What’s at stake:

"To initiate a war of aggression, therefore, is not only an international crime, it is the supreme international crime differing only from other war crimes in that it contains within itself the accumulated evil of the whole." -- Robert H. Jackson, Chief U.S. Prosecutor, Nuremberg Military Tribunal

“It has been a mainstay of this book that successful antiwar movements are those that have been able to make direct links with those in the flight path of US aggression and to bring their struggles and concerns directly into the US political arena. Indeed, direct comprehension of their urgent struggles has often been a radicalizing factor in antiwar campaigns.”” Richard Seymour, American Insurgents: A Brief History of American Anti-Imperialism (2012). p. 193.

J. William Fulbright during the height of the Cold War attempted to extend his Exchange Program to the Soviet Union, but his plan to acquire a part of WWII Lend Lease money the Russians were repaying was scuttled by US Sovietphobes. See The Price of Empire. Another Arkansas native, Betty Bumpers, wife of then Senator Bumpers, created the women’s organization, Peace Links, to exchange women from the US and Russia and other countries. Call the Fulbright Program to create programs with Russia.

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By Walter G. Moss, History News Network, posted May 4

The author is a professor of history emeritus at Eastern Michigan University.

"Annexations"
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http://www.counterpunch.org/2014/05/08/to-understand-or-not-to-understand-putin/#

To Understand Or Not to Understand Putin
by DIANA JOHNSTONE. May 8, 2014

Paris.

In Germany these days, very many citizens object to the endless Russia-bashing of the NATO-oriented mainstream media. They may point out that the U.S.-backed regime change in Kiev, putting in power an ultra-right transitional government eager to join NATO, posed an urgent threat to preservation of Russia’s only warm water naval base in Crimea. Under the circumstances, and inasmuch as the Crimean population overwhelmingly approved, reinstating Crimea in the Russian federation was a necessary defensive move.

In Germany, anyone who says thing like that can be denigrated as a “Putinversteher” (a Putin understander).

That says it all. We are not supposed to understand.

We are supposed to hate. The media are there to see to that.

While the West doggedly refuses to understand Putin and Russia, Vladimir Putin, on the other hand, seems to understand things pretty well.

He seems to understand that he and his nation are being systematically lured into a death trap by an enemy which excels in the contemporary art of “communication”. In a war situation, NATO communication means that it doesn’t matter who does what. The only thing that matters is who tells the story. The Western media are telling the story in a way which depends on not understanding Russia, and not understanding Putin. Putin and Russia become fictional villains in the Western version, just the latest reincarnation of Hitler and Nazi
Germany.

The horrific massacre in Odessa on May 2 proved this. The photographic evidence, the testimony of numerous eye witnesses, the smoldering bodies and the shouts of the killers are all there to prove what happened. Tents erected to collect signatures in favor of a referendum to introduce a federal system into Ukraine (now a politically divided but totally centralized state) were set on fire by a militia of fascist thugs who attacked the local federalists as “separatists” (accusing them of wanting to “separate” from Ukraine to join Russia, when that is not what they are seeking). The local activists fled into the big trade union building on the square where they were pursued, assaulted, murdered and set on fire by “Ukrainian nationalists”, acting on behalf of the illegitimate Kiev regime supported by the West.

No matter how vicious the assaults, Western media saw no evil, heard no evil, spoke no evil. They deplored a “tragedy” which just sort of happened.

Odessa is proof that whatever happens, the NATO political class, political leaders and media united, have decided on their story and are sticking to it. The nationalists that seized power in Kiev are the good guys, the people being assaulted in Odessa and in Eastern Ukraine are “pro-Russian” and therefore the “bad guys”.

Understanding Putin

So despite everything, let’s try to understand President Putin, which is really not very hard. Behind every conscious action there should be a motive. Let’s look at motives. Today, UK Foreign Secretary William Hague, who certainly gives every sign of never understanding – or wanting to understand – anything, parroted the NATO line that Russia was “trying to orchestrate conflict and provocation” in Ukraine’s east and south.

That makes no sense. Putin has absolutely no motive to want civil war to rage in neighboring Ukraine, and very strong reasons to do all he can to avoid it. It confronts him with a serious dilemma. Ongoing vicious attacks by fanatic nationalists from Western Ukraine on citizens in the east and south of the country can only incite the victimized Russian-speaking Ukrainians to call on Russia for help. But at the same time, Putin must know that those Russophone Ukrainians do not really want to be invaded by Russia. Perhaps they want something impossible. And it is perfectly obvious that any use of Russia’s military force to protect people in Ukraine would let loose an even wilder demonization of Putin as “the new Hitler” who is invading countries “for no reason”. And NATO would use this, as it has already used the reunification of Crimea with Russia, as “proof” that Europe must tighten its alliance, establish military bases throughout Eastern Europe and (above all) spend more money on “defense” (buying US military equipment).

The Western takeover of the Kiev government is clearly a provocation to draw Putin into a trap that certain Western strategists (Zbigniew Brzezinski being the chief theorist) hope will cause Putin’s downfall and plunge Russia into a crisis that can lead to its eventual dismemberment.

Putin can only wish to find a peaceful solution to the Ukrainian mess.

While Washington reverts to Cold War “containment” policy to “isolate” Russia, Putin today held talks in Moscow with Didier Burkhalter, the Swiss president and current chairman of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), in hope of initiating some sort of peaceful mediation.

Putin Pulls Back From False Flag Plan?
On this occasion, Putin announced that he had pulled back Russian forces from the border with Ukraine. He indicated that this was to ease concerns over their positioning, meaning claims that Russia was preparing an invasion. He also advised against holding referendums for greater autonomy in the Russophone areas until “conditions for dialogue” can be created.

However, news reports indicated that this reported military pullback caused new concerns among some Ukrainians, who felt Russia was abandoning them in their hour of need, and among some Russians, who feared the President was backing down under Western pressure.

It is not impossible that the pullback order was linked to a Novosti RIA report dated May 6, which indicated that the Ukrainian secret service was planning an imminent false flag operation in order to accuse Russia of violating the border with Ukraine.

Novosti said it had learned from security circles in Kiev that the Ukrainian secret service SBU had secretly shipped about 200 Russian army uniforms and some 70 forged Russian officer ID into the Eastern Ukrainian protest stronghold of Donetz, to be used to stage a false attack on Ukrainian border patrols.

Novosti said the reports were unconfirmed, but they could nevertheless be taken seriously by the Russians. “The plan would be to simulate an attack on Ukrainian border troops and to film it for the media”, the report said. In connection with the plan, a dozen or so combatants from the ultranationalist Right Sector were to cross the border and kidnap a Russian soldier in order to present him as “proof” of Russian military incursion. The operation was scheduled for May 8 or 9.

By pulling Russian troops farther away from the border, Putin could hope to make the false flag operation less plausible and perhaps to forestall it.

The whole Ukrainian operation, at least partly directed by Victoria Nuland of the U.S. State Department, has been characterised by false flag operations, most notoriously by the snipers who suddenly spread murder and terror in Maidan square in Kiev, effectively wrecking the internationally sponsored transition agreement. “Pro-West” insurgents accused President Yanukovych of sending the killers and forced a rump parliament to give government power to Ms Nuland’s protégé, Arseniy “Yats” Yatsenyuk. However, there has been plenty of evidence to show that the mysterious snipers were pro-West mercenaries: photographic evidence, followed by the telephone statement by the Polish foreign minister to that effect, and finally by the German television channel ARD whose Monitor documentary concluded that the snipers came from the extreme right anti-Russian groups involved in the Maidan uprising. Indeed, all known evidence points to a fascist false flag operation, and yet Western media and politicians continue to blame everything on Russia.

So whatever he does, Putin now has to realize that he will be deliberately “misunderstood” and misrepresented by Western leaders and media. Over the heads of the American people, over the heads of the Germans, French and other Europeans, a private consensus has obviously been reached among persons we may describe as our own Western “oligarchs” to revive the Cold War in order to provide the West with an “enemy” serious enough to save the military-industrial complex and unite the transatlantic community against the rest of the world.

This is what Russian leaders are obliged to understand. What they need most to save the world from endless and useless conflict is the understanding of all those Americans and Europeans who have never been consulted or informed about this perilous shift in strategy, and who, if they understood, would surely say no.
“The Russians are coming … again … and they’re still ten feet tall!”

So, what do we have here? In Libya, in Syria, and elsewhere the United States has been on the same side as the al-Qaeda types. But not in Ukraine. That’s the good news. The bad news is that in Ukraine the United States is on the same side as the neo-Nazi types, who – taking time off from parading around with their swastika-like symbols and calling for the death of Jews, Russians and Communists – on May 2 burned down a trade-union building in Odessa, killing scores of people and sending hundreds to hospital; many of the victims were beaten or shot when they tried to flee the flames and smoke; ambulances were blocked from reaching the wounded. Try and find an American mainstream media entity that has made a serious attempt to capture the horror.

And how did this latest example of American foreign-policy exceptionalism come to be? One starting point that can be considered is what former Secretary of Defense and CIA Director Robert Gates says in his recently published memoir: “When the Soviet Union was collapsing in late 1991, [Defense Secretary Dick Cheney] wanted to see the dismemberment not only of the Soviet Union and the Russian empire but of Russia itself, so it could never again be a threat to the rest of the world.” That can serve as an early marker for the new cold war while the corpse of the old one was still warm. Soon thereafter, NATO began to surround Russia with military bases, missile sites, and NATO members, while yearning for perhaps the most
important part needed to complete the circle – Ukraine. In February of this year, US State Department officials, undiplomatically, joined anti-government protesters in the capital city of Kiev, handing out encouragement and food, from which emanated the infamous leaked audio tape between the US ambassador to Ukraine, Geoffrey Pyatt, and the State Department’s Victoria Nuland, former US ambassador to NATO and former State Department spokesperson for Hillary Clinton. Their conversation dealt with who should be running the new Ukraine government after the government of Viktor Yanukovich was overthrown; their most favored for this position being one Arseniy Yatsenuk.

My dear, and recently departed, Washington friend, John Judge, liked to say that if you want to call him a “conspiracy theorist” you have to call others “coincidence theorists”. Thus it was by the most remarkable of coincidences that Arseniy Yatsenuk did indeed become the new prime minister. He could very soon be found in private meetings and public press conferences with the president of the United States and the Secretary-General of NATO, as well as meeting with the soon-to-be new owners of Ukraine, the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, preparing to impose their standard financial shock therapy. The current protestors in Ukraine don’t need PHDs in economics to know what this portends. They know about the impoverishment of Greece, Spain, et al. They also despise the new regime for its overthrow of their democratically-elected government, whatever its shortcomings. But the American media obscures these motivations by almost always referring to them simply as “pro-Russian”.

An exception, albeit rather unemphasized, was the April 17 Washington Post which reported from Donetsk that many of the eastern Ukrainians whom the author interviewed said the unrest in their region was driven by fear of “economic hardship” and the IMF austerity plan that will make their lives even harder: “At a most dangerous and delicate time, just as it battles Moscow for hearts and minds across the east, the pro-Western government is set to initiate a shock therapy of economic measures to meet the demands of an emergency bailout from the International Monetary Fund.”

Arseniy Yatsenuk, it should be noted, has something called the Arseniy Yatsenuk Foundation. If you go to the foundation’s website you will see the logos of the foundation’s “partners”. Among these partners we find NATO, the National Endowment for Democracy, the US State Department, Chatham House (Royal Institute of International Affairs in the UK), the German Marshall Fund (a think tank founded by the German government in honor of the US Marshall Plan), as well as a couple of international banks. Is any comment needed? Getting away with supporting al-Qaeda and Nazi types may be giving US officials the idea that they can say or do anything they want in their foreign policy. In a May 2 press conference, President Obama, referring to Ukraine and the NATO Treaty, said: “We’re united in our unwavering Article 5 commitment to the security of our NATO allies". (Article 5 states:
“The Parties agree that an armed attack against one or more of them … shall be considered an attack against them all.” Did the president forget that Ukraine is not (yet) a member of NATO? And in the same press conference, the president referred to the “duly elected government in Kyiv (Kiev),” when in fact it had come to power via a coup and then proceeded to establish a new regime in which the vice-premier, minister of defense, minister of agriculture, and minister of environment, all belonged to far-right neo-Nazi parties. The pure awfulness of the Ukrainian right-wingers can scarcely be exaggerated. In early March, the leader of Pravy Sektor (Right Sector) called upon his comrades, the infamous Chechnyan terrorists, to carry out further terrorist actions in Russia. There may be one important difference between the old Cold War and the new one. The American people, as well as the world, can not be as easily brainwashed as they were during the earlier period.

Over the course of a decade, in doing the research for my first books and articles on US foreign policy, one of the oddities to me of the Cold War was how often the Soviet Union seemed to know what the United States was really up to, even if the American people didn’t. Every once in a while in the 1950s to 70s a careful reader would notice a two- or three-inch story in the New York Times on the bottom of some distant inside page, reporting that Pravda or Izvestia had claimed that a recent coup or political assassination in Africa or Asia or Latin America had been the work of the CIA; the Times might add that a US State Department official had labeled the story as “absurd”. And that was that; no further details were provided; and none were needed, for how many American readers gave it a second thought? It was just more commie propaganda. Who did they think they were fooling? This ignorance/complicity on the part of the mainstream media allowed the United States to get away with all manner of international crimes and mischief.

It was only in the 1980s when I began to do the serious research that resulted in my first book, which later became Killing Hope, that I was able to fill in the details and realize that the United States had indeed masterminded that particular coup or assassination, and many other coups and assassinations, not to mention countless bombings, chemical and biological warfare, perversion of elections, drug dealings, kidnappings, and much more that had not appeared in the American mainstream media or schoolbooks. (And a significant portion of which was apparently unknown to the Soviets as well.)

But there have been countless revelations about US crimes in the past two decades. Many Americans and much of the rest of the planet have become educated. They’re much more skeptical of American proclamations and the fawning media.

President Obama recently declared: “The strong condemnation that it’s received from around the world indicates the degree to which Russia is on the wrong side of history on
Marvelous … coming from the man who partners with jihadists and Nazis and has waged war against seven nations. In the past half century is there any country whose foreign policy has received more bitter condemnation than the United States? If the United States is not on the wrong side of history, it may be only in the history books published by the United States.

Barack Obama, like virtually all Americans, likely believes that the Soviet Union, with perhaps the sole exception of the Second World War, was consistently on the wrong side of history in its foreign policy as well as at home. Yet, in a survey conducted by an independent Russian polling center this past January, and reported in the Washington Post in April, 86 percent of respondents older than 55 expressed regret for the Soviet Union’s collapse; 37 percent of those aged 25 to 39 did so. (Similar poll results have been reported regularly since the demise of the Soviet Union. This is from USA Today in 1999: “When the Berlin Wall crumbled, East Germans imagined a life of freedom where consumer goods were abundant and hardships would fade. Ten years later, a remarkable 51% say they were happier with communism.”)

Or as the new Russian proverb put it: “Everything the Communists said about Communism was a lie, but everything they said about capitalism turned out to be the truth.”

A week before the above Post report in April the newspaper printed an article about happiness around the world, which contains the following charming lines: “Worldwide polls show that life seems better to older people – except in Russia.” … “Essentially, life under President Vladimir Putin is one continuous downward spiral into despair.” … “What’s going on in Russia is deep unhappiness.” … “In Russia, the only thing to look forward to is death’s sweet embrace.”

No, I don’t think it was meant to be any kind of satire. It appears to be a scientific study, complete with graphs, but it reads like something straight out of the 1950s.

The views Americans hold of themselves and other societies are not necessarily more distorted than the views found amongst people elsewhere in the world, but the Americans’ distortion can lead to much more harm. Most Americans and members of Congress have convinced themselves that the US/NATO encirclement of Russia is benign – we are, after all, the Good Guys – and they don’t understand why Russia can’t see this.

The first Cold War, from Washington’s point of view, was often designated as one of “containment”, referring to the US policy of preventing the spread of communism around the world, trying to block the very idea of communism or socialism. There’s still some leftover from that – see Venezuela and Cuba, for example – but the new Cold War can be seen more in terms of a military strategy. Washington thinks in terms of who could pose a barrier to the ever-expanding empire adding to its bases and other military necessities.
Whatever the rationale, it’s imperative that the United States suppress any lingering desire to bring Ukraine (and Georgia) into the NATO alliance. Nothing is more likely to bring large numbers of Russian boots onto the Ukrainian ground than the idea that Washington wants to have NATO troops right on the Russian border and in spitting distance of the country’s historic Black Sea naval base in Crimea.

The myth of Soviet expansionism

One still comes across references in the mainstream media to Russian “expansionism” and “the Soviet empire”, in addition to that old favorite “the evil empire”. These terms stem largely from erstwhile Soviet control of Eastern European states. But was the creation of these satellites following World War II an act of imperialism or expansionism? Or did the decisive impetus lie elsewhere?

Within the space of less than 25 years, Western powers had invaded Russia three times – the two world wars and the “Intervention” of 1918-20 – inflicting some 40 million casualties in the two wars alone. To carry out these invasions, the West had used Eastern Europe as a highway. Should it be any cause for wonder that after World War II the Soviets wanted to close this highway down? In almost any other context, Americans would have no problem in seeing this as an act of self defense. But in the context of the Cold War such thinking could not find a home in mainstream discourse.

The Baltic states of the Soviet Union – Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania – were not part of the highway and were frequently in the news because of their demands for more autonomy from Moscow, a story “natural” for the American media. These articles invariably reminded the reader that the “once independent” Baltic states were invaded in 1939 by the Soviet Union, incorporated as republics of the USSR, and had been “occupied” ever since. Another case of brutal Russian imperialism. Period. History etched in stone.

The three countries, it happens, were part of the Russian empire from 1721 up to the Russian Revolution of 1917, in the midst of World War I. When the war ended in November 1918, and the Germans had been defeated, the victorious Allied nations (US, Great Britain, France, et al.) permitted/encouraged the German forces to remain in the Baltics for a full year to crush the spread of Bolshevism there; this, with ample military assistance from the Allied nations. In each of the three republics, the Germans installed collaborators in power who declared their independence from the new Bolshevik state which, by this time, was so devastated by the World War, the revolution, and the civil war prolonged by the Allies’ intervention, that it had no choice but to accept the fait accompli. The rest of the fledgling Soviet Union had to be saved.

To at least win some propaganda points from this unfortunate state of affairs, the Soviets announced that they were relinquishing the Baltic republics “voluntarily” in line with their
principles of anti-imperialism and self-determination. But it should not be surprising that the Soviets continued to regard the Baltics as a rightful part of their nation or that they waited until they were powerful enough to reclaim the territory.

Then we had Afghanistan. Surely this was an imperialist grab. But the Soviet Union had lived next door to Afghanistan for more than 60 years without gobbling it up. And when the Russians invaded in 1979, the key motivation was the United States involvement in a movement, largely Islamic, to topple the Afghan government, which was friendly to Moscow. The Soviets could not have been expected to tolerate a pro-US, anti-communist government on its border any more than the United States could have been expected to tolerate a pro-Soviet, communist government in Mexico.

Moreover, if the rebel movement took power it likely would have set up a fundamentalist Islamic government, which would have been in a position to proselytize the numerous Muslims in the Soviet border republics.

Notes

1. See RT.com (formerly Russia Today) for many stories, images and videos
3. If this site has gone missing again, a saved version can be found here.
4. Voice of Russia radio station, Moscow, April 18, 2014; also see Answer Coalition, “Who’s who in Ukraine’s new [semi-fascist] government”, March 11, 2014
5. RT.com, news report March 5, 2014
8. USA Today (Virginia), Oct. 11, 1999, page 1

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Who is more exceptional: The United States or Russia?

I was going to write a commentary about President Obama’s speech to the graduating class at the US Military Academy (West Point) on May 28. When he speaks to a military audience the president is usually at his most nationalistic, jingoist, militaristic, and American-exceptionalist – wall-to-wall platitudes. But this talk was simply TOO nationalistic, jingoist, militaristic, and American-exceptionalist. (“I believe in American exceptionalism with every fiber of my being.”) To go through it line by line in order to make my usual wise-ass remarks, would have been just too painful. However, if you’re in a masochistic mood and wish to read it, it can be found here.

Instead I offer you part of a commentary from Mr. Jan Oberg, Danish director of the
Transnational Foundation for Peace and Future Research in Lund, Sweden:
What is conspicuously lacking in the President’s West Point speech?

1. Any reasonably accurate appraisal of the world and the role of other nations.
2. A sense of humility and respect for allies and other countries in this world.
3. Every element of a grand strategy for America for its foreign and security policy and some kind of vision of what a better world would look like. This speech with all its tired, self-aggrandising rhetoric is a thin cover-up for the fact that there is no such vision or overall strategy.
4. Some little hint of reforms of existing institutions or new thinking about globalisation and global democratic decision-making.
5. Ideas and initiatives – stretched-out hands – to help the world move towards conflict-resolution in crisis areas such as Ukraine, Syria, Libya, China-Japan and Iran. Not a trace of creativity.

Ironically, on May 30 the Wall Street Journal published a long essay by Leon Aron, a Russia scholar at the conservative American Enterprise Institute in Washington. The essay took Russian president Vladimir Putin to task for claiming that Russia is exceptional. The piece was headed:

“Why Putin Says Russia Is Exceptional”

“Such claims have often heralded aggression abroad and harsh crackdowns at home.”

It states: “To Mr. Putin, in short, Russia was exceptional because it was emphatically not like the modern West – or not, in any event, like his caricature of a corrupt, morally benighted Europe and U.S. This was a bad omen, presaging the foreign policy gambits against Ukraine that now have the whole world guessing about Mr. Putin’s intentions.”

So the Wall Street Journal has no difficulty in ascertaining that a particular world leader sees his country as “exceptional”. And that such a perception can lead that leader or his country to engage in aggression abroad and crackdowns at home. The particular world leader so harshly judged in this manner by the Wall Street Journal is named Vladimir Putin, not Barack Obama. There’s a word for this kind of analysis – It’s called hypocrisy.

“Hypocrisy is anything whatever may deceive the cleverest and most penetrating man, but the least wide-awake of children recognizes it, and is revolted by it, however ingeniously it may be disguised.” – Leo Nikolaevich Tolstoi, (1828-1910) Russian writer

Is hypocrisy a moral failing or a failing of the intellect?
The New Cold War is getting to look more and more like the old one, wherein neither side allows the other to get away with any propaganda point. Just compare any American television network to the Russian station broadcast in the United States – RT (formerly Russia Today). The contrast in coverage of the same news events is remarkable, and the stations attack and make fun of each other by name.

Another, even more important, feature to note is that in Cold War I the United States usually had to consider what the Soviet reaction would be to a planned American intervention in the Third World. This often served as a brake to one extent or another on Washington’s imperial adventures. Thus it was that only weeks after the Berlin Wall came down in 1989, the United States bombed and invaded Panama, inflicting thousands of casualties and widespread destruction, for the flimsiest – bordering on the non-existent – of reasons. The hostile Russian reaction to Washington's clear involvement in the overthrow of the Ukrainian government in February of this year, followed by Washington's significant irritation and defensiveness toward the Russian reaction, indicates that this Cold War brake may have a chance of returning. And for this we should be grateful.

After the “communist threat” had disappeared and the foreign policy of the United States continued absolutely unchanged, it meant that the Cold War revisionists had been vindicated – the conflict had not been about containing an evil called “communism”; it had been about American expansion, imperialism and capitalism. If the collapse of the Soviet Union did not result in any reduction in the American military budget, but rather was followed by large increases, it meant that the Cold War – from Washington's perspective – had not been motivated by a fear of the Russians, but purely by ideology.

NATO’S EASTWARD EXPANSION

*Enlargement of NATO, Google Search, July 13, 2014*
- *Enlargement of NATO - Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia*
  en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Enlargement_of_NATO

After the Cold War ended, and Germany reunited in 1990, there was a debate in NATO about continued expansion eastward. In 1999, Poland, Hungary, and the ...

*NORDEFCO - Georgia–NATO relations - Category:Enlargement of NATO*

*NATO’s Eastward Expansion: Did the West Break Its Promise*
  www.globalresearch.ca/natos-eastward-expansion-did-the.../5380144

May 2, 2014 - No one in Russia can vent his anger over NATO's eastward expansion quite as vehemently as Viktor Baranez. The popular columnist with the ...

*NATO's eastward expansion destabilizes Europe – Kremlin *

rt.com/politics/163568-nato-expansion-destabilizing-ivanov/*
RT

Jun 4, 2014 - The head of the Russian presidential administration has attacked NATO expansion towards Russia's borders and dismissed the possibility of ...

☐ The Folly of NATO Enlargement | Cato Institute
www.cato.org/publications/.../folly-nato-enlargement

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by TG Carpenter - 2012 - Cited by 1 - Related articles

If NATO moves eastward, the United States will be undertaking new and potentially ... Clinton administration officials and other supporters of NATO expansion ...

☐ Ukraine Halts Eastward Expansion of NATO - Truthdig
www.truthdig.com/.../ukraine_halts_eastward_expansion_of_na...

Truthdig

Nov 27, 2013 - Russia’s relations with the Western countries are troubled and dangerous in the Ukraine dispute, and an important opportunity may be lost.

☐ Five Years Ago, Documents Exposed NATO’s Lies About ...
larouchepac.com/node/30257

Five Years Ago, Documents Exposed NATO's Lies About Eastward Expansion. March 23, 2014 • 2:50PM. In demanding written legal guarantees from NATO that ...

☐ PressTV - Russia warns against NATO eastward expansion

www.presstv.com › Europe › Russia

Jun 10, 2014

Russia warns against any eastward expansion or military build-up by the NATO near Russia's borders.

☐ Russia and NATO Expansion Eastward: Red-Lining ... - jstor
www.jstor.org/stable/40203375

JSTOR

by JL Black - 1999 - Cited by 5 - Related articles

NATO expansion eastward. Red-lining the Baltic states \( \text{\&} \) N EASY ASSUMPTION THAT the eastward expansion of the North. Atlantic Treaty Organization ...

☐ NATO Expansion: The Source of Russia's Anger? | The ...
nationalinterest.org/.../nato-expansion-the-source-ru...

The National Interest

May 1, 2014 - "NATO expansion has been neither an anti-Russian plot nor a means ... at best, ambiguous with respect to NATO's further eastward expansion.

☐ OPINION: Ukraine Crisis Exposes NATO's Eastward ...

www.press.tv
UKRAINIAN CRISIS 2013-

http://www.counterpunch.org/2014/05/14/a-world-war-is-beckoning/

According to the great whistleblower Daniel Ellsberg, a silent coup has taken place in Washington and rampant militarism now rules.

Break the Silence

A World War is Beckoning

by JOHN PILGER

Why do we tolerate the threat of another world war in our name? Why do we allow lies that justify this risk? The scale of our indoctrination, wrote Harold Pinter, is a “brilliant, even witty, highly successful act of hypnosis”, as if the truth “never happened even while it was happening”.

Every year the American historian William Blum publishes his “updated summary of the record of US foreign policy” which shows that, since 1945, the US has tried to overthrow more than 50 governments, many democratically elected; grossly interfered in elections in 30 countries; bombed the civilian populations of 30 countries; used chemical and biological weapons; and attempted to assassinate foreign leaders.

In many cases Britain has been a collaborator. The degree of human suffering, let alone criminality, is little acknowledged in the west, despite the presence of the world’s most advanced communications and nominally freest journalism. That the most numerous victims of terrorism – “our” terrorism – are Muslims, is unsayable. That extreme jihadism, which led to 9/11, was nurtured as a weapon of Anglo-American policy (Operation Cyclone in Afghanistan) is suppressed. In April the US state department noted that, following Nato’s campaign in 2011, “Libya has become a terrorist safe haven”.

The name of “our” enemy has changed over the years, from communism to Islamism, but generally it is any society independent of western power and occupying strategically useful or resource-rich territory. The leaders of these obstructive nations are usually violently shoved aside, such as the democrats Muhammad Mossedeq in Iran and Salvador Allende in Chile, or they are murdered like Patrice Lumumba in the Congo. All are subjected to a western media campaign of caricature and vilification – think Fidel Castro, Hugo Chávez, now Vladimir Putin.

Washington’s role in Ukraine is different only in its implications for the rest of us. For the first time since the Reagan years, the US is threatening to take the world to war. With eastern Europe and the Balkans now military outposts of Nato, the last “buffer state” bordering Russia is being torn apart. We in the west are backing neo-Nazis in a country where Ukrainian Nazis backed Hitler.

Having masterminded the coup in February against the democratically elected government in Kiev, Washington’s planned seizure of Russia’s historic, legitimate warm-water naval base in
Crimea failed. The Russians defended themselves, as they have done against every threat and invasion from the west for almost a century.

But Nato’s military encirclement has accelerated, along with US-orchestrated attacks on ethnic Russians in Ukraine. If Putin can be provoked into coming to their aid, his pre-ordained “pariah” role will justify a Nato-run guerrilla war that is likely to spill into Russia itself.

Instead, Putin has confounded the war party by seeking an accommodation with Washington and the EU, by withdrawing troops from the Ukrainian border and urging ethnic Russians in eastern Ukraine to abandon the weekend’s provocative referendum. These Russian-speaking and bilingual people – a third of Ukraine’s population – have long sought a democratic federation that reflects the country’s ethnic diversity and is both autonomous and independent of Moscow. Most are neither “separatists” nor “rebels” but citizens who want to live securely in their homeland.

Like the ruins of Iraq and Afghanistan, Ukraine has been turned into a CIA theme park – run by CIA director John Brennan in Kiev, with “special units” from the CIA and FBI setting up a “security structure” that oversees savage attacks on those who opposed the February coup. Watch the videos, read the eye-witness reports from the massacre in Odessa this month. Bussed fascist thugs burned the trade union headquarters, killing 41 people trapped inside. Watch the police standing by. A doctor described trying to rescue people, “but I was stopped by pro-Ukrainian Nazi radicals. One of them pushed me away rudely, promising that soon me and other Jews of Odessa are going to meet the same fate … I wonder, why the whole world is keeping silent.”

Russian-speaking Ukrainians are fighting for survival. When Putin announced the withdrawal of Russian troops from the border, the Kiev junta’s defence secretary – a founding member of the fascist Svoboda party – boasted that the attacks on “insurgents” would continue. In Orwellian style, propaganda in the west has inverted this to Moscow “trying to orchestrate conflict and provocation”, according to William Hague. His cynicism is matched by Obama’s grotesque congratulations to the coup junta on its “remarkable restraint” following the Odessa massacre. Illegal and fascist-dominated, the junta is described by Obama as “duly elected”. What matters is not truth, Henry Kissinger once said, but “but what is perceived to be true.”

In the US media the Odessa atrocity has been played down as “murky” and a “tragedy” in which “nationalists” (neo-Nazis) attacked “separatists” (people collecting signatures for a referendum on a federal Ukraine). Rupert Murdoch’s Wall Street Journal damned the victims – “Deadly Ukraine Fire Likely Sparked by Rebels, Government Says”. Propaganda in Germany has been pure cold war, with the Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung warning its readers of Russia’s “undeclared war”. For Germans, it is an invidious irony that Putin is the only leader to condemn the rise of fascism in 21st-century Europe.

A popular truism is that “the world changed” following 9/11. But what has changed? According to the great whistleblower Daniel Ellsberg, a silent coup has taken place in Washington and rampant militarism now rules. The Pentagon currently runs “special operations” – secret wars – in 124 countries. At home, rising poverty and hemorrhaging liberty are the historic corollary of a perpetual war state. Add the risk of nuclear war, and the question begs: why do we tolerate this?

John Pilger is the author of Freedom Next Time. He can be reached through his website: www.johnpilger.com
US AND EU/NATO INTERVENTION

Baiting the Russian Bear

By Bruce Gagnon  May 4, 2013

I am as distressed as I’ve ever been having watched a 24 minute video yesterday from Odessa, Ukraine as fascist Right Sector thugs set fire to a union hall where unarmed anti-Kiev protesters had taken refuge.

You can see the video at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IVXm9nnY-AQ

You have to be patient watching the video because it is obvious that a lot of the time the photographer was trying to be discreet as he filmed the pro-western nationalists attacking the people inside the union hall. At one point the photographer runs around to the backside of the building and films police authorities standing around talking but taking no action to stop the carnage that killed more than 40 people.

What struck me the most was that during the entire 24 minutes of watching this video I never heard or saw any signs of fire trucks. Odessa is a big city and surely must have fire departments. Only near the end of the video did we finally see some police begin to move in but by then the fire was well under way and people were leaping out of windows. Who had the power to stop fire trucks from responding?

What we know is that Right Section fascist thugs were bussed in from around Kiev and they marched through the streets of Odessa. There was a protest camp set up outside of the union hall where anti-Kiev protests were happening. As the fascists descended on the union hall many of the anti-Kiev protesters ran inside the building for safety. The pro-Kiev nationalists, supported by the US-EU, then began throwing Molotov cocktails into the building.

Never during the 24-minute video did I see any of the nationalists outside the union hall taking cover. Clearly they were not being shot at. But you do see at least one man on the ground firing his gun at those inside the building.

The news media in the US have responded by saying it is “unclear” who caused the fire. You can see a short video about media whitewashing this story at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=c1tykLCTVlw

I read one testimony this morning from someone who tried to help rescue those burned inside the building. He wrote:

Hello, my name is Igor R., I am 39, I live in town of Odessa. During 15 years I work as a
Yesterday, as you know, a frightful tragedy happened in our cities, one people put to death other. Put to death cruelly - burned living. Not because they were drunk, not for the inheritance of grandmother, but because they do not divide the political looks of nationalists. First they were beating people unmercifully, cruelly, and burned them alive after. As a doctor I rushed to give help to the one who could be rescued, but I was stopped by pro Ukrainian Nazi radicals, who did not let me walk up to the injured. One of them pushed away me rudely, promising, that soon me and other Jews of Odessa are going to meet the same fate.

I saw a fellow which could be rescued, if I was able to take him away to the hospital, but all persuasions ended with me getting hit in the face so hard that I lost my glasses. For 15 years I saw a great deal very much, but yesterday I wanted to cry, not from pain not from humiliation, but from a weakness. What occurred yesterday didn't even have place during fascist occupation in my town in WWII. I wonder, why the whole world is keeping silent?

The US backed 'government' in Kiev largely came to power because the Right Sector fascists used these same violent tactics in the coup d'état a couple of months ago. The now famous "Fuck the EU" quote from US State Department operative Victoria Nuland (wife of Bush-Cheney era neocon Robert Kagan) was direct evidence of the deep involvement and interference of the US in Ukraine. This whole story just reeks of hypocrisy and arrogance on the part of the US.

Victoria Nuland was also caught last December saying "we've invested $5 billion" in the Ukraine project.... that part picks up at the 7:25 mark in this video [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2y0y-JUsPTU](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2y0y-JUsPTU)

Note the ExxonMobil and Chevron logos on the stage next to Nuland ... and remember that the oil-i-garchy wants Russian natural gas and oil supplies. Add it up, mix in the usual modus operandi, stir and what you get is chaos, instability and regime change.

What is Russia to do? Roll over and watch themselves get more NATO 'missile defense' bases on their borders and fascists appointed to the 'new government' cabinet in Ukraine? More than 27 million people were killed during Hitler's invasion of the Soviet Union during WW II. The Russians are hyper-sensitive to fascists coming to power on their immediate borders - especially when the US-NATO are calling the shots.

In recent days there have been reports from eastern Ukraine that not only Right Sector fascists have been attacking unarmed protesters but also that black-clad mercenaries (Blackwater?) have been filmed chasing down the anti-fascist protesters.

The US knew that Russia would have to react, that is why we've witnessed massive corporate media demonization of Putin during the past year or so. It helps make it easier for the American people to swallow another one of our interventions.

This intervention though could lead to nuclear war.

The time is long past for peace activists to speak out opposing the Obama administration and NATO baiting the Russian bear.

Bruce K. Gagnon
Robert Parry | The State Department's Ukraine Fiasco.  


Parry writes: "American diplomacy, by definition, is supposed to advance the national interests of the United States, not contribute to international crises that undermine those interests. Yet, by that standard, the U.S. State Department and Secretary of State John Kerry have failed extraordinarily during the current Ukraine crisis."

[READ MORE](http://space4peace.blogspot.com/)

**TIMELINE JUNE 27, 2014**

**Ukraine signs historic pact with EU despite Russia**

*By JOHN-THOR DAHLBURG, Associated Press*

BRUSSELS (AP) — Ukraine's new president signed an economic and political pact with the European Union on Friday, pushing his troubled country closer into a European orbit over the protests of Russia, which warned of possible trade sanctions.

"What a great day!" a beaming President Petro Poroshenko said in Brussels. "Maybe the most important day for my country after independence" from the Soviet Union in 1991.

Russia has long been opposed to closer ties between Ukraine and the EU. Moscow is loath to see its historic influence wane in its strategic neighbor, which it considers the birthplace of Russian statehood and of Russian Orthodox Christianity.

"There will undoubtedly be serious consequences for Ukraine and Moldova's signing," Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Grigory Karasin said.

European Union leaders decided not to immediately impose new sanctions on Russia for destabilizing eastern Ukraine. But in a statement, they warned that new sanctions have been prepared so they could be levied "without delay" and listed several demands for Vladimir Putin's government and the pro-Russian rebels in eastern Ukraine.  

[http://hosted2.ap.org/APDEFAULT/3d281c11a96b4ad082fe88aa0db04305/Article_2014-06-27-EU--Ukraine/id-938bd5222c244e65bc3d0b9a9cf7673e](http://hosted2.ap.org/APDEFAULT/3d281c11a96b4ad082fe88aa0db04305/Article_2014-06-27-EU--Ukraine/id-938bd5222c244e65bc3d0b9a9cf7673e)

[I read this in the *Arkansas Democrat-Gazette* (June 28, 2014) 11A, “Despite Russian Warning, Ukraine Signs EU Pact.” The AP reporter must have struggled with this report, so strong are the interests on both sides. Is he even-handed? The opening paragraphs seem to]
be, by the fifth paragraph he sides somewhat with the West. For example, that the former
democratically elected President Yanukovych was overthrown by an illegal coup is not
precisely conveyed by the phrase “bloody protests that toppled his government.”
Consequently, that “EU leaders decided...not to immediately impose new sanctions on
Russia for destabilizing eastern Ukraine” deserves questioning regarding who did the
destabilizing. One more example out of several others: The new, illegal president
Poroshenko seems blatantly hypocritical when he declares that Ukraine “paid the highest
possible price to make her European dreams come true,” but the reporter offers no comment.
It’s a dubious report, but a fully accurate one would have required, as I have been
demonstrating, twice the space.--Dick

FURTHER ANALYSIS

Moeri: Be Critical of Both Imperialisms
Zunes: Be Aware of Nonviolent Participants
Four Essays Forwarded from HAW on Ukrainian History

US and Russia: Examine Both Imperialisms

UKRAINE: Excuse Me Mister: How Far Is It From Simferopol
To Grozny?
by AntiDote’s Laurent Moeri

Many are unwilling to condemn Russian aggression for what it is, fearing this would imply support for their
own imperialists, similar to those “leftists” that tried to defend first Qaddafi, later Assad, and now Putin.⁷ ⁸
Two wrongs don’t make a right.

There is an interesting split in perception, on the “Left,” when it comes to imperialism. It
seems fair to say we all agree on the need to oppose US imperialism. However, as soon as
the picture is complemented by a second state with imperial aspirations, many—especially
Western—“leftists” equivocate, and seem willing to choose the perceived lesser of two evils.
This dualistic approach has its roots in the Cold War; it is the useless remnant of a period
when to be pro-Soviet might have implied being anti-capitalist.

It was wrong then, it is wrong now, and it is time to get rid of it.

The latest example of this difficulty in renouncing the false choice between evils has come
with the crisis in Ukraine. Commentators around the world are drumming up evidence to
support the hype that a new Cold War is at hand. Publicly, tensions between the US and
Russia appear to be rising; however behind the curtain nothing is all that new. The US, the
EU and NATO have always been trying to push their scope of influence eastwards;
Russia has never been willing to cede political influence, control over pipelines, or access to
resources in its former Soviet territories.

More importantly, however, and refuting the vision of a new Cold War at our doorstep, is the
fact that the US has been handing out “aid” to Russia since 1992, attached to conditions
demanding deregulation imposed by the victory march of Bretton Woods (and later Troika)
institutions.

We are used to hypocritical US foreign policy; its stance towards Russia serves just as another example. We keep hearing calls out of the White House urging Russia to respect dissent and the opposition. Along with the US’s own draconian attitude toward dissent and opposition, this continuous backdoor support of Putin’s regime reduces such calls to so much hot air. Nevertheless, Obama and his Western colleagues stay plenty busy reaffirming themselves with ridiculous sanctions which have no impact whatsoever on Putin’s or his pet oligarchs’ greed.

At any rate, the previously mentioned US vs. Russia narrative continues to fill the airwaves, and of course the US is not the only one making noise. From an anti-authoritarian standpoint, it is frustrating as well as saddening to see the Kremlin’s propaganda make its merry way around the world wide web. Indeed, Russian mainstream media has much in common with that of the US and EU—each points the finger at the “other side.” “Leftists” and anarchists should, however, be able to see through this game and reject both claims. The “West” does not have a monopoly on imperialism, and it is not by opposing only Western imperialism that we show our solidarity with ethnic minorities, marginalized groups, radical Left opposition or the working class—all of whom will be the main victims of continued aggression.

In fact, to do so has dire human and political consequences; it enables the continued oppression and killing of ethnic minorities and weakens those few voices that do manage to get heard from within the opposition movements in Russia and Ukraine. Further, this reckless attitude results in a direct conflict among “leftists.” Many are unwilling to condemn Russian aggression for what it is, fearing this would imply support for their own imperialists, similar to those “leftists” that tried to defend first Qaddafi, later Assad, and now Putin. Two wrongs don’t make a right.

full: http://tahririn.wordpress.com/2014/05/19/ukraine-excuse-me-mister-how-far-is-it-from-simferopol-to-grozny/

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**Zunes. recent nonviolent action against Russian aggrandizement  June 1, 2014**

Here is a recent article I co-authored with strategic analyst Erica Chenoweth in which we examine recent nonviolent action against Russian aggrandizement in eastern Ukraine and Crimea and how an escalation of such popular resistance could help avoid additional violence and defuse the crisis: http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2014/05/28/a_nonviolent_alternative_for_ukraine

You can also check out two other recent articles of mine from this past March: an earlier article on Ukraine http://fpif.org/straight-talk-u-s-ukraine/ and another on the broader phenomenon of nonviolent resistance http://www.ozy.com/c-notes/a-force-more-powerful-than-war-nonviolent-resistance/30051.article

Links to other articles of mine--covering such topics as the Middle East, U.S. foreign policy, human rights issues, and more--can be found at: http://stephenzunes.org/publications/

Please feel free to forward this on to others and invite them to contact me about being on my email list. And please let me know if you no longer wish to be on my email list.

Stephen Zunes
FOUR ANALYSES, UKRAINIAN HISTORY and Present Crisis via HAW Historians Against the War, May 19-28, 2014.

“What’s Next? The Ukrainian Crisis 2.0”  [from HAW]
By Walter G. Moss, History News Network, posted May 28, 2014
The author is a professor of history emeritus at Eastern Michigan University.

“Why the Second World War Never Ended for Ukraine”  [from HAW]
By Juliane Fuerst, History News Network, posted May 25, 2014
The author teaches history at the University of Bristol.

“Ukraine Between a Rock and a Hard Place: Is There a Way Out?”  [from HAW]
By Joanne Landy, Campaign for Peace and Democracy, posted May 20, 2014

“Why the Revival of Nationalist Myths in Ukraine Should Alarm Us”  [from HAW]
By Tarik Cyril Amar and Per Anders Rudling, History News Network, posted May 19, 2014
The authors teach history at Columbia University and the University of Lund, respectively.

US MEDIA

Robert Parry, “NYT's One-Sided Ukraine Narrative.”

Parry writes: "As part of the New York Times’ sorry descent into becoming a propaganda sheet for the U.S. State Department, the Times' front-page story on the Ukrainian presidential election offered a near perfect distillation of Official Washington's false narrative on the crisis."
READ MORE

GERMANY

"Why Germans Are More Ambivalent about What's Happening in Ukraine than
Anybody Else"
By Julianne Fuerst, History News Network, posted April 13
The author teaches history at the University of Bristol, U.K.

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Patrick Smith, US/New York Times Spin
Stephen Cohen, Anti-Russia Is Old Anti-Soviet
Parry, Group Think
Alternative Analysis

(Plenty of protest against the pro-war Obama administration and media, but all together reflecting a comparatively small readership. If you agree with the analyses of these alternative views that try to view Russia outside the US imperial box, then forward this newsletter and notify your contacts.)

The Nation Editorial

Alterman, Cold War Hysteria Revived
How Russia/Ukraine Look in Beijing
Charles Pierce, Dick Cheney's View
Ray McGovern, Putin Says No to Regime Change on Its Border
Bruce Gagnon, Danger of War Following US-led Coup for Gas and Oil
Pilger, Other Coups, Same Superpower
Robert Freeman, Ukraine and WWI over Energy
Mark Swaney

More Reading
Via Historians Against War (HAW)
Via Common Dreams
Via FAIR TV

Contact Arkansas Representatives

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Steve Weissman: US Participated in Coup That Toppled Yanukovytch
Stephen Cohen, Cold War Again?
Two Essays from Bruce Gagnon

Bruce Gagnon, Boxing in the Bear (with Francis Boyle and Chandra Muzaffar)
Gagnon, Preparing for War with Russia
Franklin Spinney, What Is the Real Price of Starting a New Cold War?

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Ira Chernus: Showdown with Russia Sells Newspapers

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Forum of 3 Essays on US and Ukraine in Z Magazine April 2014
   Chandra Muzaffar, US Behind Ouster of Democratically Elected President
   Ajamu Baraka, US Ukraine Policy Marred by Contradictions and Double Standards
   Parry, Obama Only One Able to Prevent War

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END RUSSIA (AND UKRAINE) NEWSLETTER #4

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