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“Idiots. Utter, unbelievable, jaw-dropping, unpardonable idiots” Alice Miles

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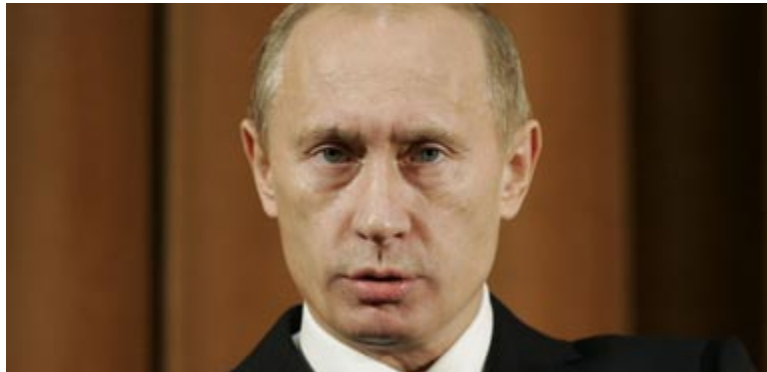
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From The Times November 21, 2007

President Putin rattles nuclear sabre at Nato



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Tony Halpin in Moscow

President Putin accused Nato yesterday of threatening Russia's security and ordered the military to place the country's strategic nuclear arsenal on a higher state of alert.

"In violation of previous agreements, certain member countries of the Nato alliance are increasing their resources next to our borders," Mr Putin told generals in a meeting broadcast on state television. "Russia cannot remain indifferent to this obvious muscle-flexing."

Mr Putin, whose rhetoric has become more strident as relations with the West have deteriorated, went on: "One of the most important tasks

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remains raising the combat readiness of the strategic nuclear forces. They should be ready to deliver a quick and adequate reply to any aggressor."

He issued his stark message as Russia confirmed that it would pull out of a landmark arms limitation treaty on December 12. The Conventional Forces in Europe (CFE) treaty was fundamental to ending the Cold War.

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Mr Putin hit out at Nato less than two weeks before Russians vote in parliamentary elections. While there is a clear element of sabre-rattling for domestic purposes, the Kremlin has also been alarmed by what it regards as a Nato plot to contain Russia.

Mr Putin is determined to increase pressure on Nato in an attempt to divide European members over a United States

plan to place a missile defence shield in Poland and the Czech Republic. He has already threatened to station nuclear missiles in the Russian exclave of Kaliningrad, which is surrounded by EU states, if Nato ignores Moscow's objections.

Poland's new Government has stated that it is willing to review the US proposal to place interceptor missiles on its territory. Washington says that the shield is aimed at rogue states such as Iran, but Russia is adamant that its own security is at risk.

The Kremlin is also angry at the prospect of Nato expanding to take in former Soviet satellites such as Georgia, Ukraine and Azerbaijan, bringing the military alliance along most of Russia's western border.

The 1990 CFE treaty imposed limits on the deployment of tanks and other forces in Europe. Nato refused to ratify an updated treaty in 1999 until Russia pulled troops out of the former Soviet republics of Georgia and Moldova.

Moscow has rejected any link between the two issues. Mr Putin said that Russia had honoured the CFE treaty while Nato members had continued to build up their military capabilities.

Mr Putin said that Russia would return to the CFE treaty only after Nato countries had ratified it. He urged the generals to seek "new ways to mitigate threats in the early stages".

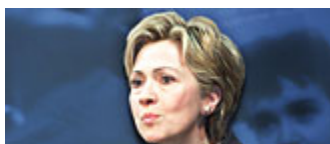
Mr Putin also praised the military potential of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO), which links Russia, China and four former Soviet states in Central Asia. The group held its first joint military exercises in August at Chebarkul in the Urals.



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I have been following Mr. Putin's actions, and public speeches as much as I can over the years, and I've noticed he is a man who thinks about everything he says ahead of time. I believe he isn't anyone's front man. Mr. Putin governs for the Russian People as a whole; while George Bush governs for the rich and corporations. Just from my observations of these two leaders I believe Mr. Putin isn't one into saber rattling, he just tells it like it is! I've also been aware as much as the media will allow about what has been going on in Russia over the years, like the poisoned KGB Colonel, the shooting of the free lance reporter etc. At times I get the feeling Mr. Putin enjoys toying with foreign politicians! Lets don't forget Mr. Putin spent a good portion of his life in service to his country in the KGB, and attained the rank of Colonel. Where are most of the Russian troops? Where are most of the American troops, the Chinese? Naturalistic Observation anyone? Mike, Sheffield Lake, Ohio

Mike, Sheffield Lake, Ohio, USA

Putin just means to improve his country. He's just playing with the toys god gave him such as we all do. Russia is not the enemy here.


Josh, Pennsylvania, USA

Putin, Bush, Ahmadijad, and the heads of nearly every government, are in the same club. That is, everyone of them is willing to put their people at risk, so 'they' can play economic and geopolitical power games with each other. This is one main reason, that government, every one, everywhere, are the enemies of humanity. Who else runs around with tanks , fighter jets, bombers, and battleships, killing as many people as possible.

Russians, who are very familiar with chess, may see the similarities of government moves to a chess game. Putin, Bush and the rest, are playing 'reality chess' , where knights and rooks really get killed, and pawns are worth a dime a dozen. We are the pawns. But there is such a thing as a 'pawn game', in which the pawns themselves pull off a checkmate or at least a stalemate. We better learn how to play a 'pawn game', and fast...

Duh_Swami, Nevada City , Calif, USA

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