

Flynn's Out: Is 'The New Détente' Really Dead - Or Can Russia Still Benefit?

By [Andrew Korybko](#)

Region: [Russia and FSU](#), [USA](#)

Global Research, February 16, 2017

[21st Century Wire](#) 15 February 2017

The global media is awash with analysis and speculation about the resignation of former National Security Advisor Michael Flynn, with everyone trying to make sense of what happened, why it occurred, and what it means for the future of the Trump Presidency and US-Russian relations more broadly.

Flynn didn't resign because he broke any laws; he left the White House supposedly because of the erosion of trust between him and the President which occurred as a result of this "deep state"-driven fake scandal.

Neoconservative and [Obama/Clinton-aligned elements](#) of the US' permanent military, intelligence, and diplomatic bureaucracies conspired to get rid of one of Trump's most trusted and promising advisors in order to preemptively undermine his hoped-for New Détente with Russia in the New Cold War.



Flynn was an integral part of this initiative and therefore had to be taken out as soon as possible, since his [political assassination](#) could change the momentum of the US' "deep

state” civil war and improve the odds that other revolutionary thought leaders such as Stephen Bannon and Stephen Miller – could be the next to go.

Retracing The Sequence Of Events

The grand objective is to neutralize Trump’s capacity to “Drain The Swamp” (even if only partially as it relates to US-Russian relations) and restore the old order of business in Washington, even going as far as ‘delegitimize’ and then later impeach the President if he doesn’t bend to their will. That’s why the Mainstream Media is making such a big fuss out of nothing more significant than an incoming National Security Advisor speaking with one of his many foreign counterparts during the transitional period, but it’s because of an alleged ‘technicality’ pertaining to the [1799 Logan Act](#) that this *American Hero* was able to be taken down by the “deep state”.

According to reports, the FBI ‘coincidentally’ happened to be eavesdropping on Russian Ambassador Sergey Kislyak at the exact same time as he held one of his discussions with Flynn, and the story goes that the designated National Security Advisor – at the time legally still a “civilian” – had made suggestions about American foreign policy which unwittingly put him in violation of the aforementioned law. Furthermore, he purportedly misled Vice President Pence about the full content of his conversation with the Ambassador, and this in turn contributed to the erosion of trust that ultimately led to Trump asking for his resignation.

Almost right afterwards, White House Press Secretary Sean Spicer [declared](#) that Trump “expects the Russian government to...return Crimea”, echoing UN Ambassador Nikki Haley’s earlier [copying](#) of Obama-era sloganeering about “the Russian occupation of Crimea”. This prompted mainstream and [alternative](#) voices to declare that Trump has revealed his “true face” and that there is “no hope” for a New Détente to ever materialize. The general sentiment from the mainstream media was that this was a good thing, while the alternative one rued the loss of this historic opportunity.

Uncomfortable Questions

But is that really the right way to assess this situation?

Flynn is an experienced operative in the US “deep state”, and he should have known better than to clumsily slip up and speak about anything which could be remotely interpreted by his presumed anti-Trump eavesdroppers to be in violation of any arcane legislation. He probably made a simple mistake in terms of how he expressed himself and that’s what’s to blame for this whole scandal, but there’s no way of knowing exactly what it was that he said until an official transcript becomes available, if ever. Nevertheless, judging by the euphemisms that he used in his [resignation letter](#), it’s evident that Flynn did in fact apparently mislead Pence as it related to his conversation with Ambassador Kislyak.

Or that’s what he wants everyone to think.

It’s doubtful that Flynn would have gone rogue on Trump simply due to the overzealousness that he might have felt towards helping to reach a New Détente, so no matter how taboo it may be to wonder, it can’t help but be countenanced that whatever it is that he spoke to the Russian Ambassador about, he did so with Trump’s implicit approval and per the President-elect’s suggestions. If this is the case, then Flynn might very well have misled Pence – The

Establishment's most powerful figure in the new administration - but still took the fall in order to save Trump from possible impeachment proceedings under the 1799 Logan Act.

PBHISTORY For The 21st Century

All the brouhaha that's being created over Flynn's resignation and the manufactured "deep state" scandal over his conversation with the Russian Ambassador is really just a 21st-century manifestation of the Old Cold War CIA project codenamed [PBHISTORY](#). This operation took place in post-coup Guatemala after the US successfully overthrew government in 1954, and its objective was to concoct 'evidence' that the former President was linked to the Soviet Union. This could then 'justify' the coup that was just carried out, but what's happening to Trump right now is almost the reverse implementation of that plan.

Instead of trying to link Trump to Moscow after his impeachment, the "deep state" is trying to do so in order to catalyze a 'legal' regime change against him. Flynn is being presented as the strongest 'evidence' allegedly connecting the American President to his Russian counterpart by wide degrees of imaginative speculation, but nevertheless, in the narrative-controlled vacuum of the Mainstream Media, this alternative reality has begun to take root and become a never-ending talking point among the army of paid shills that they employ. In order to wiggle out of this trap, Trump has reactively taken to parroting The Establishment's position towards Russia by sending Spicer out to channel his message about Crimea, just like he earlier preemptively did with Haley at the UN.

Does Détente Even Matter...

In both cases, it's unclear whether Trump really believes these positions or not, but in the larger scheme of things, it doesn't, nor shouldn't, really matter too much. It would be ideal if the US finally matured to the point of seeing the world through Moscow's multipolar eyes and accepted the reality that Crimea is in fact Russian, but even if it doesn't, that doesn't change the facts on the ground. All that it does is confirm that the sanctions pertaining to the peninsula's historic reunification with Russia will remain in place, much to the consternation of some neoliberal political and economic influencers in Moscow who might want them lifted for the wrong self-interested reasons.

Of course, it would be great if these economic restrictions were removed and the EU decided to follow suit because this could symbolically usher in a new era of cooperation between Russia and the West, though the downside is that the counter-sanctions would have to be lifted and Russian domestic producers - already enjoying an economic renaissance of sorts - would be forced to once more compete with their international counterparts on the Russian marketplace. The cost-benefit assessment pertaining to this either-or decision is entirely up to Russia's strategists and decision makers to calculate, and no judgement is being rendered in this regard, but it's an objectively expected fact that the Western recognition of Crimea's reunification with Russia might bode negatively for the competitiveness of some Russian companies (mostly agricultural) within their own country.

Now that Flynn's out and Trump is doubling down on his anti-Russian rhetoric, it seems ever less likely that a New Détente will be reached anytime soon, so any hope that optimists may have had about the supposedly imminent removal of sanctions has just completely evaporated. Nevertheless, just because the US is reminding Russia of its traditional hostility to it in the European front doesn't mean that it necessarily has to behave that way in the

Mideast one, which is why there's still a chance that the two Great Powers might indeed enter into some sort of joint cooperation against Daesh. If carried out with Damascus' blessing (whether stated or implied), then this could also work out to Russia's benefit as well.

Or Was It Just A Deception?

From the provocative position of being the 'devil's advocate', and for the purposes of simply presenting an alternative angle to the latest events, it's very possible that the prior dream that Russian strategists and decision makers might have had about reaching a New Détente was nothing more than a carefully crafted deception by the US. While Moscow has [officially](#) said on multiple occasions that it hadn't discussed the removal of sanctions with Washington and [has no illusions](#) about the difficulty of restoring bilateral relations between the two countries, there was popular speculation in some corners that Russia was willing to engage in preliminary trust-building 'concessions' in order to facilitate this presumed eventuality.

There's of course no real proof that this was ever the case, but the narrative is convincing to many and relies on conjectures related to the Russian-written "draft constitution" for Syria and Moscow's refusal to conventionally intervene during the latest [Ukrainian-provoked aggression](#) against Donbas. The author refuted the first line of thinking in the "[best-case scenario](#)" that he outlined in a recent article on the topic, while an analysis from two and a half years ago about the threat of a "[Reverse Brzezinski](#)" still accurately accounts for Russia's refusal to invade Ukraine. Even assuming that the author was wrong, however, and that Russia really is 'conceding' on multiple fronts in order to attain sanctions relief for its elite and a New Détente for its strategists, then the latest statements coming out of the White House must have certainly sobered up even the most diehard pro-Détente individuals in the Kremlin.



Crimea left the Ukraine and joined the Russian Federation in March 2014 (Image Source: [YouTube](#))

The cold hard reality is that even if Trump sincerely wanted to recognize Crimea as part of Russia and remove the sanctions – whether out of a genuine desire to start a new era of relations or in order to cynically squeeze as many ‘concessions’ from Moscow as possible beforehand – the domestic political situation in the US now makes it all but impossible for him to do so, let alone anytime in the near future. This shatters the hopes of the well-intentioned ideologues who truly believed that the dawn of new era was on the cusp of finally approaching, while it unprecedentedly was met with differing degrees of acceptance by both the Mainstream Media and Western neoconservatives on one side, but also foreign policy realists and “patriotic skeptics” from Russia on the other.

The first group obviously wanted to do everything in their power to undermine a Russian-US rapprochement, while the second was extremely cautious about what Washington might have expected from Moscow in exchange for the New Détente. For whatever their respective reasons may be in regards to the causes that they support (Syria, Donbas) or even just in general, some of the foreign policy realists and “patriotic skeptics” in Russia felt uncomfortable with their country potentially ‘conceding’ some of its recent geopolitical gains to the US as part of a grand bargain, despite it being impossible to ever reach a New Détente without both sides participating to some extent of deal-making.

This ‘conservative’ camp inadvertently got a boost from Flynn’s scandal, however, since they can now leverage more influence on the Kremlin in convincing it of the need to double down on relations with China and Iran in response to the US’ renewed aggression towards Russia and consider expanding their country’s newfound partnerships with [Turkey](#) and [Pakistan](#). There’s no longer any semi-legitimate concern in any serious circles that Russia will ‘concede’ anything on any of these fronts so long as Trump keeps up his hostile shtick (whether he really believes what he says or it’s just a distraction from domestic problems).

Whatever deception the US might have had in mind for Russia when hinting at a *New Détente* has disappeared and Moscow’s honeymoon with Trump is now over.

Draining The Swamp or Ruling Over It?

Trump’s volte face towards Russia has been exploited by critics and even those who sincerely believed in him in order to allege that he’s not draining the swamp, but ruling over it. They draw attention to how the only real differentiating factor separating the Trump and Obama Administrations’ policies towards the multipolar countries of Eurasia was that the 45th President was presumably poised to enter into cordial relations with Russia, and even that, as the author earlier [forecast](#) immediately after the election, was entirely dependent on draining the “deep state” foreign policy swamp. Other than this ambitious initiative, however, Trump has already disappointed many people when it comes to his stances towards [China](#) and [Iran](#), which has led many people to conclude that he was trying to separate Moscow from the Eurasian Great Power Alliance and neutralize its multipolar effectiveness per a [neo-Kissinger stratagem](#).

Those fears can safely be discarded – for now – because it’s highly unlikely that Russia would ever move in that direction – if at all – without any tempting carrots being offered by the US, such as the possible recognition of Crimea and a removal of the anti-Russian

sanctions. Considering that the Trump Administration's foreign policy towards Russia, China, and Iran is almost identical to Obama's except for the possibility of pragmatic joint cooperation against Daesh in Syria (pending Damascus' uncertain approval, of course), then it's fair to say that Trump is essentially leading the swamp when it comes to foreign affairs and that little has structurally changed except for the nature in which the US manages its established spheres of influence in the Western Hemisphere and the Eurasian Rimland (which might admittedly lead to dynamic and unpredictable developments).

Ask a regular Trump supporter, however, and most of them will totally disagree with anyone who says that Trump is ruling the swamp. The author isn't talking about the foreign policy wonks on Facebook or alternative international media, but the standard Joes and Sallys who voted for him in the Heartland and could honestly care less about International Relations except for when it comes to keeping the US out of another big war halfway across the world. The truth is that the generic Trump voter might have been sympathetic to their candidate's reasonable pragmatism towards Russia, but it was never really one of the main factors determining their support for him. Take it from a [Clevelander](#), not a nuclear physicist, academician, Twitter troll, or jet-setting journalist, among the many professional tropes that have become influential in alternative media lately, because here's what the average Trump voter cares about (in any given order):

- * Building the wall with Mexico;
- * Kicking out illegal immigrants;
- * Cracking down on welfare and other related government benefit freeloaders;
- * Restoring law and order to America's gang-ridden and riotous streets;
- * Fighting the War on Hard Drugs;
- * Easing business regulations and taxes on the Working Class (including Obamacare);
- * and fighting terrorism (both inside the US and abroad).

Trump supporters are also instinctively anti-Clinton, so since Hillary was a hawk against Russia, then they were automatically receptive to the softer stance promised by Trump. That's just the way it is, whether for right or for wrong, but because of this, most of the regular Americans who voted for Trump honestly don't care too much about his policy towards Russia so long as it doesn't impede his ability to carry through on the domestic agenda that won them over to his side in the first place. Trump's base, love it or hate it, is domestically focused and cares about "America First". Even if they disagreed with him on some elements of his foreign policy, they'd still vote for him based on what he was promising to do domestically, which is how most of the electorate anywhere across the world typically behaves anyhow.

This is the opposite of the position held by the majority of pro-Trump voices in the alternative media community (not counting Breitbart, of course), who might have been opposed to Trump's domestic policies but sided with him regardless because of his international ones vis-à-vis Russia. Many non-Americans who frequent these online communities might have therefore come under the misleading impression that most of Trump's supporters think the same way as these influential voices do, which isn't exactly the case. Now that some of the pro-Trump alternative media influencers have turned on him

due to his volte face towards Russia and have declared that he now leads the swamp, the non-American audience might think that this position is representative of the bulk of his supporters in general, which is once again inaccurate owing to the professional idiosyncrasies of these said voices relative to the Working Class core of Trump's movement.

No matter which angle it's looked at, however, there's no escaping the observation that Trump is indeed ruling over the foreign policy swamp, but appears to be in full revolt against the domestic one, at least as it relates to the 7 key platforms earlier enumerated upon which profile the most important issues for the typical Trump voter. Just as Obama succumbed to the neoconservative "deep state" in order to have a relatively free hand in carrying out his domestic agenda, so too does Trump appear poised to do the same, although the 45th President might simply be choosing his battles wisely with the understanding that it might be impossible to drain two swamps at once and that he should go after the 'lesser evil' (globally speaking) first before aiming for the greater one (if ever at all again). This has a lot to do with both his personal and political self-preservation, as Trump understands that his support base mostly doesn't even recognize that a foreign policy swamp exists outside of the Clinton Foundation and George Soros, neither of which he's obviously rubbing shoulders with, so to them, he's still draining the swamp so long as he stays loyal to the domestic concerns of his movement.

Concluding Thoughts

The neoconservative "deep state" ouster of National Security Advisor Flynn from Trump's Administration is a worrying development which shows that the [Clintonian Counter-Revolution](#) is proceeding apace and won't stop until Trump is either controlled or impeached.

In reaction to this onslaught against his team and responding to the fake "Russian puppet" narrative which has come to dominate the Mainstream Media discourse, Trump started to full-throatedly parrot some of The Establishment's most well-known talking points against Russia, especially as they relate to Crimea. This marks a dramatic change in tone and rhetoric from the President and signals that the domestic political pressure that he's under right now as a result of the latest manufactured scandal is too overwhelming for him to fully continue with the hoped-for New Détente with Russia. Nevertheless, that doesn't mean that such an eventuality should be completely dismissed, since it's still possible in principle for the US to coordinate joint anti-Daesh strikes with Russia in Syria (conditional on Damascus' approval, of course). What's importantly changed, however, is that the prospects for a New Détente, or even the remote semblance of one, in Europe have markedly diminished, and this can't help but catch the attention of the Kremlin.

It's unclear what goes on behind closed doors in the Grand Kremlin Palace and what sort of factions there are in the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, but there was previously some concern expressed in various sectors of the alternative media community that Moscow was at risk of 'going soft' on the US in Syria, Donbas, and elsewhere in order to exhibit 'goodwill gestures' designed to reach the grand goal of a New Détente and the pecuniary reward of sanctions removal. There were some speculations about this which contributed to a persistent and ever-growing narrative among various circles, and they in turn led some to wonder whether the pertinent arguments were based in objective reality or were just a convincing attempt at gaslighting. Whatever they may or may not have been is becoming irrelevant, however, since the readjusted expectations that Russia now has of the US after

Flynn's ouster and Trump's embrace of neoconservative rhetoric about Crimea have emboldened the patriotic conservatives which were previously cautious and possibly even outright skeptical about the New Détente, thus mitigating the chances that Russia will engage in any unnecessary preemptive 'concessions' towards the US so long as this attitude remains in place (key conditional).

The foreign policy twists that are playing out in the Trump Administration towards Russia have led some influential pro-Trump supporters in alternative media to conclude that the President has given up on draining the swamp and is instead now ruling it, whether because he decided to show the true colors that he's had all along or out of self-interested reasons in preserving his own political and personal survival.

The non-American audience which frequents the said alternative media platforms might come under the false impression that this sentiment mirrors that of the typical Trump supporter, which isn't necessarily the case owing to the professional particularities of some of the highest-profile commentators in this community.

While they're certainly entitled to their individual analyses, they don't exactly channel the sentiment of the grassroots masses which brought Trump to power, and their positions towards the President are mostly determined by his foreign policy, unlike the domestic policy which motivates most of his base. That being said, while the author by no means condones Trump's anti-Russian rhetoric and expected complementary actions, he understands that this should be seen separately from the President's domestic agenda and therefore doesn't impact the reason why his movement supports him in the first place.

Trump is definitely on the defensive when it comes to draining the foreign policy swamp, and the case can be argued that he's already in the process of being coopted by it to a large degree, but the situation is remarkably different when it comes to the domestic swamp that his supporters want him to drain. While the appointment of former Goldman Sachs investment banker Steven Mnuchin as Secretary of the Treasury completely goes against the presumable expectations of Trump's slogan, it's not an issue which takes absolute precedence to his base in comparison to the other reasons why they voted for him. Trump supporters want the President to restore law and order to their streets, fight hard drugs and crime, be tough on illegal immigration and unfair trade deals, and ease the draconian Obama-era regulations on small businesses (including Obamacare), which is what the populist leader is poised to do regardless of his foreign and macroeconomic policies. This isn't to endorse either of the latter, but simply to explain the reality that Trump is still very popular among his base and isn't perceived of as having "sold out", and the dichotomy between the alternative media narrative and the grassroots one is due to the differing emphasis that the first category of voices typically places on foreign policy as opposed to the second one's natural focus on domestic issues.

All in all, Flynn's resignation is evidence that the "deep state's" Clintonian Counter-Revolution is in full swing and that it's successfully (and swiftly) removed one of his top advisors. The international consequences of this are apparent, and it's that Russia is much more reserved about the prospects of ever reaching a New Détente and is less likely to ever enter into any preemptive 'concessions' (whether speculatively or substantially) aimed at attaining this. Russia will probably reinforce its relationships with China and Iran as well as expand its partnerships with newfound friends such as Turkey and Pakistan, while the US stands ready to return back to its Obama-era policies towards the multipolar leaders of Eurasia. For the most part, the Trump Administration's foreign policy is beginning to look

almost identical to the Obama Administration's, but in spite of that, the President still enjoys overwhelming approval from his grassroots movement because of their reverence for his nonsense and 'politically incorrect' approach to domestic issues. Whether this is a "good" or "bad" thing is for the reader to decide, but this is the objective reality as the author presently understands it, though fully accepting that it could quickly change in any and all regards depending on certain variables.

For the moment, however, the diminished hopes over the New Détente aren't necessarily a defeat for Russia, and should contrarily be seen as an opportunity by its strategists and supporters for the reasons previously mentioned.

Author and geopolitical analyst Andrew Korybko is a contributor to 21st Century Wire. He is also journalist for Sputnik News and the host of 'Trend Storm' on [Sputnik Radio](#). He studied international relations at the Moscow State University of International Relations (MGIMO), and is as a member of the expert council for the Institute of Strategic Studies and Predictions at the People's Friendship University of Russia. His book, "[Hybrid Wars: The Indirect Adaptive Approach To Regime Change](#)", extensively analyzes the situations in Syria and Ukraine and claims to prove that they represent a new model of strategic warfare being waged by the US.

The original source of this article is [21st Century Wire](#)
Copyright © [Andrew Korybko](#), [21st Century Wire](#), 2017

[Comment on Global Research Articles on our Facebook page](#)

[Become a Member of Global Research](#)

Articles by: [Andrew Korybko](#)

About the author:

Andrew Korybko is an American Moscow-based political analyst specializing in the relationship between the US strategy in Afro-Eurasia, China's One Belt One Road global vision of New Silk Road connectivity, and Hybrid Warfare. He is a frequent contributor to Global Research.

Disclaimer: The contents of this article are of sole responsibility of the author(s). The Centre for Research on Globalization will not be responsible for any inaccurate or incorrect statement in this article. The Centre of Research on Globalization grants permission to cross-post Global Research articles on community internet sites as long the source and copyright are acknowledged together with a hyperlink to the original Global Research article. For publication of Global Research articles in print or other forms including commercial internet sites, contact: publications@globalresearch.ca

www.globalresearch.ca contains copyrighted material the use of which has not always been specifically authorized by the copyright owner. We are making such material available to our readers under the provisions of "fair use" in an effort to advance a better understanding of political, economic and social issues. The material on this site is distributed without profit to those who have expressed a prior interest in receiving it for research and educational purposes. If you wish to use copyrighted material for purposes other than "fair use" you must request permission from the copyright owner.

For media inquiries: publications@globalresearch.ca