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- Confront an Evil March Toward World War III with Relentless Optimism
- When Zelenskyy Explained to Ukraine a Peace Plan with Russia
- U.S. Rep. Gosar Condemns ‘Biden’s Reckless Decision To Escalate War’
- Trump: Tanks & Nukes, or Peace
- Lavrov Details How Russia Discussed BRICS Currency with Africans and Ibero-American Nations
- Russia Views Trade with South Africa Using National Currencies as First Step
- Swiss President Considers Sending Weapons to Ukraine Violates ‘Our Basic Principles’
- U.S., Greens and Liberals Muscled Germany on Tanks to Ukraine, Argues Linke MP
- Russians Demand, with German Tanks in Ukraine, ‘Have You Forgotten World War II?’
- Israel Turns Down U.S. Pressure for Air Defense Batteries to Ukraine

EDITORIAL

Confront an Evil March Toward World War III with Relentless Optimism

Jan. 26, 2023 (EIRNS)—Yesterday’s “Tanks to Ukraine” parade, a silly and dangerous piece of theater, meant primarily to busy Europe into a perpetual state of conflict, provoked more than a few forces around the

world today to dig deeper into their own principles. In Gottfried Leibniz's "best of all possible worlds," evil is certainly possible, but the better angel of mankind's nature always has the capacity to rise to the occasion, forging a greater good than otherwise would have been possible. Today provided more than a few examples.

The President of Switzerland Alain Berset not only ruled out any involvement in sending weapons to Ukraine, but explained on television that Switzerland had a unique quality of "neutrality." Their role, as reflected in the Geneva Conventions, is so much more important than joining a parade of weapon providers. "Today, it is not time to change the rules" against exporting weapons. "Neither is it time to change the rules of neutrality. On the contrary, it is time to recall our basic principles, to stay committed to them and find a right path for the country in this situation." Switzerland has "a different role from other states."

It was their duty to uphold a decent part of Western civilization. At a time when Japan is getting enmired in offensive warfare capabilities, and Germany has broken its "never again" commitment, never to send weaponry into an openly hostile area—when decades-long sacred commitments born out of a burning desire to not repeat the tragedies of the past, Switzerland's re-assertion of an actual principle should not go unnoticed.

In Germany's Bundestag, Chancellor Olaf Scholz was openly confronted by AfD parliamentarian Petr Bystron for abandoning Germany's "never again" tenet, declaring that Scholz stood in stark contrast to the legacy of SPD predecessors such as Willy Brandt and Helmut Schmidt, who had "done a lot for peace and reconciliation." (Scholz admitted he had abandoned those SPD principles, but Russia made him do it.) Another parliamentarian, Sevim Dagdelen of the Linke party, blamed the U.S., but more importantly, Germany's "neo-cons," the Greens and the Free Democrats (the "liberals"), for muscling Germany down this ominous path. She then usefully recalled "When you see the books of Brzezinski and many think tankers in the United States, it was always an aim by the United

States elites to destroy the relationship between Germany and Russia,” which could only thrown current developments backward into the geopolitics of the 1930s. Germany should benefit from more such deliberations.

A chorus of voices sang out in Russia, honing in on a completely overlooked reaction awaiting the West, when the image of German tanks rolling across Ukraine is rebroadcast. Russia’s Interior Minister said it called up the “historical memory” among Russians “of the crimes of Hitler’s forces and their henchmen—the Banderites—in Ukraine.” Nikolay Mezhevich, of the Institute of Europe of the Russian Academy of Sciences offered: “Our opponents do not really understand that the emergence of German tanks in the post-Soviet space will mean a turning point in the Russian public mind. The Germans will be forced to feel the consequences of their decision.” And Andrey Kortunov, general director of the Russian International Affairs Council explained that it also had consequences for Germans, as the West “does not let Germans hear their inner voice.” There is “a heavy load of political symbolism for the people of Germany, who will again see German tanks in Donbass ... this brings to mind various unpleasant associations for the Germans as well.”

In the United States, Congressman Paul Gosar, in his statement, “Biden’s Reckless Decision To Escalate War and Send Tanks to Ukraine,” called out Biden’s “dangerous and reckless escalation matched by a historic escalation by Germany, which has now violated its post-World War II policy of non-intervention.... This war needs to be resolved and America should be a peace maker, not a war monger.” Former President Donald Trump was succinct, on target, and free of any sloppy populism: “FIRST COME THE TANKS, THEN COME THE NUKES. Get this crazy war ended NOW. So easy to do!”

CODEPINK’s Medea Benjamin and Nicolas Davies’ article, “[What Can the United States Bring to the Peace Table for Ukraine?](#)” reminded readers of a time when even President Zelenskyy stopped playing a comic book hero, and on March 27, 2022, addressed his country about Ukraine agreeing

to a neutrality status, and settling with Russia. She suggested that the U.S. now can simply bring something to the peace table by endorsing “Ukrainian neutrality” and agree “to participate in the kind of security guarantees Ukraine and Russia agreed to in March [2022], but which the U.S. and U.K. rejected.”

Finally, the [Veteran Intelligence Professionals for Sanity](#) (VIPS) presented “Leopards vs. the Russian Bear,” as an “Alert Memorandum” to President Biden, which eviscerates the reckless incompetence behind what Biden is receiving as intelligence, and bluntly tells him that he has lost his war in Ukraine, and in the process has driven Russia and China so close together, that the U.S. now faces two conjoined nuclear powers in any showdown. Further, Putin “has heard from the lips of U.S. Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin: ‘One of the U.S.’s goals in Ukraine is to see a weakened Russia. ... The U.S. is ready to move heaven and earth to help Ukraine win the war against Russia.’ ” And Putin and Russia view that as an existential threat. “Can the U.S. achieve Austin’s goal? Not without using nuclear weapons.”

The VIPS conclude that an off-ramp is needed for the sake of the U.S. and of Ukraine. Take up Putin’s hint from October 2022 that Moscow “might agree to halt before taking Odessa, in return for concessions from U.S./NATO/Ukraine....

“It is true that the final word belongs to those who implement this policy in Washington. It is very easy for them to solve this problem: to send the appropriate signal to Kiev that they should change their position and seek a peaceful solution to these problems. And that will do it....

“In return for flexibility on the part of Washington/Kiev, we suggest the Russians might consider stopping their advance at the Dniepr River and try to arrange talks to create some kind of demilitarized zone from Odessa northward roughly along the Dniepr. This would leave Ukraine with access to the sea.”

No one wishes more evil in the world. But when it appears, we must rise to the occasion.

And do recall, that on January 27, we celebrate the freedom in 1994 of that embattled political prisoner Lyndon H. LaRouche, and the birthday in 1756 of that genius Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, both forces of relentless optimism.

- Watch [Harley's Updates](#) with Harley Schlanger on Friday January 27, 2023: Every weekday morning on The LaRouche Organization, Schlanger will give you the strategic briefing you need to start your day.

U.S. POLITICAL & ECONOMIC

When Zelenskyy Explained to Ukraine a Peace Plan with Russia

Jan. 26, 2023 (EIRNS)—In an article for Antiwar today, “[What Can the United States Bring to the Peace Table for Ukraine?](#)” CODEPINK cofounder Medea Benjamin and collaborator Nicolas Davies very usefully remind of a time when the world was only half-crazy. In March 2022, negotiations including a ceasefire between Russia and Ukraine, carried out in Istanbul, resulted in “a 15-point ‘neutrality agreement,’ which President Zelenskyy publicly presented and explained to his people in a national TV broadcast on March 27th. Russia agreed to withdraw from the territories it had occupied since the invasion in February in exchange for a Ukrainian commitment not to join NATO or host foreign military bases. That framework also included proposals for resolving the future of Crimea and Donbas,” wrote Benjamin and Davies. They included a link to the [Guardian](#)’s March 28, 2022 coverage of Zelenskyy’s presentation.

The *Guardian* stated that Zelenskyy was “willing to discuss ‘neutral status’ at face-to-face talks with Russia” in Turkiye. Then it quotes [Zelenskyy](#) as saying in his broadcast: “Our goal is obvious—peace and the restoration of normal life in our native state as soon as possible. Ukraine’s sovereignty and territorial integrity are beyond doubt. Effective security guarantees for our state are mandatory.” And Zelenskyy granted a video interview “with independent Russian media outlets to signal his willingness

to discuss the idea of Ukraine adopting a ‘neutral status,’ and also make compromises about the status of the eastern Donbas region, in order to secure a peace agreement with Russia.”

Worth noting, though not mentioned in the Benjamin-Davies article, within hours of Zelenskyy’s presentations, the “Bucha” narrative was set into play. Then, within two weeks, Britain’s then Prime Minister Boris Johnson was in Kiev making clear that the West would not provide such security guarantees as Zelenskyy had called for. Rather, the West expected Ukraine to reject any agreement with Russia and to fight to the last Ukrainian.

The article does list “some steps the U.S. could consider putting on the table to start de-escalating these ever-rising tensions.” It begins with the West supporting “Ukrainian neutrality by agreeing to participate in the kind of security guarantees Ukraine and Russia agreed to in March, but which the U.S. and U.K. rejected.”

U.S. Rep. Gosar Condemns ‘Biden’s Reckless Decision To Escalate War’

Jan. 26, 2023 (EIRNS)—The following statement was issued by U.S. [Rep. Paul Gosar](#) (R-AZ) today “in response to the Biden administration’s decision to escalate our involvement in a war with Russia and send 31 M1 Abrams tanks to Ukraine.

“Joe Biden’s decision to send American tanks to Ukraine brings us one step closer to dragging America directly into a massive, global war. This is a dangerous and reckless escalation matched by a historic escalation by Germany, which has now violated its post-World War II policy of non-intervention.

“Not too long again Biden stated that ‘the idea that we’re going to send in offensive equipment and have planes and tanks and trains with American pilots and American crews just understand no matter what you say, that is called World War III.’

“By his own admission and, with this latest decision, by his very actions, World War III is more and more possible each passing day thanks to Joe Biden.

“America should not send any tanks to Ukraine, or any war materiel at all, or help to prolong a needless war and adding to the body count. We need peace between Ukraine and Russia, not more American equipment and tanks. This war needs to be resolved and America should be a peace maker, not a war monger.”

Congressman Gosar concluded: “We just ended a 20-year war with Afghanistan and suffered another stunning and humiliating loss there. Biden’s war making ability is negligible and his silly war mongering endangers millions of Ukrainians, Russians and now potentially other Europeans and Americans.”

Trump: Tanks & Nukes, or Peace

Jan. 26, 2023 (EIRNS)—Writing this morning on his Truth Social platform about the sending of tanks to Ukraine, former President Donald Trump made it short and sweet: “FIRST COME THE TANKS, THEN COME THE NUKES. Get this crazy war ended, NOW. So easy to do!” He further wrote, early in the evening: “IF I WERE PRESIDENT, THE RUSSIA/UKRAINE WAR WOULD NEVER HAVE HAPPENED, BUT EVEN NOW, IF PRESIDENT, I WOULD BE ABLE TO NEGOTIATE AN END TO THIS HORRIBLE AND RAPIDLY ESCALATING WAR WITHIN 24 HOURS. SUCH A TRAGIC WASTE OF HUMAN LIFE!!!”

NEW WORLD PARADIGM

Lavrov Details How Russia Discussed BRICS Currency with Africans and Ibero-American Nations

Jan. 26, 2023 (EIRNS)—Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov said in a statement to the media, yesterday, following his Jan. 24 meeting in Luanda with Angolan President João Lourenço, that in their discussion “they confirmed the unprecedented pressure exerted by the Western countries on

the developing economies of Asia, Africa and Latin America.”

Furthermore, “The West’s actions prove that it can trample over the values and the globalization mechanisms that it created and promoted ... and can betray its allies at any time as well.”

Hence, Lavrov concluded: “Serious countries that have respect for themselves are well aware of what is at stake and clearly see the inability of the ‘owners’ of the current international monetary and financial system to negotiate, and want to create their own mechanisms for ensuring sustainable development that is protected against outside dictate. The initiatives that have been voiced recently, literally just the other day, focus on the need to think about creating separate currencies within BRICS and the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean. Without a doubt, this issue will be discussed at the BRICS summit to be held in South Africa in late August 2023. A group of African countries, including President of Angola João Lourenço, are invited to take part in this.”

Lavrov had earlier referenced discussion on Russian relations with Latin America. In his [Jan. 18 press conference](#) on Russian diplomacy, Lavrov responded to a media question that Russia had had a mechanism for harmonizing its relations with Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC) that had been shut down by Covid-19 pandemic, and which Moscow wanted to soon reestablish.

“We are interested in mutually beneficial cooperation with all these countries. We also want Latin America to strengthen its Latin American-Caribbean unity...” he explained.

“At this point, we are ready to cooperate through the BRICS-Plus format. The five association members see eye to eye with us on this score. We have teamed up with our Chinese friends to approve the criteria for other countries wanting to join BRICS. Probably, speaking about the Latin American region’s interests, it would make sense for CELAC to consider items on the BRICS agenda. Also, other CELAC countries would benefit from the Latin American countries that participate in the BRICS activities representing their interests in BRICS.” He mentioned that Argentina and

several other Ibero American nations are seeking membership in the BRICS.

Moreover, he closed his Jan. 18 press conference regarding Russian-African relations: “Russia and Africa are planning to hold a second Russia-Africa Summit on July 23-26, 2023, in St. Petersburg. We are preparing a series of events for the summit, including a business forum. We are drafting documents to reset cooperation mechanisms in this environment of sanctions and threats...” that punish African states that cooperate with Russia. “There will be new trade and investment cooperation tools, logistics chains and payment arrangements. The change to transactions in national currencies is under way. This process is not a rapid one, but it is in progress and gaining momentum,” said Lavrov.

Russia Views Trade with South Africa Using National Currencies as First Step

Jan. 26, 2023 (EIRNS)—[Oleg Ozerov](#), the head of the Russia-Africa Partnership Forum Secretariat, reported at the Valdai Discussion Club that Moscow expects that its cooperation with South Africa will not develop on the basis of payments in dollars, but on the basis of various national currencies, TASS reported today.

“We can work in national currencies that are not under sanctions,” he said. That means that Russia’s partners could use the ruble, but also the South African rand, in payments between countries, as the rand “is the currency of not only South Africa, but the whole of Southern Africa and the SADC [South African Development Community] member states.” Ozerov also cited the use of China’s yuan as another possibility.

He stressed the importance of restarting trade with South Africa, after the disruptions of the Covid period. As for the creation of a BRICS currency, he said this is a “long-running process, though we need quick solutions that will allow us to restart trade with South Africa, as well as create and finance joint projects. These solutions are actively being investigated now.”

STRATEGIC SHOWDOWN

Swiss President Considers Sending Weapons to Ukraine Violates 'Our Basic Principles'

Jan. 26, 2023 (EIRNS)—Switzerland's President Alain Berset asserted yesterday that, as a neutral state, Switzerland should not allow third countries to re-export of Swiss weapons to Ukraine. His remark came in response to a proposal to lift the ban on re-exporting made by the Swiss parliament's international commission, that called for amending the country's laws. The country's major party, the Swiss People's Party, part of the four-party government coalition, is against lifting this ban.

"Today, it is not time to change the rules of re-export. Neither is it time to change the rules of neutrality," Berset said in an interview with the RTS television channel. "On the contrary, it is time to recall our basic principles, to stay committed to them and find a right path for the country in this situation." Switzerland has "a different role from other states," he said.

He recalled that trust in Switzerland stems from the fact that the country is a depository of the Geneva conventions and stands for promoting humanitarian law. He further argued that departing from its special role for the sake of weapons export will not influence the situation in Ukraine, saying, "A lot of weapons are being exported to Ukraine, and Switzerland is not playing a decisive role in that."

However, on Jan. 25, the Swiss government imposed new export controls against Russia on certain goods, "including dual-use goods, goods for military and technological enhancement, or for the development of the defense and security sector, or goods that contribute to the enhancement of Russian industrial capacity."

U.S., Greens and Liberals Muscled Germany on Tanks to Ukraine, Argues Linke MP

Jan. 26, 2023 (EIRNS)—In an interview yesterday with Democracy Now!, [Sevim Dagdelen](#), Linke party member on the Bundestag's Foreign Affairs Committee, denounced the government's decision to send Leopard 2 battle

tanks to Ukraine: “This decision, sending battle tanks to Ukraine from Germany and giving the decision that Poland and others can send Leopard 2 German tanks to Ukraine, is a historic wrong decision. And it comes only because of the pressure, the heavy pressure, of the U.S. Biden administration, we have to say. Several months ago, Chancellor Scholz, in the German parliament Foreign Affairs Committee, said it is a red line. It’s a line of escalation, sending battle tanks from Germany to Ukraine. ... But the pressure now was too heavy, too strong from the Biden administration to send Germany in the frontline of this war. And it was the pressure of the coalition partners, the Greens and the liberals [Free Democrats]—they are actually the neocons in this coalition,” which threatened to breach the governing coalition if the Leopard 2 were not sent to Ukraine, she said. “According to new polls ... in the recent days, the majority in Germany is against sending battle tanks to Ukraine. The majority is in favor for more diplomacy, for a negotiated peace in Ukraine,” she stressed.

Dagdelen further pointed out: “So they’re pushing us Germans into the frontline of this fire ... to ensure that Germany and Russia, for good, have no relations at all. ... When you see the books of Brzezinski and many think tankers in the United States, it was always an aim by the United States elites to destroy the relationship between Germany and Russia. ... Last night, already the Green Foreign Minister Annalena Baerbock started to say, officially, we are fighting a war against Russia.”

A local branch of Die Linke posted on its Telegram channel coverage of a demonstration of hundreds of people marching in Munich, accompanied by drummers, with activists carrying banners for peace, critical of supplying weapon to the Kiev regime. They called for “peace without weapons” for Ukraine and for ending the “economic warfare.”

Russians Demand, with German Tanks in Ukraine, ‘Have You Forgotten World War II?’

Jan. 26, 2023 (EIRNS)—The grotesque image of German tanks again in Ukraine triggered a chorus of Russian voices, marveling at the amnesia and folly of the West. Have Germans erased the memory of German tanks on

Russian soil, the Nazi invasion of the Soviet Union, and the horror it wrought? As Russian experts pointed out about the decision of German Chancellor Olaf Scholz to allow its own and others' Leopard tanks to be sent to Ukraine, the descendants of those Russians who fought the Nazi invaders and destroyed their tanks certainly haven't forgotten. And Germany will pay for its renewed folly.

According to TASS, Russia's Interior Minister Vladimir Kolokoltsev warned yesterday that Russia will destroy today's Leopard tanks, just as they had the Tigers and Panthers during World War II. The descendants of those who liberated the world of Nazism "preserve the historical memory of the crimes of Hitler's forces and their henchmen," referring to the collaborationists around Stepan Bandera in Ukraine. "They perfectly preserve the picture of Tigers and Panthers burning on Russian soil in the memory of the modern generation. They will remember burning modern Leopards as well."

Kolokoltsev explained that the "U.S. masters of the Kiev leadership" aren't bothered by huge human losses, or by the glorification of Nazism, "or of the unprecedented corruption of their puppets." The subservient Ukrainian elites willingly have turned a "once brotherly republic and good neighbor to an outpost of infrastructure that is hostile to Russia, to turn our borders into an area of 'controlled geopolitical instability.' "

Andrey Kortunov, general director of the Russian International Affairs Council, had a similar message, asserting that the West "does not let the Germans hear their inner voice." He points out that, while there is an internal rift in Germany over sending tanks to Kiev, Berlin succumbed "to colossal pressure." The U.S. played a major role, and so did the Baltic states.

Even more important, he says, is that there is "still internal discussion," given that the decision bore "a heavy load of political symbolism for the people of Germany, who will again see German tanks in Donbass ... this brings to mind various unpleasant associations for the Germans as well." Yet, it was clear that Scholz would give in, he says. However, he warns that

the decision will harm Germany's defense capabilities, and rules out that Germany can send a large number of tanks, as the "Bundeswehr itself is not in the best shape now."

Finally, Nikolay Mezhevich of the Institute of Europe of the Russian Academy of Sciences, asks "what will London or Washington say when Russian gunners start knocking out German tanks in Ukraine?" He also points to historical precedent: "Our opponents do not really understand that the emergence of German tanks in the post-Soviet space will mean a turning point in the Russian public mind. The Germans will be forced to feel the consequences of their decision."

Israel Turns Down U.S. Pressure for Air Defense Batteries to Ukraine

Jan. 26, 2023 (EIRNS)—In the midst of the "tanks to Ukraine" announced in Berlin and Washington, it also emerged yesterday that the U.S. is pressuring Israel to transfer its old Hawk anti-aircraft missiles to Ukraine. Israel has 10 Hawk batteries, along with hundreds of interceptors for them, which it retired a decade ago and has kept in storage.

According to Axios, a senior Israeli official said its Defense Ministry official told U.S. counterparts there is no change in Israel's policy to not provide weapons systems to Ukraine. Moreover, the Israeli official reported that Israel's Hawk systems are "obsolete" and dysfunctional from being in storage so long without maintenance. However, the Israeli officials counter that while the launchers might be completely dysfunctional, the hundreds of Hawk interceptors Israel has in storage can be refurbished and used.

Still, the Israeli Defense Ministry reiterated to Axios in a statement that the "position of the Israel security establishment [on giving military aid to Ukraine] hasn't changed. Every request is being reviewed on a case-by-case basis."