

EXPECT BRITISH SABOTAGE

War Avoidance Measures Make Progress on Iran, Syria

by Jeffrey Steinberg, Michele Steinberg, and Nancy Spannaus

April 16—Despite the recent weeks' provocations by the British and their operatives, this last week saw two significant advances in the war-avoidance policy of Russia, China, and U.S. military layers on the flash-points of Iran and Syria. But it would be foolhardy for anyone to think that the British Empire's threat of using these conflict points to detonate a thermonuclear confrontation between the U.S. on one side, and Russia and China on the other, has been pushed off the table. Indeed, the underlying cause for the war drive, the panic of the Empire over its onrushing bankruptcy collapse, is increasing day by day.

Lyndon LaRouche warned on April 15, that the very facts that the first round of talks between the P5+1 (UN Security Council Permanent Five plus Germany) and Iran concluded successfully; and that UN monitors are now on the ground in Syria, makes a British Empire flight-forward toward war all the more likely.

As the recent developments around North Korea underscore, possible triggers for conflict between an Empire-led "West," and Russia and China, are not confined to the Middle East cockpit. Nonetheless, British puppet and Israeli Premier Benjamin Netanyahu is a prime option for the British sabotage operation. As his initial statements after the P5+1 talks suggested, Netanyahu could well be activated to carry out his long-threatened provocation against Iran—thus exploding a global conflict.

The only way that the British drive to intimidate

every nation in the world into giving up its sovereignty, by threatening nuclear war, can be stopped, is to destroy its financial empire.

The Iran Talks

The P5+1 talks held April 13-14 in Istanbul, Turkey, among the U.S., Russia, China, Britain, France, and Germany, on the one side, and Iran, on the other, resulted in a series of extremely positive statements, and the scheduling of follow-up discussions for May 23 in Baghdad. Of special note was the statement made by European Union Foreign Minister Catherine Ashton at a press conference, where she called the talks "constructive and useful," and, according to the Iranian official Fars News Agency, said, "We have agreed that the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) forms a key basis for what must be serious engagement to ensure all the obligations under the treaty are met by Iran while fully respecting Iran's right for the peaceful use of nuclear energy."

Ashton added that "subsequent meetings will lead to concrete steps towards a comprehensive negotiated solution which restores confidence in the exclusively peaceful nature of the Iranian nuclear program."

Ashton's positive tone was echoed by Russia's Deputy Foreign Minister Sergei Ryabkov, and by Alaeddin Boroujerdi, head of the Foreign Policy Commission of the Iranian parliament. According to the Israeli newspaper *Ha'aretz*, which has opposed Netan-



White House/Pete Souza

Efforts to find negotiated settlements for the conflict in Syria, and with Iran, while promising, could still be sabotaged by British imperial assets Obama and Netanyahu, shown here in the Oval Office March 5.

yahu's threats to attack Iran, Boroujerdi said, "The Istanbul talks were a good and positive step forward, and "it was decided that, in the next talks . . . the lifting of banking and oil sanctions against Iran would be raised."

Netanyahu, for his part, sent out a video of a discussion he had with U.S. Senator (and warmonger) Joe Lieberman, charging that the successful talks gave Iran "five weeks to continue enrichment without any limitation," and issuing his own demands that Iran immediately stop enriching uranium and dismantle its nuclear facility in Qom—precisely the deal-breaking demand that the British had floated unsuccessfully immediately before talks began.

Another key avenue of potential sabotage is British puppet Obama, whose record consistently contradicts his mouth. (See book review, below.)

The Syrian Ceasefire

Pressure for diplomacy—especially from Russia and China—rather than regime change, clearly made the difference in Istanbul, and also tipped the balance at the United Nations in discussions about Syria. For, while British Prime Minister David Cameron, among others, was raving that the Assad government, which had announced its approval of UN envoy Kofi Annan's

plan for a ceasefire, had failed to adhere to the terms, the UN Security Council on April 14 passed a *unanimous* resolution recognizing that ceasefire, and authorizing the first delegation of UN monitors to start work in the country.

Russia's UN Ambassador Vitaly Churkin succeeded in getting two concessions from the UNSC's warmongers before agreeing to the resolution. The first was that the resolution calls for *both* sides to "cease all armed violence in all its forms," not just the government, and the second was to include the opposition in the condemnation of violations of human rights, by changing the original language so as to condemn "the widespread violations of human rights by the Syrian authorities, as well as any human rights abuses by armed groups."

Thus the first 30 unarmed military observers—an advance team for an expected group of 250 to be approved in a new resolution—are charged with establishing contacts with both sides, and with reporting on implementation of "a full cessation of armed violence in all its forms by all parties."

In Syria too, sabotage by key British assets, including Saudi Arabia and Qatar, can be expected. In addition, it was announced this weekend that the Obama Administration will be releasing funds to the Syrian National Council and Syrian Free Army in Turkey for communications and other "non-lethal" goods, thus joining the British, and in effect, providing material support to the armed terrorist groups who are determined to continue and escalate the conflict.

China Exposes Anti-Assad Terrorism

Well aware of the dangers, both China and Russia remain highly engaged in the situation, and are acting preemptively with the dangers in mind.

On April 15, for example, the Chinese news agency Xinhua, citing Syrian media sources, reported that there has been a "surge" in kidnappings and assassinations, including:

- On April 14, a candidate for Syria's upcoming

parliamentary elections, Mohammad Ismail al-Ahmed, was kidnapped by an “armed terrorist group” in the province of Idlib.

- While the kidnappers of Al-Ahmed have not been identified, Xinhua reports that a rebel group calling itself the “Battalions of Mohammed” recently threatened to kill anyone who might “put himself as a candidate for the forthcoming parliamentary elections.” The threats have appeared on YouTube, and the same group also claimed responsibility for the earlier assassination of Lt. Col. Youssef Saqqer in the eastern province of Deir al-Zour.

- Also on April 14, another armed group kidnapped Col. Mohammad Eid in the central province of Hama.

- A prominent cleric, Sayyed Nasser al-Allawi, was reported to have been assassinated on April 13, in the Damascus suburb of Saida Zeinab. Al-Allawi was providing assistance for families fleeing to the area because of the unrest.

- Also on April 13, rebel terrorists killed Maj. Moussa Youssef in Hama.

- On April 12, the day the ceasefire took effect, officials loyal to the Assad government were killed. These included a brigadier general in the Damascus suburb of Jaramana, a first lieutenant in the northern province of Aleppo, and the secretary of the Ba’ath Party’s office in al-Mazareeb. The same day, dozens of officers were wounded.

The Chinese report shines a spotlight on the terrorist sabotage which both Assad and the Arab League Monitors have exposed—but is routinely ignored, for obvious reasons, by the U.S., Britain, and France.

Russians Announce Warship Deployment

On April 14, Ria Novosti reported from “a high-ranking source at the Defense Ministry,” that “Russian warships will be continuously deployed for patrol duty off the Syrian coast.” The Russian Kashin-class guided-missile destroyer *Smetlivy* is currently deployed near the Syrian coast, the report said, and another Black Sea Fleet ship will replace the *Smetlivy* in May, while several other Russian warships were on their way to the Mediterranean. The source said that deployment of a Black Sea Fleet task force to the region cannot be ruled out.

As we reported at the time, Russia’s announcement last November of a visit by its only aircraft carrier, the *Admiral Kuznetsov*, to Syrian coastal waters, was one of Russia’s first major war-avoidance measures. The

carrier’s tour of duty lasted two months, and the vessel returned to its northern home region in February.

At the time of that announcement, according to *Izvestia*, former Russian Navy Chief of Staff Adm. Victor Kravchenko said that, even if the *Kuznetsov* and its accompanying ship take some time to arrive in the Mediterranean, “the appearance there of any naval force besides NATO’s is very useful for the region, since it represents an obstacle to unleashing armed conflict.”

The April 14 Ria Novosti wire also said that “the Russian military has repeatedly underscored the need for Russian warships to patrol the Mediterranean on a permanent basis. In Soviet days, up to 50 warships from the Fifth Squadron of the Russian Black Sea Fleet and other Soviet Navy units were been deployed in the Mediterranean on a permanent basis.”

Other Russian ships currently on patrol in the Mediterranean are the *Kildin* surveillance ship, as well as the *Iman* tanker vessel, and a floating workshop deployed near the Syrian port of Tartus, according to the report.

Nor are the Russians limiting their action to the Mediterranean theater.

Wire services reported on April 15 that four Russian Pacific Fleet warships, along with support vessels, fighter planes, helicopters, and marines left Vladivostok that day to participate in joint maneuvers with the Chinese PLA Navy (PLAN). The Russian guided-missile cruiser *Varyag* and three anti-submarine ships will participate in Yellow Sea maneuvers with the PLAN April 22-29. More than 200 ships from Russia and China will be involved in the maneuvers, which are taking place under the auspices of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO).

While the Russian news reports on the ships’ departure made no mention of the growing tensions in North Asia, or the recent North Korean failed rocket/satellite launch, the joint maneuvers send a clear message that both Moscow and Beijing are aware of the threats from the West and are engaging in tighter military cooperation. The action supplements statements by Chinese official media, and from last week’s Moscow meeting of the foreign ministers of Russia, China, and India, that all international conflicts, such as those in North Korea and Southwest Asia, must be solved by diplomacy, not by threats.

These major Eurasian powers know well that what is threatened in any of these regional theaters is not a local conflict, but a general war, which leads inexorably toward thermonuclear confrontation.