NATO's Perilous Gambit

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NATO's recent decision to deploy a military spearhead in eastern Europe against what it claims is aggressive Russian expansionism now threatens to evolve into an uncontrollable level of brinkmanship with potentially cataclysmic consequences on a global scale. This ill-conceived decision to position NATO forces within miles of the Russian borders is also predicated on calculated deception and egregious misrepresentations of facts. True to form, mainstream media outlets are now parroting the refrains agreed upon in the inner circles of strategy-oriented think-tanks and military intelligence agencies to justify these hazardous moves. The U.S.'s own Nobel "Peace Prize" president also recently announced that the executive office was seeking $1 billion to pre-position heavy military artillery and tanks in five nations near the Russian frontier as appropriate "defensive measures" against a "possible Russian attack" [1].

To set the record straight, the U.S. and its globalist allies had been hard at work for more than a decade to bring about "regime change" in geopolitically key nation-states, including Ukraine. Attempts in late 2004/early 2005 carried the monicker "Orange Revolution" and relied heavily on numerous "soft power" "nation-building" NGOs, such as USAID, the National Endowment for Democracy, and the Open Society Institute, which themselves are generously funded by powerful insiders from the world of international banking and pro-NATO interest groups. They have functioned as key instruments in "restructuring" sovereign nations slated for takeover. After the first failed attempt to integrate Ukraine entirely into the EU framework, and *mutatis mutandis,* into NATO, the opportunity presented itself again in February 2014 to complete the unfinished business.

The global financial crisis that began in 2007/2008 impacted the Ukrainian economy quite severely. The World Bank had forecast a 15-percent decline in the country's economy and a tripling of the unemployment rate to 9 percent for 2009. Western corporate and financial big-players laid the groundwork for loans (read: debt incursion) through the World Bank, contingent as always on the country's implementation of key structural reform measures directed by the International Monetary Fund. [2] The neoliberal takeover of the Ukrainian economy with predictable austerity outcomes led to a shift in perspectives among ordinary Ukrainians who feared that further, even more severe forms of hardship would naturally follow from increased integration into the EU corporate/financial framework. The people made their voices heard at the ballot boxes with the 2010 re-election of Viktor Yanukovych, whom Western analysts had portrayed as uncomfortably pro-Russian. Western suspicions then appeared to be confirmed when the Yanukovych government refused to endorse the Ukraine-EU Association Agreement.

Even a cursory reading of Title II of the 909-page Agreement makes it perfectly clear that the legal foundations have been carefully laid for the total and seamless integration of Ukraine into the NATO military alliance, with all the potentially catastrophic results that

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entails. The Agreement also stipulates the complete assimilation of Ukraine's industrial, financial/banking sectors into the legal framework governed by the ECB and the European Parliament.

Former Moscow correspondent for Germany's Zweites Deutsches Fernsehen (ZDF), Gabriele Krone-Schmalz, had the following warning to make regarding the Agreement:

"Also wir, die Medien, hätten zu einem frühen Zeitpunkt wissen müssen und das auch verkünden müssen, dass dieses Assoziierungsabkommen die Ukraine zerreist." ("We in the media should have known and we should have reported early on that this agreement tears Ukraine apart.") [3]

And why didn't the Western media report this? Because, as Claus von Wagner of ZDF's "Die Anstalt" (July 29, 2014) accurately surmised, "that would not fit in with the image of a peaceful EU which is threatened by the evil Ivan." (".... weil das nicht ins Bild passt von der Friedensmacht EU, die vom bösen Ivan bedroht wird.")

The U.S. / NATO's response to Ukraine's initial refusal to endorse the Agreement was of course to overthrow the legitimately elected Yanukovych government. The now infamous leaked telephone conversation between U.S. Ambassador to Ukraine, Geoffrey Pyatt, and U.S. Assistant Secretary of State Victoria Nuland revealed not only that the U.S. had spent $5 billion in its efforts to foment "regime change" in Ukraine, but also that "the U.S. was actively planning who would be appointed to the top government posts in Ukraine, post-coup." [4]

The putsch pattern typically follows an identifiable script: paramilitary mercenaries and hired agents provocateurs perform the ground-level dirty work of destabilizing the general population through targeted attacks that always result in civilian casualties; social media then set about to spread the word of the attacks and to define and construct the intended "enemy"; mainstream media then swing into high gear to operationalize the construct by reinforcing among the citizens the dangers associated with the newly fabricated "enemy"—a message which is then repeated ad nauseum on a daily basis. In the case of 9/11, this was the so-called "Al Qaeda" and its alleged "co-conspirators" in Iraq and Afghanistan; in Syria, the poison gas attacks which the western alliance claimed had been perpetrated by the Assad government against its own people; in Ukraine, "pro-Russian militia," who in reality were clearly recruits from the most violent factions of Svoboda, a virulent neo-fascist organization with strong paramilitary ties. Robert Abele pointed out that "Nuland herself, along with U.S. Senator John McCain, made no fewer than four independent trips to Ukraine to publicly hand out cookies to the right wing, self-proclaimed neo-Nazi parties (i.e. Svoboda and Right Sector)." [5]

Washington's goals in the coup were twofold: First, to usher in a pro-EU/pro-NATO government whose leaders would adhere to the framework defined by the transnational corporate/financial elite who were actively effecting regime change. Second, to operationalize ultra-nationalist Ukrainian elements from the Right Sector and Svoboda as reliable insurgents and hit-men to cultivate and nurture anti-Russian sentiment within the Ukrainian population. As Mahdi Nazemroaya has noted, the post-coup government included several members of Svoboda in key cabinet positions. [6]

In response to the violent Western-backed overthrow of the legitimate government of

Ukraine, "more than 83 percent of the qualified voters of Crimea, on their own volition, participated in a referendum to rejoin Russia. And of that number, nearly 97 percent voted to separate themselves from Ukraine and once again become a part of Russia, in what was a massively one-sided victory." [7] And yet, this legitimate right of a people to self-determination is routinely and deliberately erroneously described in western media as an "illegitimate annexation by Russia," or in the words of former Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs Nicholas Burns, a Russian "invasion and occupation of Crimea." [8]

The West's quest for global hegemony has been an evolving process for more than a century. The events of 9/11 made possible the invasion and occupation of both Afghanistan and Iraq. With the fall of Libya, the US-led western alliance set its sights on Syria, with the usual suspects of mercenaries and paramilitary forces that brought down the Gaddhafi government brought in fully equipped to wreak havoc on the Assad regime from within. With its power-grab across the Middle East and its current planned deployment of heavy artillery and troops at the Russian borders, NATO has demonstrated an unprecedented level of brinkmanship that could quickly escalate into a Third World War—one that no one will survive.

The determination known as the NATO-Double-Track resolution, pushed through by the Pentagon hawks during the Reagan administration, planned to seed much of central Europe with Pershing II and cruise missiles that would have directly threatened all of Europe and the former Soviet Union. Concerned citizens in Europe from the entire political spectrum sounded the alarms and took to the streets in unprecedented numbers to stop the aggressive measures. Today, NATO's perilous gambit warrants an even greater number of demonstrations in every town and city worldwide. The global community needs to counter NATO's madness with a resounding NO!

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Notes

[1] See Eric Schmitt and Steven Lee Myers, "U.S. Is Poised to Put Heavy Weaponry in Eastern Europe," New York Times, June 14, 2015, A1.

[2] See in particular, Ediliberto Segura, Olga Pogarska, Oleg Ustenko, Larisa Kozyarivska, Sergey Kasyanenko, sigma Bleyzer, "Ukraine's Financial Crisis: Past, Present and Future," (Kyiv, Ukraine: The Bleyzer Foundation, April 28, 2009); International Monetary Fund IMF Country Report No. 05/415: Ukraine: 2005 Article IV Consultation and Ex Post Assessment of Longer-Term Program Engagement—Staff Reports; Staff Supplement; and Public Information Notice on the Executive Board Discussion; Statement by the Hon. Arsenii Yatsenuk, Governor of the Fund for Ukraine, at the Joint Annual Discussion, Boards of Governors 2004 Annual Meetings, Washington, D.C. International Monetary Fund, World Bank Group, Press Release No. 27, October 23, 2004.

[3] http://www.carta.info/72065/journalistische-berichterstattung-uber-russland-ein-weiterer--grosartiger-sieg/

[4] Robert Abele, "The Norms of Justice, International Law, and the 'Duty to Protect'," in Stephen Lendman, Flashpoint in Ukraine. How the US Drive for Hegemony Risks World War III (Atlanta, GA: Clarity Press Inc.), 208.

[5] Ibid.

[6] Mahdi Nazemroaya, "The Geopolitics of Euromaidan," in Stephen Lendman, *Flashpoint in Ukraine. How the US Drive for Hegemony Risks World War III* (Atlanta, GA: Clarity Press Inc.), 91.

[7] Michael Parenti, "Ukraine and Regime Change," in Stephen Lendman,*Flashpoint in Ukraine. How the US Drive for Hegemony Risks World War III* (Atlanta, GA: Clarity Press Inc.), 50.

[8] Nicholas Burns in conversation with Warren Olney on "To the Point," National Public Radio (June 25, 2015).

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