



Emergency Event at National Press Club: The Danger of Nuclear War Is Real, and Must Be Stopped

June 12, 2024 (EIRNS)—On Wednesday, June 12, the Schiller Institute hosted an emergency press conference which featured four distinguished speakers: Scott Ritter, former UN weapons inspector and U.S. Marine intelligence officer; Col. Richard H. Black (ret.), former head of the U.S. Army’s Criminal Law Division at the Pentagon and a former Virginia State Senator; Helga Zepp-LaRouche: founder and chairwoman of the Schiller Institute; and Col. Lawrence Wilkerson (ret.), former chief of staff to United States Secretary of State Colin Powell. Ray McGovern, former CIA analyst and co-founder of the Veteran Intelligence Professionals for Sanity (VIPS), had been scheduled to appear, but had to cancel due to health issues.

The venue was the National Press Club in Washington, D.C., and the in-person gathering was joined by journalists participating by Zoom from around the world, with simultaneous interpretation provided in Spanish, German and French. In addition, close to 2,000 people participated on a live Schiller Institute feed, with others joining via other electronic venues.

Schiller Institute moderator Dennis Speed observed that among others, Scott Ritter and Helga Zepp-LaRouche have been listed as targets by Ukraine’s U.S.-funded Center for Countering Disinformation (CCD). Ritter had recently received shocking treatment at the behest of the State Department, when he was prevented from boarding a plane to attend the St. Petersburg International Economic Forum in Russia, and his passport was seized.

Ritter opened the event, stating that the lead story of every U.S. newscast should be the acute danger of nuclear war. People say wrongly that the

Cuban Missile Crisis was the closest we ever came to nuclear war, he noted; at that time, diplomacy was taking place. Today, Ambassador Anatoly Antonov, a leading specialist in arms control, is sitting in the Russian embassy on Wisconsin Avenue in Washington, D.C., “and his phone is not ringing.” After the end of the Soviet Union, America decided to maintain a strategic advantage, and began to withdraw from arms control treaties. Gradually, deterrence gave way to a nuclear war-fighting doctrine. “The greatest threat to us,” Ritter insisted, “is American nuclear weapons policy,” and only through the patience of the Russian leadership have we avoided nuclear war.

Col. Richard Black continued the theme: “Our nuclear doctrine grants the President of the United States plenary authority—unfettered authority”—to launch a nuclear war for any reason. This is different from Russian or Chinese doctrine; Russian doctrine is defensive, and nuclear weapons will only be used if the country is under nuclear attack or if the sovereign existence of the nation is otherwise threatened. “Ukraine was never a vital United States interest,” said Black, adding that the war began over whether Ukraine would be integrated into NATO and nuclear weapons could be stationed there, close enough that Russia would have no time to respond to a first strike. After Russia entered Ukraine in February 2022, peace negotiations began within four days. After two months, they were virtually at an agreement. Then British Prime Minister Boris Johnson was sent to Kyiv to tell the Ukrainians, “Knock off these peace talks, get back to the important work of fighting.”

In summary, Black said, “All of this vast sea of bloodshed which followed has been largely

unnecessary.” He described American and NATO-launched provocations such as the sabotage of the Nord Stream pipeline, which threw the German economy into recession; French President Macron’s proposal to send troops as “trainers,” as in Vietnam, which will inevitably lead to combat; and the attempts to blind Russian early-warning radars, and attacks on the Russian Engels-2 airbase where its nuclear bombers are stationed.

Helga Zepp-LaRouche described how Russia is responding to these escalating provocations from NATO. In addition to conducting maneuvers for the tactical use of nuclear weapons, a Russia flotilla has arrived in Cuba on the very day of the press conference. Turning to discuss solutions, she proposed that “the most obvious reference point is the Peace of Westphalia” which ended the Thirty Years’ War, because continuation of that war would have killed everyone in Europe. We now have a global version of that situation. She asked the participants

to study her Ten Principles of a New International Security and Development Architecture, and praised the proposals of Chinese President Xi Jinping and the Brazilian/Chinese initiative to end the Ukraine war.

Col. Lawrence Wilkerson began by quoting a “great man, a patriot and a hero of this country,” Daniel Ellsberg, who has said that we are closer to nuclear war than we have ever been. Wilkerson added, “It is all our fault. It is the empire’s fault.... We have abrogated every protective treaty environment that we painstakingly crafted.” Prior to the U.S. proxy confrontation with Russia in Ukraine, it was an established principle of diplomacy that two nuclear weapons-owning states should never go to war. “The American people have forgotten what it was to build a bomb shelter in your backyard,” he said. “We don’t have any idea in this nation anymore of what nuclear weapons can do.”

Watch the Press Conferecncce Here



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