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## Trump and the Military-Industrial Complex



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An interesting controversy has been sparked on the Internet. It's being reproduced by the conservative publication The American Conservative (TAC), published in Washington DC, on the role of US President Donald Trump in the alleged rapprochement with Russia that culminated with his meeting with Russian President Vladimir Putin in Helsinki.

Ultra-conservative lawyer and writer Bruce Fein, senior partner at Fein & DelValle, former deputy attorney general and general counsel to the Federal Communications

Commission during Reagan's presidency, assesses Trump's merits in defending the most reactionary positions and their contradictions with those of Putin:

"President Donald Trump has strengthened, not weakened, U.S. military and economic opposition to Russian President Vladimir Putin. This situation has not been properly clarified and is of the utmost importance. Regardless of the triumphs Trump claims over NATO or Vladimir Putin, the Military-Industrial Counter-Terrorism complex (MICC) governs U.S.-Russian ties as it has for seven decades. The nightmare of the MICC is not to lose a friend, but to lose an enemy, says Fein.

"False information is obsessed with personalities. Authentic information assumes that nations have no permanent friends or enemies, but only permanent interests. The executive branch, in particular, has a permanent interest in exaggerating threats in order to increase its own power and superfluous military spending.

According to Fein, President Barack Obama, in opposition to Russian objectives, refused to provide military assistance to Ukraine, while Trump has authorized the transfer of military weapons to that country. Obama limited the U.S. military mission in Syria to the goal of defeating ISIS or the Islamic State, while Trump has expanded that mission to remain in Syria indefinitely and to influence the outcome of that country's protracted civil war.

Trump plans to invest \$1.2 trillion in upgrading the U.S. nuclear arsenal, including low-yield tactical weapons, directed largely against Russia. In a recent report on national security strategy, Trump said Washington will respond to the economic, political, and military challenges posed by China and Russia to U.S. power, influence, and interests by attempting to erode U.S. security and prosperity. "They are determined to make their economies, less free and less fair, to increase their armies and the repression they exert on their societies.

Trump has supported the 30,000-strong NATO rapid response force in the face of a hypothetical Russian attack. He has called on NATO members to increase their contributions to the alliance from 2 to 4 percent of their GDP.

Trump has stated that the attack on any NATO member will be considered an attack on the United States and will be responded to militarily, without the prior declaration of war required by the Constitution. Not a single soldier out of the more than 50,000 currently on US bases in NATO countries has been withdrawn.

Trump has maintained economic sanctions against Russia for its annexation of the Crimea and new military invasions in eastern Ukraine. He signed the Law to Counter America's

Adversaries through Sanctions, which the Russian Prime Minister called a “large-scale trade war” against his country.

In April, the Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) of the Trump administration – in consultation with the State Department – sanctioned seven Russian leaders and 12 companies owned or controlled by them, 17 Russian government officials and one Russian state-owned arms trading company and one of its subsidiary banks.

The assets of a sanctioned person or entity are frozen and business with Americans is prohibited.

Trump supported Montenegro’s NATO membership despite its obvious irrelevance to US national security.

Trump’s critics criticize his cowardice toward Putin. They deplore every positive thing he says about Russia and its alleged interference in American politics. But they cannot point to a single thing that the Trump administration has done to diminish Washington’s overwhelming military and economic superiority over Russia or to deter Russian aggression.

“Trump is just the background noise; the enduring script of American national security is written by the Military Industrial Complex with the consent of the American people while its armored knight gratifies him as always with the vicarious thrill of power and domination,” concludes the reactionary Bruce Fein.

*A CubaNews translation by Walter Lippmann.*