

The Gordievsky affair: Soviets mounted 'World War III' hoax

by Scott Thompson

A book that will appear in the United States in spring 1989, *The Storm Birds*, that is partially based upon the statements of Oleg Gordievsky, a prominent Soviet defector to Britain, will claim that Moscow was prepared to launch a thermonuclear World War III back in autumn 1983. Authoritative sources have insisted that Moscow did simulate threats during that period—the time at which forces inside the Reagan administration moved to oust Judge William Clark from his position as National Security Adviser, and to break off all direct contact with Lyndon H. LaRouche, Jr. and his associates at *EIR*.

In fact, Moscow was not ready to go to war in autumn 1983. The threat reported by Gordievsky was simply carefully orchestrated disinformation that was part of a calculated strategic deception to test the will of the Reagan administration. Apparently, many Western authorities were deceived by that bluff then, and continue to be fooled to the present day.

The British Secret Intelligence Services have been so proud of their defector Gordievsky, that he not only consults regularly with Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher on a “revolving door” basis, but authoritative British sources claim that he remains an adviser to the prime minister and the Foreign Office on Mikhail Gorbachov’s policies long after his usefulness as a defector has disappeared. It was on the highest British recommendation that a 50-page report by Gordievsky, classified “COSMIC,” titled “Soviet Perceptions of Nuclear War,” was read by President Reagan from cover to cover.

The late director of the CIA, William Casey, accompanied by Lt. Col. Oliver North, reportedly flew to London before the first, 1985 Reagan-Gorbachov summit in Geneva, to debrief Gordievsky on how the President should conduct himself. Gordievsky was also brought secretly to the United States for several days of debriefing by senior officials of the National Security Council, the State and Defense Departments, U.S. intelligence agencies, and, possibly, for a showcase visit with President Reagan.

Was he a dispatch?

The perception of a false defector (dispatch), carrying Soviet disinformation into Western policy deliberations has lost ground since 1972, when James Jesus Angleton was fired as CIA chief of counterintelligence, because of the “détente”

era then ushered in by Secretary of State Henry Kissinger and DCI William Colby. Several leading intelligence analysts and defectors, questioned by *EIR* on whether Gordievsky was a “dispatch,” called this “Angleton’s paranoid school of counterintelligence,” or denied that such a high-ranking KGB officer would be deployed on such a mission.

Others reasoned that Gordievsky “gave away the store.” Not only had he identified Soviet “mole” Arne Treholt in Norway, but, after his defection was announced by Margaret Thatcher before Parliament in 1985, the British kicked out 31 Soviet diplomats, journalists, and trade officials, whom Gordievsky had reportedly identified as espionage agents of the KGB and GRU. It was also argued that MI-6 had to conduct a daring rescue of Gordievsky in Moscow, after he had fallen under suspicion of being the “double agent” who had exposed Treholt.

EIR is not prepared to say whether or not Gordievsky was a witting dispatch. However, it is notable that Gordievsky won his position as KGB *resident* in London, when, supposedly acting as a British “double,” he successfully stage-managed Gorbachov’s December 1984 visit to London, during the Soviet succession crisis, when Thatcher gave her approval to his rise to power by stating, “Gorbachov is a man whom the West can deal with.” Gorbachov credited Gordievsky with much of his success, and had him promoted from deputy station chief in London to *resident*. It is certainly curious that MI-6, working through their alleged “double,” wanted Gorbachov to succeed in the faction fight that landed him the general secretary job three months later.

This raises significant questions about the continuation of the “Anglo-Soviet Trust,” which earlier endorsed Gorbachov’s mentor, KGB chief Yuri Andropov to be general secretary, on the basis that he had been “Westernized” by H.A.R. “Kim” Philby, et al.

Arne Treholt had already fallen under suspicion, according to Scandinavian intelligence officers queried by *EIR*, so it cost little to cough him up. Trading 31 Soviet espionage agents in Britain for the impact Gordievsky’s disinformation about the World War III hoax had upon a major shakeup in the Reagan administration, definitely favored the Soviets in the bidding.

Author Gordon Brook-Shepherd, who was permitted by MI-6 to interview Gordievsky for three days for his *Storm Birds* book, claims unequivocally that Gordievsky’s warn-

ings of a war danger caused President Reagan to drop his analysis of the Soviet Union as an “evil empire” and to make overtures to the Soviet leadership.

Orchestrating the hoax

In June-July 1983, Lyndon H. LaRouche, Jr. went on an international fact-finding trip in order to present a report on the current Soviet posture to the NSC. He noted that the United States must expect some key Soviet military incident within about 30 days, and that this incident, whatever it might be, would begin a general escalation of almost unprecedented Soviet threats. LaRouche’s point: “Our nerve was to be tested.”

The idea that the Soviets would “test” the Reagan administration was widely accepted by a traditionalist faction of the administration in senior positions, according to Murrey Marder, who first revealed the Gordievsky side of the war hoax in an Aug. 8, 1986 *Washington Post* article, “Defector Told of Soviet Alert; KGB Station Reportedly Warned U.S. Would Attack.” LaRouche’s 1983 warning proved correct; within less than 30 days, Marshal Nikolai Ogarkov personally defended the shooting down of the civilian airliner, KAL 007.

Although President Reagan rightly identified some of the elements which proved conclusively that Moscow had deliberately attacked the airliner, no adequate political penalties against Moscow were exacted. By Soviet standards, U.S. nerve had failed its first test.

This led to the Soviet escalation during the NATO command post exercise, Able Archer, a few weeks later. The Soviet Politburo, according to Gordievsky, ordered the KGB and GRU to work together to determine if the exercise was a cover for a NATO attack upon the Soviet Union.

The Soviets, so the story goes, estimated it would take the West 7-10 days to prepare their attack, so the Soviet intelligence alert was the first step toward their own count-down. Examined from a distance—knowing that the U.S. had conducted the Able Archer exercise for several years and had no intention of war—the Soviet deception becomes an incredibly cheap one. It did not even require a significant Soviet military alert, merely an intelligence-gathering exercise, which the Soviets knew would be picked up by Western signals intelligence and reported back by “double agents” (possibly including Gordievsky) as “the real thing.”

LaRouche later stated, “Was there, as London sources now say, a Soviet threat of World War III during autumn 1983? No. There was something very nasty afoot in Moscow: a grand-scale strategic deception. It was ‘nuclear living theater’ . . . The West ‘blinked,’ and the rest, to date, is recent history. What was pushed aside was the very simple fact, that Moscow was not prepared to go to war, unless attacked, at that time. Also, Moscow feared no U.S.A. attack at that time, or any time since, to the present day.”

In fact, at this very time, LaRouche and his associates were in a faction fight at the NSC, around two major points:

1) The Soviets were involved in a five-year program designed by Marshal Nikolai Ogarkov to build up their military to the point that it could either hope to win a thermonuclear war started by Moscow, or where its overwhelming strategic superiority would Finlandize the West, starting with Western Europe’s industrial economies. 2) The fact that the dominant ideology of the Soviet *Nomenklatura* was precisely that of an “evil empire,” which sought world domination in correspondence with the blood-and-soil doctrine of the Russian Orthodox Church, that Moscow would become the “Third and Final Rome.”

Corroborating LaRouche’s analysis that the war threat was a psychological warfare hoax, the *Washington Post*’s Murrey Marder noted from other NSC-level sources: “Many senior administration officials scoff now, as they did then, at the suggestion that the Soviet Union was genuinely alarmed by U.S. military moves or public statements, or that Moscow had any justification for feeling vulnerable. The ‘war scare’ in the Soviet Union in 1982-83 was deliberately engineered for propaganda purposes, these officials maintain.”

Reagan administration ‘blinks’

When the Soviets ran their strategic deception in response to Able Archer, tensions between East and West were at a high point, largely because of Soviet alarm over President Reagan’s announcement of his Strategic Defense Initiative in March 1983. The Soviets feared not only that they could not compete with the West in this new technology, but also that the SDI might act as a “science driver” for reviving the Western economy, whose collapse Marshal Ogarkov had counted upon as part of his war plan.

This new policy course of the Reagan administration is what the Soviets sought to disrupt through their World War III hoax, for which Gordievsky was a vehicle.

Within weeks of the Able Archer hoax, William Clark—the architect of President Reagan’s “evil empire” analysis of the Soviets—was ousted from the NSC, followed by other members of the traditionalist faction. LaRouche, who was blamed by the Soviets for SDI, was cut off from contact with the NSC, along with his *EIR* associates.

The only unknown feature of this Soviet-orchestrated cold coup was the role played by the President’s wife, who was already under the influence of Soviet Trust agent Armand Hammer, via her friends, the Charles Z. Wicks.

Despite a lack of media coverage on this point, there should be no question of the importance that the Soviets attached to the LaRouche/SDI issue.

In an Oct. 26, 1983 *Literaturnaya Gazeta* article, “Notes of a Political Observer: ‘Star Wars’/The Space Program: A Casus Belli?” Fyodor Burlatsky, a former member of a special intelligence unit of the CPSU Central Committee, stated, “Space weapons, if they are created, will undoubtedly represent a most dangerous factor of destabilization. . . . Space weapons are a *casus belli* for nuclear war.”