



Ukraine: Are We Still Under the Spell of Cold War Propaganda?

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Today its [the military's] task is to expand the "zones of democratic peace;" to deter the rise or a new great-power competitor.... The Balkans, and southeastern Europe more generally, present the major hurdle toward the creation of a Europe "whole and free" from the Baltic to the Black Sea. The delay in bringing security and stability to southeastern Europe has ... prevented the consolidation of the victory in the Cold War.... This is especially important in light of the nascent European moves toward an independent defense "identity" and policy; it is important that NATO not be replaced by the European Union, leaving the United States without a voice in European security affairs....

— "Rebuilding America's Defenses," A Report Of The Project for the New American Century September 2000

Indeed, what we are witnessing today in Ukraine is nothing but a clear attempt by the United States and its allies to "consolidate" their "victory in the Cold War" by creating a Europe "whole and free" for the unhindered reign of global capital.

The process that started a year ago with a blatant and violent U.S.-backed coup in coalition with neo-Nazis against the elected president of Ukraine is now being escalated into an indirect declaration of war against Russia. Once again a massive propaganda campaign, reminiscent of the Cold War period, is being waged by the U.S. and European governments about "Russian aggression," "Russian expansionism," and "Russian threat to Western security," while demonizing Vladimir Putin as a dangerous, power-hungry "dictator" who has "no respect for international law" and for other nations' "sovereignty" and "independence." And in doing so, they have fully

mobilized the corporate media throughout the United States and Europe.

Of course, this is nothing new, as we have seen similar propaganda campaigns to demonize other countries and their leaders in the past — in the past, Yugoslavia, Afghanistan, Iraq, Libya, Syria, and still under way, Iran and Venezuela, to name a few — to pacify public opinion in the face of impending wars of aggression. But this time, the anti-Russian propaganda is banking on an historical weakness in the psyche of the American public: the historical Cold War fear of Communism and the Soviet Union. It is aimed at making us forget that Russia is not the Soviet Union, and that it is no longer an "enemy of the West," but only a "great power competitor." The imperialist warmongers want us to forget this in order to justify expansion of NATO up to the borders of Russia, stationing of NATO missiles on Ukraine soil (just imagine Russian missiles stationed along U.S.-Mexico border) and setting the stage for the ultimate "consolidation of the victory in the Cold War," i.e., disintegration of the Russian Federation as a major "rival" and a challenge to the United States' "full spectrum dominance" of the world, as stipulated by the document of the Project for the New American Century. And, unfortunately, it seems that this Cold-War style propaganda has been effective, as it has silenced most of the U.S. peace movement, and has kept it, at least so far, from taking effective action against this step-by-step military escalation against Russia.

An orchestrated effort is now under way to send arms to Ukraine without any active resistance by the peace and anti-nuclear movement in the U.S. President Obama and Secretary of State John Kerry have announced that they are considering sending "lethal" weapons to Ukraine. Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel has announced his support for sending so-called "defensive weapons" to Ukraine. NATO's military commander, Gen. Breedlove, has expressed his support for sending weapons. Worst of all, according to Reuters (February 2, 2015), U.S. Congress is planning to "write legislation requiring the United States to send arms to Ukraine if President Barak Obama does not move to send weapons." Reuters also reported that Senator McCain "led about a dozen Republican and Democratic senators at a new conference in pressing

Obama to send arms to help Kiev....” In recent a joint report delivered to President Obama, the Brookings Institution, the Atlantic Council, and the Chicago Council on Global Affairs advised the White House and NATO on the best way to escalate the war in Ukraine. (Mike Whitney, CounterPunch, February 6-8 Edition) Not surprisingly, establishment media like the *Washington Post* and *USA Today*, have joined the fray by editorializing that “giving Ukraine lethal weapons is the only solution to this conflict.” In addition, according to Reuters, a group of “eight former senior American officials are preparing a joint report in which they “urge the United States to send \$3 billion in in defensive arms and equipment to Ukraine, including anti-armor missiles, reconnaissance drones, armored Humvees and radars that can determine the location of enemy rocket and artillery fire.” The “lethal” weapons under consideration are all sophisticated weapons that the Ukrainians are not trained for and will require that the U.S. military personnel operate them — a situation which would inevitably get the United States military directly involved in the war.

But military-strategic objectives are not the only reason for the United States to go to such extremes. As Mike Whitney has correctly put it, the U.S. “wants to control the pipeline corridors from Russia to Europe to monitor Moscow’s revenues and to ensure that gas continues to be denominated in dollars. And it wants a weaker, unstable Russia that is more prone to regime change, fragmentation and, ultimately, foreign control. These objectives cannot be achieved peacefully....” (*op. cit.*) In fact, since the discovery of new oil and gas reserves in the United States, the issue of weaning the European Union from the Russian oil and gas and turning Europe into an export market for the newly discovered U.S. reserves has been placed on top of the U.S. Administration and Oil companies’ imperialistic agenda. Instigating a conflict in Ukraine, causing a rift between the European Union and Russia, and imposing economic sanctions on Russia, is precisely aimed at serving this objective. And the leading EU governments are more that willing to go along with this plan. However, while the U.S. neocons are rushing to cause a military confrontation, European governments, having had the disastrous experience of two world wars on their soil, are more reluctant to take the military route. They prefer to achieve the same

imperialist objectives through economic sanctions and diplomatic pressures. European leaders want the threat of war, but not the war itself. As the French President recently warned Russians: “If we don’t manage to find ... a lasting peace agreement, we know perfectly well what the scenario will be. It has a name, it’s called war.” (Reuters, February 7, 2015) In other words, the imperialist objectives are the same, the methods are different.

And none of this should be surprising to anyone, given the U.S., EU and NATO’s similar imperialistic record in Afghanistan, Iraq, Libya, Syria, Iran, etc. What is surprising, however, is the passive response of the peace and anti-nuclear movement in the United States. Why aren’t we organizing protests? Why aren’t we mobilizing the masses? Why aren’t we marching on the streets, on the White House, on the Congress? Is it because we do not yet see the gravity of the looming danger, which is highly unlikely? Or could it be that we are still under the spell of the Cold War propaganda?

In either case, we must act quickly before it is too late. With Russia and the United States possessing thousands of missiles, bombers and submarines equipped with nuclear bombs on hair-trigger alert, an escalation could spiral out of anyone’s control. This time the stakes are extremely high.

We call upon all peace-loving people of the United States to join forces and demand:

1. Send no weapons to Ukraine,
2. Remove NATO, US troops, US missiles and bases from all states bordering Russia
3. Ensure that Ukraine immediately becomes a neutral country.
4. Agree that Ukraine participates in no foreign military exercises and foreign military blocs.

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