

Obama Is Spelled N-A-I-V-E

While in London for the G20 summit on April 1, Obama and Russian President Dmitry Medvedev announced they would meet later in the year and attempt to work out an arms control treaty that reduces the number of nuclear weapons. They issue a joint statement, *"We are instructing our negotiators to start talks immediately on this new treaty and to report on results achieved in working out the new agreement by July."*

Russia will do its best to take advantage of Obama's desire to limit nuclear arsenals by persuading him to drop U.S. plans for the missile defense system in Eastern Europe that it vehemently opposes. Obama may believe he will score "peace points" by reducing the number of nuclear warheads, but Russia will emerge the clear winner if it stops a missile defense system that is designed to neutralize its weapons.

Medvedev referred to Obama as *"my new comrade,"* and expressed pleasure that he was not pursuing President Bush's *"mistake"* of a missile shield. Although the U.S. has not yet ruled out the missile defense installation planned for Poland, Russia is clearly pressuring Obama to cancel it. Medvedev's remark suggests that Russia has already decided it has won that battle, and there is no doubt that Medvedev (and Putin) take the missile defense system seriously. On November 5, the day after the election of Obama, Medvedev announced that Russia would deploy missiles in Kaliningrad in response to U.S. plans to deploy a ballistic missile defense system in Poland and radar installation in the Czech Republic. Russia also announced plans to establish a Black Sea naval base in Abkhazia, and the formation of a "rapid reaction force." The timing of the announcements was not accidental; they were clearly intended to intimidate the new American President

Obama later had a telephone conversation with Lech Kaczynski, President of Poland. A Kaczynski staffer, Mariusz Handzlik, related that Obama promised he would proceed with plans to build the missile defense shield previously promised by President Bush. Obama senior foreign policy advisor Denis McDonough then denied that Obama made the pledge, as did the Polish Foreign Affairs Ministry. The incident means either that Obama made a hollow promise that he then retracted, or Poland was attempting to pressure Obama to continue with U.S. defense shield plans.

Obama seems eager to reduce the weaponry of the U.S. *"The president is on a path to denuclearizing the United States by refusing to modernize the arsenal or even to fund fully the steps necessary to assure the viability of the weapons we have,"* according to Frank Gaffney, president of the Center for Security Policy. Obama can reduce the U.S. arsenal simply by letting existing weaponry fall into

disrepair by spending funds on food stamps rather than the Defense Department.

Weeks ago, Obama had foolishly sent a private letter to Medvedev offering to cancel the planned defensive missile system if Russia agrees to help stop Iran from gaining nuclear weapons. Medvedev one-upped and humiliated Obama by making the offer public, calling Obama's bluff, and stating that he would gladly accept Obama's plans to drop the defensive missile program – but he added that there was no need to use Iran to haggle. The blunder by Obama signaled to Poland and the Czech Republic that he will readily throw them under the bus (probably along with Israel, Columbia, Taiwan, and South Korea) if it suits his political purposes. A letter from 35 Congressmen to Obama warned him “...it is *unwise and premature to offer such a concession*,” and wisely suggested that the Russians couldn't be trusted with such a deal anyway.

Then, in a test near Hawaii on March 17, the U.S. military successfully shot down a medium-range ballistic missile using a ground-based missile defense system, thus vindicating the “*Star Wars*” program initiated by President Reagan in 1983. Obama has called the program a “*boondoggle and unmitigated failure*,” although Defense Secretary Gates favors the continuing development of the system. Reagan's “*Trust, but verify*” has apparently been replaced by Obama with “*Trust, and keep your fingers crossed*.”

Since the moment of Obama's election, the Russians have sought to prevent the missile defense system. Obama, clearly no poker player, has several times indicated he would be willing to dump the installation. (If Saul Alinsky's book “*Rules for Radicals*” had a chapter on “negotiating from a position of strength,” Obama must have been high on cocaine while reading it.) The Russians, meanwhile, know better. They are aware of what Obama wants... a Nobel Peace Prize for having negotiated a reduction in nuclear weapons. And they will be more than happy to let him have it if it means strengthening their hand.

Before everyone starts congratulating Obama on a reduction in the number of nuclear weapons, consider an analogy. An American city is overrun with drug gangs and violence. The newly-appointed police chief negotiates a reduction in weapons with the gangs. They agree to turn over their automatic weapons if the police do the same. Members of the media assemble at the scene and cheerily report as the weapons are run over by a steamroller and destroyed. The chief is praised as a hero! Fewer assault weapons all around! Everyone is safer! Hail to the chief! The police chief and the media, however, neglect to disclose that the gangs agreed to turn over some of their weapons only on the condition that the police would stop wearing bulletproof vests.

Anyone with an ounce of intelligence and experience knows that Russia would rather have fewer missiles that *cannot* be intercepted than more missiles that *can*. Anyone except Obama, that is.

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