

Landsbergis sees Russian designs on Lithuania

Vytautas Landsbergis, former President and now head of the parliamentary opposition in Lithuania, warned against Russian imperial designs, in an open letter to Russian President Boris Yeltsin, the Baltic news agency Baltfax reported on March 3. Days later, Gen. Paul Albert Scherer (ret.), former head of Germany's military intelligence and counterintelligence, independently warned in a press conference at the National Press Club in Washington, D.C. that "a Russian 'special forces' division has taken up a position in the area lying between St. Petersburg and Narva. This means that in the springtime, that is, as soon as the frost and snow have begun to break up, we must expect an invasion and re-occupation of the Baltic states."

In his letter, headlined "On Russia's Bid to Become International Policeman," Landsbergis referred to Yeltsin's suggestion that Russia be granted a U.N. mandate to "secure peace and stability in the former Soviet Union," as revealing Russia's design to interfere with its neighbors' affairs. "Mr. Landsbergis also expressed concern over the unstable political situation in Russia and the imperial tenor of Yeltsin's opponents," added Baltfax.

Landsbergis emphasized that Lithuania, which finally won recognition of its independence from Russia in 1991, has "never been and we will never become a CIS [Community of Independent States] country," and criticized Yeltsin's bent to control "near foreign states." Landsbergis said that "near foreign states" was not a "geographical term," but a "political term."

For over a half-century the Baltic nations of Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia were illegally annexed to the Soviet Union under the secret clauses of the 1939 Hitler-Stalin Pact.

But if it *does not* do that, then the entire world will be assured that the West is but a paper tiger. Nobody will be able to talk about morality anymore.

Now for you here as a group, as a movement, from my point of view, and I also discussed this with Lyndon LaRouche, what is necessary is to go out to the public and help *force* this government to take this path, i.e., to be *courageous!* There is no other way. I can discuss it with you afterwards. You can propose things to me, and I will definitely accept them, if they are better than my own.

I know that you were opposed to the war against Iraq. I can well understand that; but now we have a completely new situation. We have a strategic emergency situation, with our backs up against the wall. Modern pacifism right now only guarantees catastrophe.

That means we must now provide those people who want to lead today and tomorrow, with a corset to keep them standing up straight. You know that earlier, at the beginning of the 20th century, women still had these whalebone corsets. We have to put the Clinton administration into something like that.

But all joking aside, this is a damned horrible, bloody situation. And I want to ask quite bluntly: Are the Balkans part of Europe? Is Europe part of your own civilization, or not?

This is the life-or-death question. There's no more skirting around it. There can no longer be any cowardice; 24 months of cowardice was enough! Or do you think that there is any way the Vance-Owen program is going to get the Serbians to see reason? I don't.

Blindness must not have the last word

And to that extent, the question of life or death is being posed for the first time. For 40 years, we have been living peacefully under the atomic umbrella; today that has to be said. Two superpowers have mutually balanced each other out: One set off into space, then the other one got to the Moon; then one power waged proxy wars, and the other one had to intervene against that. And then came the great illusion that now we have peace, that now we have quiet, and that the Russians have stopped making any trouble. And as I have just shown, these illusions have vanished, they've been burned off. All that remains is bitter disillusionment. Blindness must not continue to have the last word.

I hope that in this short presentation, I have conveyed the essential things on how I see the situation at the moment, without making it look pretty, and without over-dramatizing it.

Questions and Answers

Q: The last time you were here, you put great emphasis on China, but you did not mention it tonight. How do you see China as part of this strategic equation?

Scherer: I would first of all hope that you would understand that it was really for time reasons that I did not go into this.

First of all, China, with 1.3 billion people, is in an extraordinarily difficult domestic political situation. One of the things that is perfectly plausible, is that by about 1994-95, Siberia will separate itself from Russia, and the Chinese may find some kind of a common ground with that, and may try to undertake these investments into Siberia instead of the