

# NATO guarantees are worthless

by Konstantin George

Since the New Year began, western government leaders and media have expended countless words on the theme of NATO "security guarantees" for the states of central and eastern Europe. These were buttressed at the Jan. 10-11 NATO summit with the Clinton administration's "Partnership for Peace" formula—termed "P4P"—solemnly adopted by the NATO heads of state. That's "P," as in "p—ing in the wind," which is what NATO is doing by refusing to recognize the fundamental issues at stake. The most important issue is the urgent necessity for adopting a development-based economic policy alternative to the International Monetary Fund (IMF) "shock therapy" policies of the last years. If these policies are continued, all talk of "security" is a cruel farce. By destroying the economies and social fabric of all the eastern European states and Russia, these policies are responsible for the fact that Russia will again become a nuclear superpower adversary of the West.

American statesman Lyndon LaRouche made the point quite graphically. In early January, he emphasized that any NATO commitment to Poland or other eastern European states "would be worth as much as the British and French commitments to Poland's security in 1939. . . . If we do not get rid of the Jeffrey Sachs shock therapy, the IMF conditionalities policy, and related policies toward eastern Europe and Russia, we're going to have hell breaking out, and all the NATO alliances in the world will not save Poland or the other eastern European states. If we don't get rid of this insane economic policy which is destroying those parts of the world and which is driving Russia deeper and deeper into a Third Rome dictatorship as a nuclear superpower." The "Third Rome" refers to the Russian imperial doctrine that Moscow will become the head of a third and final world empire.

LaRouche described the travesty of the West's discussing "security" for Poland, when the West has been destroying the stability of that country in the post-communist era: "Poland is being destroyed from the inside. The Polish economy is down to 30% of what it was under communism in 1989. The Russians haven't yet done anything to Poland. The London crowd, the Anglo-American crowd, has done a great deal to Poland."

The tragedy is compounded by the fact that even in the domain of strictly military security, the summit was a failure. The gathering, as the London *Guardian* aptly put it, was haunted by the "Banquo's Ghost" of Bosnia. NATO's refusal

to take effective military against a relatively puny aggressor, namely the Serbian regime of Slobodan Milosevic, has not been lost on either Moscow or on any future east European victims of a Russian empire reconquest policy.

## Divisions in the U.S. establishment

As attested to by the results of the NATO summit and the first phase of President Clinton's visit to Moscow and Kiev, the U.S. administration remains committed to the catastrophic IMF policies. Clinton's promise in Kiev on Jan. 12 of increased economic aid to Ukraine, but only on "condition that Ukraine implement economic reform policies," i.e., a form of shock therapy, provided the latest proof of this. However, it cannot be excluded that this could change. The shock of the bloody October events in Moscow, and the stronger shock produced by the victory of Third Rome advocate Vladimir Zhirinovsky, in the Dec. 12 elections, have catalyzed a debate in the United States on the wisdom of pursuing IMF policies toward Russia.

The first public sign of this appeared on Oct. 4, right after the bloody crushing of the Russian Parliament, when President Clinton said that his administration "does not always agree that the IMF's policies are good for a country like Russia." Then, in the wake of the high vote totals for Zhirinovsky, Clinton said that he regarded that vote as a sign that many Russians were suffering from "economic hardships." Since Vice President Gore's pre-Christmas criticism of the IMF approach on aid to Russia, frictions have intensified.

## Sabers rattle in the East

The deeper Washington and NATO plunge in their present course, the more dangerous becomes the situation in Moscow. A foretaste of what could happen was provided on Jan. 10. In murky circumstances, Latvian officials arguing with two Russian generals over the disposition of some Russian military property—a handful of buildings in the capital of Riga—detained the generals, and according to Moscow, held them in handcuffs for several hours. Whatever the facts, the Defense Ministry in Moscow responded by putting all Russian troops in the Baltics on top alert, and the Russian Airborne Division and military transport units based at Pskov, just east of the Baltic republic of Estonia, were ordered to prepare for possible invasion of Latvia. Hours later, Latvia apologized, promised to punish the officials in question, and, this time around, the crisis was cooled off. Most significant of all, back in Brussels, there was no reaction from NATO.

A day later, Russian President Boris Yeltsin, in his speech to the opening session of the the Parliament's upper house, announced Russia's exclusive claim to the entirety of the former Soviet Union: "Each state is increasingly realizing that it cannot survive on its own. Rapprochement among our countries is under way. It is Russia's mission to be first among equals."