

NATO and Western Militarism in a Multipolar World

Global Research News Hour 2017 Summer Series 6

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Region: [Asia](#), [Canada](#), [Europe](#), [Middle East & North Africa](#), [Russia and FSU](#), [USA](#)

Theme: [Global Economy](#), [GLOBAL RESEARCH NEWS HOUR](#), [US NATO War Agenda](#)

"In this pact, we hope to create a shield against aggression and the fear of aggression—a bulwark which will permit us to get on with the real business of government and society, the business of achieving a fuller and happier life for all our citizens."

– Address by US President Harry S. Truman, on the occasion of the signing of the North Atlantic Treaty (April 4, 1949) [1]

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The establishment of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) in April of 1949 was defended, at least [in public discourse](#), as a necessary bulwark against threats to peace posed by the Soviet Union.

Composed of 12 member states at the time, NATO was conceived as a collective defense among countries in the North Atlantic area (including Canada and the United States) all united in common cause to "safeguard the freedom, common heritage and civilization of their peoples, founded on the principles of democracy, individual liberty and the rule of law." [2]

Today, nearly 3 decades after the collapse of the Soviet Union, the alliance remains active, with 17 additional members, including former members of the Warsaw Pact and constituent nations of the former Yugoslavia. Defense spending has shifted to the Middle East & North Africa and East Asia & Pacific regions. [3]

The post Cold War 'peace dividend' was not realized, at least not for very long, as theatres of battle were waged progressively in the Gulf (1991), the former Yugoslavia (1995-1999), Afghanistan (2001), Iraq (2003), Libya (2011), and on the Russian frontier.

Peace has not been realized in the post Cold War era, and remarkably, a nuclear conflict between major powers is once again a very real prospect.

In April 2017, a symposium was held at the University of Manitoba probing the post Cold War military and parallel economic order. Three prominent thinkers were on hand to provide some background on NATO's actual as opposed to official role, the economic context of its various manoeuvres, and the prospects and prescription for peace as social and ecological

disruption continues to grip the globe.

The lectures were sponsored by the University of Manitoba based [Geopolitical Economy Research Group](#), in association with [Peace Alliance Winnipeg](#), the Manitoba Chair for Global Governance Studies in the Department of Political Studies at the University of Winnipeg, and the University of Manitoba Institute for the Humanities in the Department of Political Studies at the University of Manitoba. Audio and complete video were provided by [Paul S Graham](#).

Radhika Desai is professor of Political Studies at the University of Manitoba and director of the [Geopolitical Economy Research Group](#), based at that university. She functioned as the moderator and convener for the April 3rd conference, and introduced the three main speakers.

Dr. Paul Kellogg is an Associate Professor in the Centre for Interdisciplinary Studies at Athabasca University. He writes extensively about Canada and international political economy, Marxist theory and social movements. His most recent book is [Escape from the Staple Trap: Canadian Political Economy after Left Nationalism](#) (2015).

Mahdi Darius Nazemroaya is a sociologist, geopolitical analyst, Research Associate with the Centre for Research on Globalization, and the award-winning author of [The Globalization of NATO](#). He is a contributor at the Strategic Culture Foundation (SCF), Moscow, and a member of the Scientific Committee of Geopolitica, Italy.

Roger Annis is a long time sociologist and retired aerospace worker. He writes on issues around war and peace and social justice. He is co-founder and editor of [The New Cold War: Ukraine and Beyond](#).

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Notes:

1. <https://www.trumanlibrary.org/publicpapers/index.php?pid=1062>
2. http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/official_texts_17120.htm
3. <http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/1758-5899.12328/full>

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