

## **Pentagon Goes Nuclear on Russia**

by Pepe Escobar via Juan - ICH-RT *Thursday, Jun 25 2015, 10:17am*

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We all remember how, in early June, President Putin announced that Russia would deploy more than 40 new ICBMs “able to overcome even the most technically advanced anti-missile defense systems.” Oh dear; the Pentagon and their European minions have been freaking out on overdrive ever since.

First was NATO Secretary-General, Norwegian figurehead Jens Stoltenberg, who condemned it as “nuclear saber rattling.”

Then there’s Lt. Gen. Stephen Wilson, the head of US Global Air Strike Command – as in the man responsible for US ICBMs and nuclear bombers – at a recent briefing in London; “[They’ve] annexed a country, changing international borders, raising rhetoric unlike we’ve heard since the cold war times...”

That set up the stage for the required Nazi parallel; “Some of the actions by Russia recently we haven’t seen since the 1930s, when whole countries were annexed and borders were changed by decree.”

At His Masters Voice’s command, the EU duly extended economic sanctions against Russia. And right on cue, Pentagon supremo Ashton Carter, out of Berlin, declared that NATO must stand up against – what else – “Russian aggression” and “their attempts to re-establish a Soviet-era sphere of influence.”

Bets are off on what this huffin’ and puffin’ is all about. It could be about Russia daring to build a whole country close to so many NATO bases. It could be about a bunch of nutters itching to start a war on European soil to ultimately “liberate” all that precious oil, gas and minerals from Russia and the Central Asian “stans”.

Unfortunately, the whole thing is deadly serious.

### **Get your tickets for the next NATO movie**

Vast desolate tracts of US ‘Think Tankland’ at least admit that this is partly about the exceptionalist imperative to prevent “the rise of a hegemon in Eurasia.” Well, they’re not only “partly” but totally wrong, because for Russia – and China – the name of the game is Eurasia integration through trade and commerce.

That condemns the “pivoting to Asia”, for the moment, to the rhetorical dustbin. For the self-described “Don’t Do Stupid Stuff” Obama administration – and the Pentagon – the name of the game is to solidify a New Iron Curtain from the Baltics to the Black Sea and cut off Russia from Europe.

So it’s no surprise that in early June, the Pentagon’s Office of Net Assessment, in itself a think tank, hired another think tank, the Center for European Policy Analysis (CEPA) to churn out – what else – a bunch of war games.

CEPA happens to be directed by A. Wess Mitchell, a former adviser to former Republican presidential candidate and master of vapidty Mitt Romney. Mitchell - who sounds like he flunked history in third grade - qualifies Russia as a new Carthage; "a sullen, punitive power determined to wage a vengeful foreign policy to overturn the system that it blames for the loss of its former greatness."

Russian intelligence is very much aware of all these US maneuvers. So it's absolutely no wonder Putin keeps coming back to NATO's obsession in building a missile defense system in Europe right at Russia's western borderlands; "It is NATO that is moving towards our border and we aren't moving anywhere."

NATO, meanwhile, gets ready for its next super production; Trident Juncture 2015, the largest NATO exercise after the end of the Cold War, to happen in Italy, Spain and Portugal from September 28 to November 6, with land, air and naval and special forces units of 33 countries (28 NATO plus five allies).

NATO spins it as a "high visibility and credibility" show testing its "Response Force" of 30,000 troops. And this is not only about Russia, or as a rehearsal in pre-positioning enough heavy weapons for 5,000 soldiers in Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, Poland, Romania, Bulgaria and Hungary.

It's also about Africa, and the symbiosis NATO/AFRICOM (remember the "liberation" of Libya?) NATO Supreme Commander Gen. Breedhate, sorry, Breedlove, bragged, on the record, that, "the members of NATO will play a big role in North Africa, the Sahel and sub-Saharan Africa."

### **Feel the love of my S-500**

As far as Russia is concerned, all this warmongering hysteria is pathetic.

Facts: under Putin, Russia has actively rebuilt its strategic nuclear missile force. The stars of the show are the Topol M - an ICBM which zooms by at 16,000 miles an hour - and the S-500 defensive missile system, which zooms by at 15,400 miles an hour and effectively seals off Russian airspace.

Russian intelligence identified as early as the dawn of the new millennium that the weapons of the future would be missiles; not clumsy aircraft carriers or a surface fleet which can easily be smashed by top-class missiles (as the new SS-NX-26 anti-ship, Yakhont missile which zooms by at 2.9 Mach).

The Pentagon knows it - but hubris dictates the "we're invincible" posing. No, you're not invincible; silent Russian submarines offshore the US could engage in a nuclear turkey shoot knocking out every major American city in a few minutes with total impunity. In only fifteen years Russia has jumped two generations ahead of the US on missiles and may be on the verge of a first strike nuclear capacity, while the US can't retaliate because the Pentagon can't get through the S-500s.

Public opinion in the US doesn't know any of this - so what's left is posturing. We're back to the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Gen. Martin Dempsey spinning the US is "considering" deploying land-based missiles - with nuclear warheads - that could reach Russian cities across Eurasia.

This does not even qualify as a childish - and unbelievably dangerous - provocation. These missiles will be useless. The US has submarine-based missiles available, and they cannot get through Russian defenses either; the S-500s will do the job. So if the Pentagon and NATO really want war, wait until next year or 2017 max - with 'The Hillarator' or Jeb "I'm not Bush" at the White House - when the

S-500 deployment will be completed.

Putin knows extremely well how dangerous is this posturing. That's why he emphasized that the US unilateral withdrawal from the 1972 Anti-Ballistic Missile (ABM) Treaty - which established that neither the US nor the USSR would try to neutralize each other's nuclear deterrence by building an anti-missile shield - is pushing the world towards a new Cold War; "This in fact pushes us to a new round of the arms race, because it changes the global security system."

Washington unilaterally withdrew from the ABM Treaty during the "axis of evil" Dubya era, in 2002. The pretext was that the US needed "protection" from rogue states, at the time identified as Iran and North Korea. The fact is this cleared the Pentagon to build a global anti-missile system directed against - who else - the only true "threats" against the hegemon; BRICS members Russia and China.

### **Terminator Ash on a roll**

Under neocon Ash Carter - compared to whom Donald Rumsfeld barely qualifies as Cinderella - the Pentagon wants to go Terminator all the way.

"Options" being considered against Russia are an offensive missile shield across Europe to shoot Russian missiles (totally useless against the Topol M); a "counterforce" (in 'Pentagonese') that implies pre-emptive non-nuclear strikes against Russian military sites; and "countervailing strike capabilities", which in 'Pentagonese' means pre-emptive deployment of nuclear missiles against targets - and cities - inside Russia.

So we're talking about the unthinkable here; a pre-emptive nuclear strike against Russia. There's only one scenario if that happens; a full-scale nuclear war. The mere fact that this is considered an "option on the table" reveals everything one needs to know about what passes for "foreign policy" in the heart of the Indispensable Nation.

In Iraq, a pre-emptive strike - although non-nuclear - was "authorized" based on non-existent weapons of mass destruction (WMDs). So the whole planet knows the 'Empire of Chaos' is capable of fabricating any pretext. In the case of Russia, the Pentagon may play 'Ultimate Terminator' all they want, but it won't be a walk in the park; after all in less than two years Russian airspace will be effectively sealed by the S-500s.

Beware of the 'Shock and Awe' you want. Still, no chance the Pentagon will take Putin seriously (Ash Carter, on the record, is a sucker for regime change.) Recently, the Russian President couldn't be more explicit; "This is no dialogue. It's an ultimatum. Don't speak the language of ultimatums with us."

MAD - Mutually Assured Destruction - is way over. It kept a somewhat uneasy peace during seven decades of Cold War. Cold War 2.0 is as hardcore as it gets. And with all those Breedhate Strangeloves on the loose, nuclear madness is now at five seconds to midnight.

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<http://www.informationclearinghouse.info/article42234.htm>

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Jungle Drum Prose/Poetry. <http://jungledrum.lingama.net/news/story-1686.html>

