

EU Bluff Against Greece and Russia Raises War Threat

by Helga Zepp-LaRouche

March 6—The desperation move by European Central Bank (ECB) President Mario Draghi, to flood the Eurozone with €1.14 billion in so-called “quantitative easing,” while excluding Greece and Cyprus from this dubious bonanza, will doubly accelerate the inevitable collapse of the trans-Atlantic financial system. The simultaneous escalation of provocations against Russia by NATO maneuvers in the Black Sea and the forward basing of NATO troops and heavy equipment in the Baltic States, up to Russia’s borders, are directly related to the impending bankruptcy of the financial system.

Both cases—the hard line against Greece and the escalation against Russia—are ultimately a bluff. The intention is to force Greece to continue with the failed austerity policy imposed by the Troika (ECB, IMF, European Commission), even though these murderous policies were overwhelmingly repudiated by the Greek population in a democratic election. Klaus Regling, the head of the European Stability Mechanism (ESM), stressed: “Greece must repay these loans entirely. That’s what we expect, and nothing has changed in this regard.” He is obviously interested neither in the fact that only 3% of these loans in Greece actually remained in Greece, with the rest going to the coffers of the European banks, nor in the result of a democratic election that clearly rejected a policy that has shrunk the Greek economy by over one third, and that is killing off the population.

As a member of the financial establishment, he

knows very well, however, that either Greece’s leaving the euro, or the debt haircut requested by Greek Prime Minister Alexis Tsipras, would lead to an instant collapse of the Eurozone, the City of London, and Wall Street, because the entire debt pyramid, including the quadrillions of dollars of the derivatives bubble, would burst. The Troika naturally is keenly concerned that the Tsipras government’s demands not be met, because they are more afraid of the positive signal this would give to Italy, Spain, Portugal, Ireland, and France, than the devil is of holy water. And the German Finance Ministry had the effrontery to reply to a parliamentary question put by the Linke party’s Bundestag caucus, that the 1953 German Debt Conference in London had no relevance to Tsipras’s proposal for such a conference on Greece today, because there is no way of knowing how the German economy would have developed in the 1950s had that conference never occurred.

The truth is, however, that then-West German Chancellor Konrad Adenauer and Deutsche Bank chairman Hermann Abs knew perfectly well that there would never have been a German “economic miracle,” if Germany had not had 60% of its foreign debt canceled and the remaining debt payments linked to export surpluses. Repayments were only due as long as Germany ran a trade surplus, and were limited to 3% of export earnings. However, unlike the current team in the Finance Ministry, those leaders were competent and had the interests of Germany at heart.



EPA/Sergei Chirikov

Greek Foreign Minister Nikos Kotzias (left) is welcomed to Moscow by Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov, Feb. 11, 2015. Kotzias has proposed that Greece function as a “bridge” between the EU and Russia.

NATO Confrontation with Russia

The same confrontation strategy can be seen in the NATO maneuvers in the Black Sea, which began March 4 with Bulgarian, Romanian, and Turkish naval ships; in the current highly tense situation, these can only be viewed as provocative. The maneuvers are practicing, among other things, defense against attacks from the air and by submarines and small ships. Russia is holding its own maneuvers at the same time, with more than 2,000 soldiers participating in air defense and combat exercises up to April 10, particularly in the south of Russia, the North Caucasus, and at its military bases in Crimea, Armenia, South Ossetia, and Abkhazia.¹

Given the louder and louder demands on the part of the British government and the Republican Party in the United States for equipping the Ukrainian Army with “lethal weapons,” and the continuous forward basing of NATO forces and headquarters to the eastern European countries along the Russian border, we are rapidly approaching a “reverse Cuban Missile Crisis,” as William Polk, who was a member of President Kennedy’s crisis management team at the time, [wrote](#) [on Feb. 24. Despite the promises of former U.S. Secretary of State James Baker III, one country after another that was for-

merly part of the Soviet Union and the Warsaw Pact has been integrated into NATO, he wrote, and now it is proposed to do the same with Ukraine, while some influential Americans have even called for advancing further, up to the “gates of Moscow.” The arming of Ukraine would be a further step in this direction.

Polk added that “there is no way in which we or the European Union could arm Ukraine to a level that it could balance Russia. Thus, the weapons are likely both to give the Ukrainians unrealistic notions of what they can do vis-à-vis Russia and to be seen by the Russians as ‘offensive’ moves to which they might feel compelled to respond. Consequently, they could lead us all into a war we do not want.” Russia could no more accept Ukraine being a member of a hostile military alliance than the United States could have allowed Mexico to become a member of the

Warsaw Pact, he wrote.

In unofficial discussions, a number of military experts have said that the current confrontation between NATO on the one side, and Russia and China on the other, is going full tilt toward such a reverse Cuban Missile Crisis, but that this time there is no “red telephone” hotline between Washington and Moscow, and above all, there is the illusion in NATO circles that it would be possible to win a war with a nuclear first strike. The risk of miscalculation is extremely high, these sources said, and this whole policy would lead to the obliteration of mankind.

This threatening posture is intended to convey the message: Either Russia and China surrender, or we are ready to play a nuclear “chicken game” to the bitter end—always on the assumption that the other side will capitulate at the last moment. But Russia and China have precisely ruled out any possibility of this occurring. The chief of the Central Command of the Russian Strategic Missile Forces, Gen. Maj. Andrei Burbin, recently [confirmed](#) Russia’s readiness to counterattack with strategic nuclear weapons, in the event of an attack on the country. Any “utopian” military plans for a “limited nuclear war” or the drive for a “Prompt Global Strike” doctrine that would neutralize the Russian second-strike capability by means of conventional weapons, would be answered with a retaliatory by ICBM missiles against the United States, he said.

1. Formerly zones of Georgia, which declared independence in 2008 and have achieved limited international recognition, including by Russia—ed.

‘Plan B’

Greek Finance Minister Yanis Varoufakis mentioned recently that there exists a Plan B, in case the ECB cuts off all credit to Greece. Foreign Minister Nikos Kotzias explained what this alternative is: Greece and Cyprus could serve as the bridge between the EU and Russia, since their relations with Russia never had the negative character that exists between Russia and other EU countries. Although both want to remain part of the EU, he said, they also have deep historical relations with the BRICS countries (Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa). Greece has had close ties with India, for example, dating back to ancient times, and also with China, since they were the two great cultures—China for Asia and Greece for Europe—for three to four thousand years. Greece also has deep historical, cultural, and religious ties with Russia, he said.

This approach is precisely what offers the chance to get off the insane road to self-destruction on which we

currently seem to be stuck, and to counterpose a reasonable alternative. The EU’s brutal confrontation with Greece will likely end in the extinction of mankind in a thermonuclear war. If we instead were to take up Greece’s proposal, we could cross this bridge toward cooperation with the BRICS countries to a new economic system, which these countries are bringing into being at a rapid pace.

We require not only a debt conference for Greece, in the tradition of the London Conference of 1953 for Germany, but such a conference for all of Europe, and indeed for the entire trans-Atlantic system. The first step must be to enact a two-tier banking system in the tradition of the Glass-Steagall Act, as it was introduced by Franklin D. Roosevelt in 1933, thereby writing off the unpayable portion of the debt and eliminating the derivatives bubble. Then, the current monetarist system must be replaced by a credit system, so that the real economy, and thus the people, are put back at the center

Greece Can Serve as Bridge to Russia, BRICS

March 4—Greek Foreign Minister Nikos Kotzias has called for Greece and Cyprus to become a bridge between Western Europe and Russia and the other BRICS nations. In a March 2 interview with Russia’s Sputnik News, Kotzias was highly critical of sanctions against Russia in particular, and the anti-Russian policy in general.

“We believe that in the long-term perspective, Russia has to be part of the European security architecture and there should be no security system against Russia,” Kotzias said. “We think that what is needed is the stabilization of peace in Ukraine, and that Europe should not come to a rupture in its relations with Russia, while Russia should also avoid taking actions that are not conducive to trust between it and the European Union.”

He continued, “Greece and Cyprus . . . could play the role of a bridge between the EU and Russia. We’ve never waged wars against each other; we have never been opposing powers. . . .”

While saying that Greece and Cyprus wish to remain part of the European Union, Kotzias noted that both countries wish to further develop their historic ties to the BRICS nations. “We are especially connected with such countries as India (in ancient times), China (when we were the big civilizations and cultures—China in Asia and Greece in Europe—for 3,000-4,000 years), and Russia, with which we have always had deep historical, cultural, and religious ties,” he said.

Kotzias said that since the new Greek government came to power, the EU has to listen to Greece, and take its interests into consideration. He stated that the sanctions against Russia is one of these issues. “In the history of international relations, there have been sanctions that actually functioned, but only in the sense that they led to negotiations. As I have already said, in most cases sanctions are not efficient, especially when they originate from a burst of anger or a wish to subordinate your opposing side,” Kotzias told Sputnik. He added that his government is against sanctions on Russia.

Meanwhile, Kotzias and Deputy Prime Minister Yannis Dragasakis are reportedly scheduled to visit Beijing soon, to prepare for Prime Minister Alexis Tsipras’s visit, likely in May.

of politics and economics. And after this essential clean-up, the trans-Atlantic sector will have everything to gain by cooperating with the BRICS and especially with China, and President Xi Jinping's "win-win" policy for the development of the New Silk Road.

Germany could play the key role in bringing about this change. If we decide to work with the BRICS in building the New Silk Road, all of continental Europe will follow, and this will also be the only lever that will return America to its better tradition as the republic of the American Revolution.

It is up to us all to choose the future of mankind.

Translated from German by Susan Welsh