

Appeasement emboldens Moscow into new strategic offensive

by Kathleen Klenetsky

George Bush's outrageous aping of Neville Chamberlain's appeasement of Adolf Hitler in his relations with the Soviet Union, especially in his handling of the Lithuanian crisis, is producing precisely those consequences of which *EIR* has warned: Moscow's imperial rulers are demanding bigger concessions, and Bush is giving in. Moscow is returning to the strategic offensive, because of Bush's capitulation to the Soviets on Lithuania.

That is the only conclusion that can sensibly be drawn from the developments surrounding the three days of meetings which Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze conducted with President Bush and Secretary of State James Baker in Washington early in April.

The round of meetings were supposed to produce further agreements on arms control and other issues, which would then be formalized at the upcoming Bush-Gorbachov summit. Instead, they demonstrated that Bush is so desperate to maintain the fiction of cozy U.S.-Soviet relations, that he is willing to pay any price and suffer any humiliation. They further demonstrate that the Soviets realize this and are playing the "Bush card" to advance their own strategic gameplan.

The decision to go ahead with the summit underscored Bush's subservience to Moscow. As the *Washington Post* noted in its April 8 lead editorial: "The President had the choice of slowing summit preparations until Soviet policy in Lithuania had passed the test of American conscience and opinion. Instead, he decided to keep up the superpower momentum and to forge ahead with a Washington summit, starting on May 30, and even to advance it a few weeks. . . . In other words, he apparently did not make the early summit meeting contingent on the outcome of the Soviets' power squeeze on Lithuania."

The meetings with Shevardnadze went so badly, that both

Baker and White House spokesman Marlin Fitzwater had to admit they were a "disappointment"—strong language for the rarified atmosphere of international diplomacy!

The "disappointment"—i.e., major setback—stemmed from the fact that the Soviets have suddenly adopted harder positions on the key arms-control issues which were supposed to have been on the verge of final resolution. Thus, where Bush had been expecting to come out of the summit with a much-needed political plum, i.e., a treaty on strategic missiles and/or conventional forces in Europe, he instead is facing the prospect of getting no agreement, or having to offer massive new concessions.

The Soviets have "tried to walk away from virtually all of the previous momentum in [troop talks] and other negotiations," a senior U.S. official told the April 9 *Washington Times*. This is indeed the case: In the two weeks preceding Shevardnadze's arrival in Washington, the Soviets pulled the rug out from underneath every arms control agreement touted as a Bush administration success.

- In the Conventional Forces in Europe talks, the Soviets reversed a previous agreement reached in Ottawa in February, under which the Central European troop deployment of each side would be limited to 195,000 while the United States would be allowed to deploy an additional 30,000 troops in Britain, Italy, Greece, and Turkey. In early April, Soviet negotiators announced that Moscow no longer agrees with the Ottawa formula, unless troop limits are placed on European nations, especially Germany, as well as the U.S. The Soviets have also explicitly linked the Vienna negotiations to the outcome of the talks on German reunification.

- The Soviets have made new demands in the Strategic Arms Limitation II talks, reopening the issue of limitations on sea- and air-launched cruise missiles which Baker thought

he had settled during his Feb. 7-9 trip to Moscow. Apparently, the Soviets are now saying that the previously announced agreement on the cruise missile issue no longer holds—throwing the future of START II open once again.

- Gorbachov, in a letter delivered by Shevardnadze, reportedly rejected a proposal by Bush to ban land-based multiple-warhead missiles, and instead demanded that any ban on MIRVed missiles should include sea-based missiles, in addition to those deployed on land. Sea-based missiles are a crucial component of the American nuclear deterrent.

- Moscow rejected a U.S. offer to bridge differences on the “Open Skies” surveillance flights program.

- The Soviets have been blatantly cheating on the Intermediate-range Nuclear Forces Treaty. Moscow transferred SS-23 missiles—banned by the INF accord—to three Eastern European allies; when questioned about it in Washington, Shevardnadze claimed neither he nor Gorbachov had been aware of the transfer—an incredible statement, which the administration nevertheless appears intent on swallowing.

The administration has been at pains to minimize the significance of the Soviet shift in negotiating position, but even so, it has been forced to concede that things have become very rocky. Bush spokesman Fitzwater admitted at the April 9 White House briefing that the prospects of an arms-control treaty by the summit are extremely dubious. Asked if an arms control treaty was “do-able” by the time of the summit, Fitzwater reiterated that “there are great questions” about it now, and “it is an open question if all the major points can be resolved.”

Bush is the desperate one

Despite these setbacks, Bush is rushing ahead as if nothing has happened. Why is he scrambling so to make nice to Moscow, when Moscow is now giving him one slap in the face after another? Contrary to the conventional wisdom that Bush is trying to prop up Gorbachov, the reverse holds true: Bush needs the appearance of successful U.S.-Soviet relations in order to prop *himself* up.

In a statement issued April 10, U.S. congressional candidate Lyndon H. LaRouche, an especially acute observer of global strategic developments, attributed Bush’s groveling before Moscow to the U.S. internal economic crisis. Bush has been thrown into desperate straits by the economy’s galloping collapse. To get himself through next November’s elections, he needs to hold out the prospect that there are massive future profits to be made in the Soviet market—even if these profits never materialize.

The change in the Soviet arms-control negotiating position, and Bush’s rush to the summit, makes it look as though Bush is desperate, said LaRouche. “Well, there’s every indication to see that George is completely desperate. On the one hand, he’s following a completely Kissinger policy. . . . At the same time, we see that not only is Moscow in an economically desperate situation, but Mr. Bush is in an eco-

nomically desperate situation. . . . So George, who doesn’t care about next year, but only about tomorrow, seems to be rushing into agreements with Moscow for the purpose of getting Moscow to sign its name to economic concessions which won’t pay off earlier than five years from now, but which George and company might make appear as a new kind of international junk bond to try to prop up investments in the New York financial markets. That’s what it appears to be. And certainly, it’s as least as bad as that.”

The United States has indicated that it wants observer status at the General Agreements on Tariffs and Trade talks for the Soviets; it is expected that the summit will produce agreement to rescind the Jackson-Vanik amendment and grant the Soviets Most Favored Nation trade status. Meanwhile, Pepsico is trying to give substance to the illusion that East-West trade means prosperity for the U.S., with its announcement immediately after the Shevardnadze visit that it has struck a \$3 billion deal to exchange Pepsi products for Soviet ships and vodka.

A key indicator of Bush’s desperation was his push to advance the summit date. It was expected that it would take place in late June and that Gorbachov would probably spend a few days, at least, at the Bush family compound in Kennebunkport, Maine, to further the image of U.S.-Soviet friendliness. The meeting has now been scheduled for May 30 through June 3—ending on the eve of the anniversary of the Tiananmen Square slaughter in Communist China—and, according to Soviet spokesmen, will be strictly business.

LaRouche predicted that the summit will produce an agreement on Lithuania and related issues modeled on the agreement struck at the Congress of Vienna in 1815. “What Bush is doing to Lithuania is the same thing that the Congress of Vienna did to Poland,” LaRouche warned. “Poland was kept in slavery primarily to the Russians for about a century” as a result of the Congress of Vienna. “That’s what George Bush is doing to Lithuania. He’s also doing to Lithuania what Neville Chamberlain did to Czechoslovakia in 1938.”

The Bush administration has produced plenty of evidence to prove LaRouche’s charge. While Shevardnadze was in Washington to discuss arms control, he also indicated the Soviets have no intention of moderating their campaign of terror and intimidation against Lithuania. Shevardnadze stated that Lithuania is a “domestic affair of the Soviet Union,” and if Moscow decides to use violence to ensure “public order,” this should constitute “no basis for a deterioration in Soviet-U.S. relations.”

Bush officials’ wimpish protests that they will take “seriously” a Soviet crackdown in Lithuania came as though that is not already taking place.

Bush responded to Moscow’s humiliating treatment by giving gushing praise of Gorbachov. Bush called Gorbachov a “remarkable” reformer, and praised his record of “encouraging . . . the peaceful evolution of democratic change in Eastern Europe.”