

Brits, Obama Push War Against Russia, China

by Jeffrey Steinberg

June 1—President Barack Obama used the occasion of the May 28 West Point commencement to deliver fresh threats to Russia and China, while laying out a vision of permanent warfare against an al-Qaeda terrorist apparatus that he had in the past claimed credit for wiping out. The “Obama Doctrine” of global interventionism was not well received by the graduating cadets, who failed to give their Commander-in-Chief a standing ovation when he walked to the podium, and sat in silence through all of Obama’s applause lines.

A few days later, Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel was in Singapore, attending the annual International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS) Shangri La Dialogue, a gathering of top defense officials from the entire Asia-Pacific region. A large delegation from the Chinese Peoples Liberation Army, led by the deputy chief of staff, also attended the Singapore event. In his May 31 keynote, Hagel openly attacked Beijing, for what he described as their aggression toward neighbors in the South China Sea and East China Sea.

Hagel’s bellicose speech was matched by Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, who promoted Japan’s new interpretation of the postwar “peace constitution” allowing Tokyo to take offensive military actions in partnership with other nations. He told the gathering that Japan was prepared to provide military equipment and intelligence support to neighbors feeling “threatened,” an unambiguous reference to China.

Defense One, a website whose editor attended the Dialogue, reported that, behind the scenes, Hagel was pushing the idea of an “Asian NATO” alliance, anchored in the ASEAN (Association of South East Asian Nations) states and clearly targeted against China.

This week, President Obama will be traveling to Europe, where he will meet with the newly elected Ukrainian President Petro Poroshenko before attending

a G-7 heads of state meeting in Brussels. That summit was originally scheduled to be a G-8 meeting in Sochi, Russia, but Russia was expelled from the G-8 earlier this year as part of the sanctions imposed on Moscow after the NATO-backed coup in Ukraine. White House briefings on the President’s trip highlighted his plans to pressure the European allies to increase sanctions against Russia, despite the fact that President Putin has withdrawn most Russian military units from the border region near Ukraine and has clearly taken other steps to de-escalate the crisis.

On June 6, both Obama and Putin will be at Normandy for the commemoration of the 70th anniversary of the World War II D-Day landing.

The Russian government has made some pointed statements in the past days, warning that it is prepared to counter the Obama Administration’s Prompt Global Strike doctrine of pre-emptive war.

Russia has also warned against Washington and Brussel’s plans to extend NATO further east. At a North Atlantic Council meeting last month, a scenario was adopted to accelerate the process of Georgia gaining full NATO membership. And there are reports that talks are underway to bring several Scandanavian countries into NATO as well.

Growing Resistance

The provocations against Russia are meeting growing European resistance. After British Members of Parliament circulated a petition demanding cancellation of planned July 2014 joint U.S.-British-Ukrainian military maneuvers in Ukraine, those maneuvers were postponed indefinitely. In his meeting with Poroshenko, Obama is expected to further boost U.S. military assistance to Ukraine. Since the start of the coup earlier this year, the U.S. has tripled military assistance to the illegal putsch regime in Kiev.

All of these developments amount to dangerous war provocations coming out of London and Washington. They are driven by growing desperation that the entire trans-Atlantic financial system is on the edge of collapse, and that the Obama Presidency is also finished. With growing calls for Obama’s impeachment, with scandals escalating, and with the President’s approval ratings at an all-time low, the desperation on the part of the British Crown is at a peak. It is that desperation that is the source of a war danger that is growing by the day.