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Directing War Strategies from the Shadows

Grand Puppetmaster Brzezinski

by MIKE WHITNEY

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“From the moment the Soviet Union collapsed in 1991, the United States has relentlessly pursued a strategy of encircling Russia, just as it has with other perceived enemies like China and Iran. It has brought 12 countries in central Europe, all of them formerly allied with Moscow, into the NATO alliance. US military power is now directly on Russia’s borders... This crisis is in part the result of a zero-sum calculation that has shaped US policy toward Moscow since the Cold War: Any loss for Russia is an American victory, and anything positive that happens to, for, or in Russia is bad for the United States. This is an approach that intensifies confrontation, rather than soothing it.”

- Stephen Kinzer, “US a full partner in Ukraine debacle”, Boston Globe

“We have removed all of our heavy weapons from the European part of Russia and put them behind the Urals” and “reduced our Armed Forces by 300,000. We have taken several other

steps required by the Adapted Conventional Armed Forces Treaty in Europe (ACAF). But what have we seen in response? Eastern Europe is receiving new weapons, two new military bases are being set up in Romania and in Bulgaria, and there are two new missile launch areas — a radar in Czech republic and missile systems in Poland. And we are asking ourselves the question: what is going on? Russia is disarming unilaterally. But if we disarm unilaterally then we would like to see our partners be willing to do the same thing in Europe. On the contrary, Europe is being pumped full of new weapons systems. And of course we cannot help but be concerned.”

- Russian President Vladimir Putin, Munich Conference on Security Policy, February 2007

The Obama administration’s rationale for supporting the fascist-led coup in Ukraine collapsed on Wednesday when a “hacked” phone call between EU foreign affairs chief Catherine Ashton and Estonian foreign minister Urmas Paet revealed that the snipers who fired on protestors in Maidan Square in Kiev were not aligned with President Viktor Yanukovich, but with the protest leaders themselves. The significance of the discovery cannot be overstated since the Obama team has used the killing of protestors to justify its support for the new imposter government. Now it appears that members of the new government may be implicated in the killing of innocent civilians. This new information could force Obama to withdraw his support for the coup plotters in Kiev, which would derail the administration’s plan to remove Russia from the Crimea and expand NATO into Ukraine. Here’s a short recap of the details from an article in Russia Today:

“Estonian foreign ministry has confirmed the recording of his conversation with EU foreign policy chief is authentic. Urmas Paet said that snipers who shot at protestors and police in Kiev were hired by Maidan leaders.

During the conversation, Paet stressed that “there is now stronger and stronger understanding that behind the snipers, it was not Yanukovich, but it was somebody from the new coalition.”....

The Estonian Ministry of Foreign Affairs also issued a statement on its website, saying that the recording of the leaked telephone conversation between Paet and Ashton is “authentic.” (“Estonian Foreign Ministry confirms authenticity of leaked call on Kiev snipers“, Russia Today)

To its credit, the UK Guardian published an article reporting the basic facts, but there’s been no coverage by the New York Times, the Washington Post or any of the major TV News networks. America’s elite media are engaged in a coordinated news blackout to keep people from seeing that the Obama administration and their EU collaborators are supporting a group of far-right

extremists who were directly involved in the killing of civilians in order to topple a democratically-elected government. Here's more from the same article:

“...there is a stronger and stronger understanding that behind snipers it was not Yanukovich, it was somebody from the new coalition,” Paet says...the same handwriting, the same type of bullets, and it's really disturbing that now the new coalition, that they don't want to investigate what exactly happened.” (“Ukraine crisis: bugged call reveals conspiracy theory about Kiev snipers“, Guardian)

There won't be an investigation because an investigation would reveal the truth, and the truth would undermine Obama's plan to install a puppet regime in Kiev. The new government has already shown that it is more than willing to do Washington's bidding, that is, to impose austerity measures on the working people of Ukraine, to pay off fatcat bondholders in Berlin and Brussels via more extortionist IMF loans, to extend NATO to Russia's border in contravention of agreements made with Bush the Elder following the fall of the Berlin Wall, and to pursue the crackpot dreams of global hegemony laid out in “The Grand Chessboard” by New World Order fantasist Zbigniew Brzezinski. These are the primary objectives of the present policy which could be upended by the allegations of foul play.

The smoking gun revelations of the hacked phone call came just hours before US officials indicated they were planning to increase their military footprint in Eastern Europe. According to the World Socialist Web Site:

“Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel said the Pentagon will boost joint training of NATO forces in Poland and step up NATO air patrols in the Baltics...US military officials said they were deploying six F-15 fighter jets and KC-135 transport planes.One guided-missile frigate, the USS Taylor, is still in a Black Sea port in Turkey after patrolling the region during the Sochi Olympics...

Turkish officials confirmed that they had given a US Navy warship permission to pass through the Bosphorus straits into the Black Sea, which borders Ukraine.” (“Amid Ukraine crisis, US launches military escalation in Eastern Europe”, World Socialist Web Site)

Also Russia Today reports that: “The guided missile destroyer, the USS Truxton, is heading to the Black Sea, for what the US military said is a “routine” deployment...The ship has a crew of about 300 and is part of an aircraft carrier strike group that left the US in mid-February.” (“US navy confirms missile destroyer USS Truxton approaching the Black Sea”, RT)

“Routine deployment”? So provoking a war with Russia is “routine”? Talk about understatement.

The military escalation occurs in an atmosphere of heightened tension between the two nuclear-armed powers and will certainly add to their mutual distrust. Hagel’s deployment is consistent with a plan for antagonizing Moscow that was proposed just days earlier in the Washington Post by the Obama administration’s ideological godfather, Zbigniew Brzezinski. Here’s a bit of what Brzezinski had to say in the article titled “What is to be done? Putin’s aggression in Ukraine needs a response”:

“...the West should promptly recognize the current government of Ukraine as legitimate. Uncertainty regarding its legal status could tempt Putin to repeat his Crimean charade...

“...the West should convey.. that the Ukrainian army can count on immediate and direct Western aid so as to enhance its defensive capabilities. There should be no doubt left in Putin’s mind that an attack on Ukraine would precipitate a prolonged and costly engagement, and Ukrainians should not fear that they would be left in the lurch.

Meanwhile, NATO forces, consistent with the organization’s contingency planning, should be put on alert. High readiness for some immediate airlift to Europe of U.S. airborne units would be politically and militarily meaningful. If the West wants to avoid a conflict, there should be no ambiguity in the Kremlin as to what might be precipitated by further adventurist use of force in the middle of Europe.” (“What is to be done? Putin’s aggression in Ukraine needs a response”, Washington Post)

“Adventurist”? Dr. Strangelove is calling the Kremlin adventurist when his recommendations would put NATO, the US and Moscow on hairtrigger alert increasing the chances of an error in judgment that could lead to thermonuclear war. Isn’t that the pot calling the kettle black?

But listen to the tone of Brzezinski’s op-ed. In just a few short paragraphs, the author—who many respect as a restrained and brilliant global strategist—refers to Putin as a thug, a Mafia gangster, Mussolini, and Hitler. I imagine if he had another paragraph to work with, he would have added Beelzebub Satan to the list.

This isn’t politics; it’s hysterics. It’s incendiary, jingoistic mumbo-jumbo intended to rouse the public and fan the flames of nationalism. It’s the same kind of self-righteous raving that precipitated the invasion of Iraq.

And what is Brzezinski saying?

Is he saying that events in the Crimea are a threat to US national security? Is he saying that the US should now feel free to apply the Monroe Doctrine everywhere across the planet, sticking our big nose wherever the president sees fit?

The trouble in the Crimea has nothing to do with the United States. We have no dog in this fight. This is about military expansion into Eurasia, this is about pipeline corridors and oil fields, this is about dismantling the Russian Federation and positioning multinational corporations and Wall Street investment banks in Asia for the new century. And, finally, this is an ego-driven crusade by an old man who wants to see his looneybin NWO global hegemony vision enacted before they cart him off on a marble slab. That's what this is really about; the glorious new world disorder, the dystopian wetdream of thinktank patricians everywhere whose only purpose in life is to initiate wars that other-peoples-sons will have to fight.

Entering Ukraine into the corporate-western alliance is a critical part of Brzezinski's masterplan. The basic strategy has been underway since the fall of the Berlin Wall when neoliberal carpetbaggers from the US assisted in the looting of the former Soviet state leaving Russia politically broken and economically destitute. Since then, US policy towards Russia has been overtly hostile, making every effort to encircle the oil-rich nation while positioning nuclear missile installations on its perimeter. Now Washington is using its fascist-backed coup in Ukraine to force Moscow to relinquish its grip on a region that is vital to its national security.

Here's a brief excerpt from an interview with Stephen Cohen, professor of Russian studies and history emeritus at New York University on Monday on PBS Newshour. Cohen helps to clarify what is really going on viv a vis the US and Russia:

“What we're watching today is the worst kind of history being made, the descent of a new Cold War divide between West and East in Europe, this time not in faraway Berlin, but right on Russia's borders through Ukraine. That will be instability and the prospect of war for decades to come for our kids and our grandchildren. The official version is that Putin is to blame; he did this. But it simply isn't true. This began 20 years ago when Clinton began the movement of NATO toward Russia, a movement that's continued.

...the fundamental issue here is that, three or four years ago, Putin made absolutely clear he had two red lines...One was in the former Soviet republic of Georgia. (Putin would not allow NATO in Georgia) The other was in Ukraine. We crossed both. You got a war in Georgia in 2008, and

you have got today in Ukraine because we, the United States and Europe, crossed Putin's red line." (PBS News Hour)

There's no doubt who is to blame for the present conflict in Cohen's mind. It's Washington.

So, here we are, between a rock and a hard place: Putin cannot back down on an issue that's crucial to national security, and Washington is more determined than ever to pull Ukraine into – what Henry Kissinger calls–"a cooperative international system." (aka–global capitalist rule) That means there's going to be a war.

On Thursday, Crimea MPs voted unanimously to hold a referendum on whether the region should become a part of Russia or not. The balloting will take place in 10 days although Obama has already said that he will not honor the results. Apparently, other countries need to get the green-light from Washington before they conduct their elections now. This is how ridiculous things have gotten.

In 2008, Brzezinski revealed the real motives behind US aggression in Central Asia in an article that appeared in the Huffington Post that dealt primarily with the dust up in Georgia. (where Putin deployed Russian troops to defend Russian speaking civilians in South Ossetia.) Here's what Brzezinski had to say:

"The question the international community now confronts is how to respond to a Russia that engages in the blatant use of force with larger imperial designs in mind: to reintegrate the former Soviet space under the Kremlin's control and to cut Western access to the Caspian Sea and Central Asia by gaining control over the Baku/Ceyhan pipeline that runs through Georgia.

In brief, the stakes are very significant. At stake is access to oil as that resource grows ever more scarce and expensive and how a major power conducts itself in our newly interdependent world, conduct that should be based on accommodation and consensus, not on brute force.

If Georgia is subverted, not only will the West be cut off from the Caspian Sea and Central Asia. We can logically anticipate that Putin, if not resisted, will use the same tactics toward the Ukraine. Putin has already made public threats against Ukraine." ("Brzezinski: Russia's invasion of Georgia is Reminiscent of Stalin's attack on Finland"; Huffington Post)

Huh? It sounds a lot like Brzezinski thinks that oil should be his. Or maybe he thinks it belongs to the western oil giants; is that it?

So we're not dealing with national security, sovereignty or spheres of influence here. What we're really talking about is "access to oil." Not only that, but Brzezinski is being quite blunt in his assertion that "the West" –as he calls it–has a legitimate claim to the resources on other people's land. Where'd he come up with that one?

In another interview on Kavkacenter.com, in 2008, Brzezinski sounded the same alarm with a slightly different twist. Here's an excerpt from the article titled "Russia tends to destabilize Georgia":

"Brzezinski said the United States witnessed "cases of possible threats by Russia... motivated not by some territorial disputes....but caused by intention to take control over the Baku-Ceyhan pipeline".

"If Georgia government is destabilized, western access to Baku, Caspian Sea and further will be limited", said Brzezinski he stated that Russia will try to consolidate its monopoly on these markets and will use all existing political and economic levers, including "politically motivated cessation of energy supplies" in Europe and Baltic states.

"Russia actively tends to isolate the Central Asian region from direct access to world economy, especially to energy supplies", considers the political scientist." ("Zbigniew Brzezinski: "Russia tends to destabilize Georgia" kavkacenter.com)

Putin is not isolating anyone and he's certainly not taking over anyone's damned pipeline. He's the president of Russia. He sells oil and makes money, that's how the system works. It's called capitalism. But the oil is theirs. The natural gas is theirs. The pipelines are theirs. Not ours. Get over it!

Don't kid yourself, it's all about oil. Oil and power. The United States imperial ambitions are thoroughly marinated in oil, access to oil, and control of oil. Without oil, there's no empire, no dollar hegemony, no overbloomed, bullyboy military throwing weaker countries against the wall and extorting tribute. Oil is the coin of the realm, the path to global domination.

Putin has audacity to think that the oil beneath Russian soil belongs to Russia. Washington wants to change his mind about that. And that's why the situation in Ukraine is so dangerous, because the voracious thirst for oil is pushing us all towards another world war.