist” circles in the drive to oust Russia from the entire oil-rich Caucasus region.

Anglo-American schemes to drive the Russians out of the Caucasus have been building in intensity since 1999. But regional specialists point out that the overall targetting of the region was an integral part of the late-1970s “Bernard Lewis Plan,” which aimed to create an “arc of crisis” along the southern tier of the Soviet Union. The two foci of the destabilization scheme, which involved unleashing Islamist fundamentalist insurgencies, were Afghanistan and Chechnya.

Brzezinski, Haig, and Solarz

It should come as no surprise to regular readers of *EIR*, that one of the architects of the current Caucasus provocations is Jimmy Carter’s National Security Advisor Zbigniew Brzezinski, the man who first embraced British Arab Bureau spook Lewis’s geopolitical schemes to use Islamic radicalism against Soviet communism.

The Brzezinski-Bernard Lewis “arc of crisis” scheme was embraced by the incoming Reagan-Bush Administration in 1981, in part as the result of heavy lobbying of CIA director



Zbigniew Brzezinski, operating currently through the American Committee for Peace in Chechnya, is active in the destabilization of Russia—his lifelong career aim.

William Casey by the then-head of French intelligence, Alexandre de Maranches. The promotion of the Afghan mujahideen became a pet project of the neo-con gang that moved into the Reagan Pentagon and NSC, including such figures as Douglas Feith, Michael Ledeen, and Richard Perle.

In 1999, Freedom House, the neo-con “human rights” destabilization hub, founded by Leo Cherne, launched the American Committee for Peace in Chechnya (ACPC). The goal of the group was unabashed: to interfere into the internal affairs of Russia under the doublespeak slogan that the “Russo-Chechen war” must be settled “peacefully.”

A review of the group’s leading members reveals that this is anything but a bunch of peaceniks. The founding chairs of the group were Brzezinski, former Reagan Secretary of State Alexander “I’m in Charge Here” Haig, and former Congressman Stephen Solarz (D-N.Y.). Members include: Elliott Abrams, Kenneth Adelman, Richard Allen, Richard Burt, Eliot Cohen, Midge Decter, Thomas Donohue, Charles Fairbanks, Frank Gaffney, Irving Louis Horowitz, Bruce Jackson, Robert Kagan, Max Kampelman, William Kristol, Michael Ledeen, Seymour Martin Lipset, Robert McFarlane, Joshua Muravchik, Richard Perle, Richard Pipes, Norman Podhoretz, Arch Puddington, Gary Schmitt, Helmut Sonnenfeldt, Caspar Weinberger, and James Woolsey.

ACPC operates out of Freedom House and the Jamestown Foundation, a Cold War-era Washington think-tank which includes Brzezinski and Woolsey on its board, and which boasts a mission of conducting “democracy”-promoting operations inside “totalitarian” states. Jamestown publishes ACPC’s *Chechnya Weekly*, as well as propaganda briefs against China, North Korea, and other Eurasian countries deemed to be neo-con targets.

Target Chechnya

Indicative of the actual agenda of the ACPC was a Sept. 9, 2004 *New York Times* op-ed by board member Richard Pipes. He wrote, under the provocative title, "Give the Chechens a Land of Their Own," that Russian President Vladimir Putin was dead wrong when he equated the terrorist attack in Beslan, North Ossetia with the 9/11 attacks on New York and Washington. Pipes threatened the Russian leader that Chechen terrorism would not stop until Russia granted the breakaway region its full independence. Citing France's experiences in the 1950s with the Algerian independence movement, Pipes wrote: "The Russians ought to learn from the French. France, too, was once involved in a bloody colonial war in which thousands fell victim of terrorist violence. The Algerian war began in 1954 and dragged on without an end in sight, until Charles de Gaulle courageously solved the conflict by granting Algeria independence in 1962. This decision may have been even harder than the choice confronting President Putin, because Algeria was much larger and contributed more to the French economy than Chechnya does to Russia's, and hundreds of thousands of French citizens lived there."

Pipes threatened: "Until and unless Moscow follows the French example, the terrorist menace will not be alleviated. . . . Russia, the largest country on Earth, can surely afford to let go of a tiny colonial dependency, and ought to do so without delay."

The ACPC's *Chechnya Weekly*, on Sept. 8, further spilled oil on the Caucasus fires, by attacking Putin for failing to bring in the London-based "Chechen separatist diplomat Akhmad Zakayev" to negotiate with the hostage-takers.

Brits Recruit Caucasus Terrorists

What Russian officials also know is that, simultaneous to the launching of the ACPC, the British government was providing even more direct aid to the terrorist insurgents. As *EIR* documented in a Jan. 21, 2000 memorandum to then-U.S. Secretary of State Madeleine Albright, titled "Put Britain on the List of States Sponsoring Terrorism," British authorities abetted recruitment inside England of jihadists, to be smuggled into Chechnya.

The *EIR* document stated, in part: "On Nov. 10, 1999, the Russian government had already filed a formal diplomatic demarche via the Russian Embassy in London, protesting the attacks on the Russian journalists, and also the admissions by Sheikh Omar Bakri Mohammed, the head of the 'political wing' of the bin Laden organization, Al Muhajiroon, that the group was recruiting Muslims in England to go to Chechnya to fight the Russian Army. Bakri's organization operates freely from offices in the London suburb of Lee Valley, where they occupy two rooms at a local computer center, and maintain their own Internet company. Bakri has admitted that 'retired' British military officers are training new recruits in Lee Valley, before they are sent off to camps in Afghanistan or Pakistan, or are smuggled directly into Chechnya."