

Media Hypocrisy and History Regarding NATO Expansion

Thy Name Is Wall Street Journal

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The Wall Street Journal of March 31, 2023 (page A20, if you must know) featured this headline: "Turkey's Parliament Ratifies NATO bid." Here is the first paragraph of this entry:

"The Turkish parliament ratified Finland's entrance into the NATO on Thursday, removing the last obstacle to a historic expansion of the alliance in response to Russia's invasion of Ukraine." [Emphasis Added]

Wait a sec. If event B is a response to event A, A must necessarily come first in time, B only afterward. If B occurs first, this event can hardly be considered a response to A.

Let us do a little bit of history here. During the Cold War, NATO and the Warsaw Pact contended with one another. Then, in 1991, the Soviet Union ended. What should have then happened, for a true peace, was both military alliances should have disbanded. Or perhaps, turned into an organization that comprised both of them. But the Warsaw Pact dissolved, and NATO remained.

East and West Germany were combined in 1990. Promises were then made by NATO not to expand in an eastward direction. This agreement was broken upon numerous occasions.

And when, pray tell, did Russia invade Ukraine? Why, it was not until 2022, decades after NATO began its eastward move.

So what was a "response" to what? Obviously, the Russians responsively engaged in a war not so much against Ukraine; rather, in confrontation with all of the NATO countries. NATO instigated this war between Russia and Ukraine by expanding eastward. Russia, for many years, protested and warned against this aggressive activity, but to no avail. Finally, in 2022, this country took responsive action.

Robert D. Kaplan (also writing in *The Wall Street Journal*, titled "Putin's Shakespearian Demons") is having none of this. Suggests this worthy:

"Would Europe today be at peace with Mr. Putin's Russia had NATO not expanded east after the cold war...? Certainly not."

Does he give any reasons for this contention of his? Certainly not. Instead, he waxes eloquent about alternative history. He offers his thoughts on what he imagines would have occurred in the absence of the NATO eastward march.

To summarize: Putin's Russia would have been a bully, controlling the areas between Germany and his country, and impoverishing them all.

One way to refute this is to consider Russia's, well, the USSR's westward march. You say there was no such westward march? You are mistaken. They "marched" into Cuba in 1962 and parked a few weapons of mass destruction there. (To contextualize that initiative, at that time the U.S. had located similar weaponry in several countries surrounding the USSR. Further, these countries had joined NATO; Greece and Turkey in 1952; West Germany in 1955.)

How did the United States react to what it regarded as a serious provocation on its very borders? (Cuba is only 90 miles away from Florida.) Uncle Sam organized a naval blockade of the island nation.

But a blockade is an act of war! If Ukraine were an island, quite possibly Russia would not have physically invaded it. It might well have followed the example of the U.S. and blockaded that island of Ukraine. Hey, I can also do a bit of alternative history and alternative geography to boot! I have learned from the master of this sort of thing, Robert D. Kaplan.

In other words, the U.S. did in Cuba almost precisely what it is now blaming Russia for doing in Ukraine. There is a word for this sort of thing. Wait, I think I've got it...Yes, hypocrisy! Kaplan is also a master of that characteristic. Notice the level of patience between the two super powers. The U.S. waited only a matter of hours before the provocation of Russia to engage in an act of war. Russia? Decades.

Question: how many times in history has Russia invaded the United States? Answer, zero.

Question: how many times has the United States invaded Russia? Answer: one.

This occurred at the end of the first world war.

However, if we ask how many time has Russia been invaded by any and all countries in NATO, the answer is in the dozens.

Can we really blame them for being concerned with the possibility of western military equipment, up to and including weapons of mass destruction, being placed in a neighboring country, Ukraine, courtesy of NATO?

Imagine if we all lived in the land now occupied by Russia and they occupied the territory of the 50 states. Moscow and Leningrad are ours, they own New York City and Los Angeles and everything in between. All else remains the same: the history, the language, the culture, the

people.

How would we feel about the eastward movement by NATO? (Russia now being the leader and most powerful member of that organization.)

Answer: we would not be happy campers. How is it possible that intelligent experts such as Kaplan cannot see matters through the eyes of the other guy? Answer: I don't know.

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