

Putin Speaks with Russians, Lays Out Strategic Options Ahead

by Rachel Douglas

Dec. 15—*In this grave strategic situation, where the British Empire is attempting to instigate a strategic confrontation between the United States and Russia, in particular, media lies play a crucial role in creating the environment for war. Especially important is that citizens get an accurate picture of what the major strategic powers are saying and doing.*

It is with this in mind, that we publish our own translation of substantial excerpts from Russian Prime Minister Vladimir Putin's annual year-end webcast, which generated sound-bites and spin in the press, but, as usual, omitted the substance, in favor of the British-led vilification campaign against the Prime Minister.

Prime Minister Putin's webcast featured a new format, not only inviting questions from citizens throughout Russia—over 1.5 million were submitted—but also conducting a discussion with prominent Russians and foreign guests who were present in the studio for the four-and-a-half hour event. Among those taking part were former Foreign Ministers Yevgeni Primakov and Igor Ivanov, opposition journalists Alexander Prokhanov of *Zavtra* (nationalist) and Alexei Venediktov of *Echo of Moscow* radio (liberal), as well as foreign analysts, including Nikolai Zlobin of the World Security Institute (U.S.A.) and Alexander Rahr of the German Council on Foreign Relations.

In extensive replies to questions about the recent Russian State Duma elections, Putin exuded confidence that the ruling United Russia party's 50% results express the Russian population's continued

support. He said that if young people today were coming out to demonstrate, and could clearly express their views, then that must be the result of "Putin's regime," and "that's good"—something to be proud of. He proposed that round-the-clock video monitoring be instituted at all polling places to lessen the possibility of vote fraud, expressly to counter "those who seek to delegitimize our elections," adding that he personally would not want to stay in power for a single day without the support of the Russian people.

Asked about a much-publicized ballot which a voter had annotated with an obscene insult against Putin, he pointed out that this scribble was made in London by a Russian citizen voting at the Russian Embassy there, adding, "We know who came to vote there, and why they don't return to Russia."

Obviously there were many more questions of importance for Russian internal and foreign policy than



Prime Minister Putin spoke and fielded questions for four and one-half hours Dec. 15, in a webcast with Russian citizens, foreign press, and others. Over 1.5 million questions were submitted.

can be reported in this space. We provide below the passages broadly cited in the international media on the Libya War and Arizona Republican Sen. John McCain, in context; and also the broader statements made by Putin on the global strategic situation, including his desire for an “alliance” with the United States under a different American policy outlook than the current one.

Qaddafi Murder and McCain Remarks

Putin was asked about Senator McCain’s Twitter post, forecasting for Putin the fate of Libyan leader Muammar Qaddafi: “Is this an empty threat, or the West’s real plan?” Putin replied: “What can I say? In general terms, this was not directed at me. It was directed at Russia. Some people want to push Russia off to the side, so that Russia will not interfere with their ruling the world. They are still afraid of our nuclear capability, and that’s why Russia remains in their field of vision and attention, and is such an irritant. Furthermore, we have our own opinions. We conduct an independent foreign policy, and I hope we shall continue

to do so. Of course that bothers some people, first of all.

“Secondly, the West is not homogeneous, and we have more friends than we do enemies.

“Thirdly, Mr. McCain, as is well known, fought in Vietnam. I think he has a fair amount of civilian blood on his hands. He really likes it; probably he can’t live without these horrible scenes, these disgusting scenes of how Qaddafi was dealt with, when it was shown on TV screens around the world, how he was beaten and bloodied. Is that democracy? And, who did that? Drones, including American ones, struck his column. And then by radio, through special forces who shouldn’t have been there, on the ground, the so-called oppositionists and guerrillas were activated, and they wiped him out without trial or investigation. Who’s saying that he should have stayed? But the people should have been allowed to decide that through democratic procedures. Yes, it’s difficult; yes, it takes time, but there’s no other way.

“Mr. McCain, as is well known, was taken prisoner in Vietnam, and held not just in prison, but in a hole,

Russia’s Offers of Cooperation

Dec. 19—Contrary to the wave of anti-Putin propaganda spewing from the major international media outlets these days, the Russian government under Vladimir Putin as Prime Minister, and previously as President, has a history of boldly reaching out to the United States for cooperation in both the strategic and economic realms. We identify several of the major proposals here, all of which were de facto rejected by lack of a positive response:

Bering Strait Tunnel: In 2007 and 2010, the Russian Academy of Sciences and government agencies sponsored conferences promoting the construction of a tunnel across the Bering Strait, linking the two continents, in cooperation with the United States and other nations.

Missile Defense: Starting in July 2007, then-President Putin’s discussions at Kennebunkport, Maine with President George W. Bush, Russia has

repeatedly proposed joint missile defense projects between NATO and Russia.

Siberian Development: In September 2009, Russian Deputy Presidential Representative Alexander Levintal invited the U.S. government and American business to be part of Russia’s economic development of the Far East in high-tech industry and infrastructure, not only raw materials.

Global Disaster Monitoring: Early in 2011, the Russian government proposed the International Global Natural and Industrial Emergency Aerospace Monitoring System (IGMASS), to forecast earthquakes, severe weather, and other natural disasters.

Strategic Defense of Earth: In October 2011, Russian Ambassador to NATO Dmitri Rogozin proposed to the U.S. a program called Strategic Defense of Earth, “A single integrated system which would be targeted against possible threats to Earth coming from space, including asteroids, comet fragments, and other alien bodies, a system which should be capable of both monitoring space and destroying any dangerous objects as they approach our planet.”

and he was there for several years. Anybody would go nuts. So there's nothing out of the ordinary there."

Russia Wants U.S. as Ally

Asked by Zlobin if he feels that Russia is surrounded by enemies, Putin said: "I don't agree. Russia has many allies." He recalled his experience in lobbying for Russia to host the 2014 Winter Olympics, when representatives of other countries told him they were supporting Russia's bid "because Russia acts independent on the world scene." Such countries, Putin said, "are our potential allies, and they are not only in the post-Soviet area, because people are tired of the dictates of one country."

He continued, "We would like to be allies with the United States, too. It's just that what I see now, and what I talked about in Munich [in 2007], is not the attitude of an ally. Sometimes it seems to me that America doesn't want allies, only vassals. But we want and will continue to build relations with the States, because I see that inside the United States itself, certain transformations are under way. American society, to a significant degree, doesn't want to play the role of international policeman any more."

Missiles in Europe

Alexander Rahr of the German CFR followed up with questions about anti-missile defense in Europe, and Russia-Europe relations generally, asking what mistakes had been made during the past 20 years. Putin again emphasized his view that there is a drive to disarm Russia:

"The leading country of the Western world, the U.S.A., views our nuclear missile capability with suspicion. I think anybody is making a huge mistake, if they think that first they have to strip us of that nuclear capability, and then consider us as a potential ally. You know, when the Soviet Union collapsed, I thought that now there were really no restrictions on our really moving forward together. But these suspicions of the past continue to hinder our relations. Nonetheless, I believe it is inevitable.

"Integration in the European area is a demand of our lives, and I would say even more, that integration in the framework of common Christian values is an urgent need. And if we think about the fact that a single principle underlies the moral values of the traditional world religions, then this is the basis for overcoming the difficulties of an intercivilizational nature, as well."

Breaking the Ice on Arctic Development

LPAC's Michelle Fuchs reports on two sides of a potential global perspective for Arctic development: One, Russia's planned Arctic City, dubbed "Umka," which will be modelled on the International Space Station; and two, the planned expansion of the River Shannon Estuary, which will make Ireland a lead player in deep-sea science.

(27 minutes).

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