

MH17 and the Economic Backlash of US Sanctions against Russia: The Rush to War?

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Citing the downing of Malaysia Airlines flight MH17 as impetus, US President Barack Obama announced stronger sanctions against Russia leveled by both the US and EU. This comes after [previous sanctions implemented before the downing of MH17 failed to garner support across Europe](#), leaving the US measures politically and economically impotent. In the wake of American sanctions, pundits, politicians, and corporate-lobbyists decried Europe's desire to continue doing business with Russia, claiming US sanctions alone would only hurt US corporations leaving a void gladly filled by Europe and others.

MH17 – The Convenient Impetus



With the “serendipitous” downing of MH17, this geopolitical calculus changed abruptly, and US President Barack Obama, even while admitting investigations were ongoing, invoked the tragedy to justify both the pressure put on Europe to finally impose stronger sanctions against Russia, but also as a means to sell the decision to a public targeted by [weeks of baseless anti-Russian propaganda](#).

Clearly MH17 is being exploited, and especially so since investigations are still under way and no conclusions – or even preliminary results – have been announced. At face value, the West exposes itself as shameless opportunists leveraging human misery to advance their geopolitical ambitions. But Washington, London, and Brussels’ actions also raise serious suspicion over their possible role in the downing of the aircraft. While evidence is forthcoming, a motive for the West to have shot the aircraft down and blame Russia has been demonstrably established.

Despite the “convenience” of the MH17 tragedy and the expediency with which the West has exploited it, this latest attempt to ram through ineffectual sanctions indicate increased desperation from Washington, London, and Brussels, not a renewed initiative in Ukraine, or

against Russia as a whole.

Sanctions Don't Work

Sanctions haven't worked against nations many times smaller and economically weaker than Russia, and they won't work against Russia. In fact, the sanctions will instead motivate Moscow to build stronger ties elsewhere, as well as become stronger internally. Many of the sanctions will not even bite for years to come – if ever. Europe was initially reluctant to level sanctions against Russia, not because of any particular affinity for Moscow, but because they would suffer economically as a result of implementing them. Western think-tanks bemoaned Europe's insistence that the "pain" be shared equally – pain the sanctions were surely to cause all those who agreed to them.

It took the shameless political exploitation of a tragedy to twist Europe's collective arms into agreeing to the measures now being taken, measures that will immediately begin effecting European nations dependent on long-standing economic ties with Russia and ties that cannot be easily replaced.

Japan likewise, citing nothing other than a desire to "cooperate with G7," issued new sanctions against Russia – Japan also being a nation that cannot afford narrowing prospects for its declining economy.

ITAR-TASS News Agency in an article titled, "[Japan prepares to impose new sanctions on Russia](#)," stated:

"Japanese government is preparing to impose new sanctions on Russia, Japanese Chief Cabinet Secretary Yoshihide Suga told a news conference on Wednesday.

"We are preparing to take additional measures, including freezing of bank accounts. We intend to give a proper response with an emphasis on co-operation with G7 partners," Suga said.

Russia responded by pointing out Japan's inability to establish independent foreign policy of its own and instead pursue self-destructive edicts dictated by Washington. Indeed, what the West is doing is isolating itself from a growing multipolar world that refuses to recognize or remain beholden to a waning unipolar international order centered around Wall Street and London. While the US, EU, and Japan constitute immense economies, technology and progress elsewhere has led to emerging economies that have the potential to eclipse them all. In China alone, Russia has been looking to hedge economic risk [by developing ties with the growing nation](#).

[Despite attempts to disrupt growing Russian-Chinese relations](#) through terrorism and political subversion, sanctions against Russia and continued belligerence as part of the West's "pivot to Asia" serve only to drive these two emerging powers closer together.

The Myth of Ukrainian Self-Determination



In addition to citing MH17 as grounds for leveling new sanctions, Obama also claimed that Ukraine had a right to determine its own destiny and therefore continued interference from Russia could not be tolerated. This betrays the true genesis of the current Ukrainian conflict. The current regime occupying Kiev was installed by NATO to serve EU interests – with US Senator John McCain whose National Endowment for Democracy (NED) subsidiary, the International Republican Institute (IRI) funded the various fronts that led and supported the 2013-2014 “Euromaidan” mobs, [literally taking to the stage during the protests to offer support for the Neo-Nazi Svoboda Party in Kiev.](#)

What the US means to say is Russia’s interference with NATO’s plans to subvert, overthrow, and replace political orders along Russia’s borders with belligerent NATO proxies will not be tolerated – a similar scenario that played out along Russia’s borders when Adolf Hitler’s Nazis likewise carried out a regional campaign of covert and outright military aggression ultimately aimed at Moscow itself.

Rush to War?

Provocations against Russia are increasing, as is the rhetoric to attempt to sell some sort of wider confrontation between NATO and Russia. Unfortunately for the West, sanctions, grisly disasters they “serendipitously” stood to benefit from but can’t, and even attempting to wind up their respective populations for a military confrontation with nuclear-armed Russia appear only as “bad, worse, and the worst” of all possible options. Analysts fear growing desperation from the West who can neither move forward, nor retreat, will resort to increasingly desperate and destructive tactics to change the tide in Ukraine, and against Russia and the growing multipolar order it represents. But when sanctions and what appears to have been a false flag attack have failed utterly, what is left besides war? However, even war is an untenable prospect for the West – that while feasible and likely to catch most off guard as an opinion not considered to be on the table – it is a prospect that could initially succeed but ultimately backfire just as Hitler’s invasion of the Soviet Union did during World War II.

But when it’s not the money or the blood of the special interests driving this confrontation with Russia being spent, what does the West have to lose by trying? Russia will have to continue being smart, patient, prudent, and let the West’s ill-intents destroy itself. No matter how weak or desperate the West may appear throughout was appears to be irreversible decline, the one mistake to be made would be underestimating what Washington, London, and Brussels could do in their death throes. From theaters along Russia’s immediate peripheries, to interests across the Middle East and North Africa – Syria included – maximum vigilance is required to guard against the vindictive spite of an

antiquated, dying international order.

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