

American Russophobia: A Tale of Neocon, Liberal, and Progressive Warmongers

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After several months of Russian "special operations" in Ukraine, it might be worth asking whether the U.S.-Russia proxy war is headed toward regime-change in Moscow, or at least efforts at regime change. For Washington, after Serbia, Iraq, Libya, Ukraine, and all the others, Russia must surely represent the ultimate, perhaps final, such operation. In fact, since the very first days of the Bolshevik Revolution precisely one century ago, American ruling elites have savored the idea of turning the great Russian expanse into a vassal state allowing exploitation of its unparalleled natural resources.

Joe Biden, or those running his White House, is no doubt poised to take matters to more dangerous levels, seemingly indifferent to any prospects of nuclear catastrophe. After sending tens of billions of dollars worth of high-tech weapons to the Kiev regime, Biden, during his visit to Poland, would say: "For God's sake, this man [Vladimir Putin] cannot remain in power."

There can be little ambiguity: for years the U.S. goal has been to weaken, isolate, and eventually destroy the Putin government. What Stalin and his successors desperately feared for decades - Western capitalist encirclement and strangulation - seems finally (and menacingly) to have arrived.

Washington has been waging nonstop war against Russia since Putin ascended to power more than two decades ago, along multiple fronts:

- Intervention by means of dispersed anti-Moscow groups - NGOs, CIA covert operations, George Soros "pro-democracy" organizations, propaganda outlets such as Radio Free Europe - throughout Ukraine and other former Soviet republics, going back to the late 1980s.
- Continuous push eastward of NATO military forces toward Russian borders since the early 1990s. This expansion has been accompanied by the proliferation of new member states across eastern Europe.
- The 2014 "Maidan" coup in Kiev, orchestrated by the Obama-Biden gang working

with neocons, friendly NGOs, and Ukrainian neo-fascist forces. The Russian population of Donbass and elsewhere would be targeted politically, economically, and militarily across the succeeding eight years.

- Ongoing NATO military operations, including establishment of new military installations close to Russian territory, boosting regional nuclear capabilities, arms shipments to NATO members, and continuous provocative armed-forces maneuvers.

Harsh economic sanctions imposed by the U.S. and European Union on the Russian Federation — flagrant acts of war explicitly intended to destroy a nation's financial system and, ultimately, its general economy.

- Aggressive efforts by the U.S. and other Western powers to bring Ukraine into both NATO and the European Union - that is, organizations strongly hostile to Russian interests and ongoing threats to the country's national sovereignty.
- To this could be added the manufactured tremors of Russiagate - several years of phony allegations by the Washington and media elites of Russian collusion with Donald Trump to rig the outcome of the 2016 presidential election. These charges, the media hysteria, and series of investigations into Russian "interference" in American politics worked to fan the flames of Russophobia.

The crackpot idea of war against Russia has managed to achieve elite consensus in the U.S., its destructive passion most visible among those considered leftists and progressives.

As Biden recently proposed sending more billions to expand proxy warfare in Ukraine, Congressional liberals and progressives eagerly added to the amount. Not only Bernie Sanders and the Squad, but every member of the Congressional Progressive Caucus joined the warmongering crowd. American progressives, at present no different than garden-variety neocons, appear scarcely troubled by specter of a "nuclear exchange" with the Russians.

As noted, the idea of U.S.-engineered regime change in Moscow has a long history, starting with president Woodrow Wilson's military intervention at the end of World War I. All told, more than 200,000 "allied" forces invaded Russia in 2018, including an estimated 15,000 American troops sent to the vicinity of Vladivostok and Archangelsk in the Far East. This had become known as the peace-loving "Polar Bear Expedition". The erudite, cosmopolitan, liberal Wilson had just sent U.S. armed forces to join the pointless European slaughter of World War I - after repeatedly invading Mexico, Haiti, and Central America. The Polar Bear efforts found a country in the midst of military defeat, famine, disease, and poverty, yet those efforts to sabotage the new Bolshevik regime ended in miserable failure.

Once Soviet control was established, regime change would be unthinkable. By the 1940s, moreover, Washington and its allies urgently needed the Red Army to help defeat the Germans in World War II.

With the 1991 Soviet collapse, matters quickly and dramatically changed. President Bill Clinton, another enlightened liberal Democrat, was ready to pick up where Wilson's scheme ran aground. The embryonic, shaky Russian government was easy pickings, as U.S. elites and their Ivy League "advisers" intervened quickly to reduce the Federation to a dependent state open to unfettered resource exploitation. They found a compliant ruler - the grossly

incompetent Boris Yeltsin – to serve these imperial objectives.

The Clintonites pursued the Wilsonian dream with special fervor. “Shock Therapy” (more shock than therapy) transformed the Russian economy into a rampant corporate oligarchy now open to Western exploitation. The U.S. rigged the 1996 Russian elections to favor the extremely unpopular Yeltsin. Meanwhile, Clinton worked indefatigably to dismember Yugoslavia through a mixture of economic sanctions, political maneuvers, and military aggression, thus sweeping away the last vestiges of independent power in Europe while paving the way toward further NATO expansion. It turned out that the Democrats’ plan to create a vassal state was finally halted with Putin’s rise to power in 2000. For this, of course, Putin earned the U.S. designation of “another Hitler”.

Putin’s revitalized Russia soon confounded Western efforts to achieve hegemony over the larger Eurasian region. Emergent neocons and old-fashioned imperialists came together in fierce opposition to Putin, now the object of intensified Russophobia. The main problem with Putin (leaving aside his reputed despotic rule) was his strong dedication to Russian sovereignty against Western attacks.

While neocons at that time were famously obsessed with the Middle East, others turned to resource wars driven by prospective energy shortages. None other than Zbigniew Brzezinski, once president Jimmy Carter’s foreign-policy guru, laid out an imperial strategy that would ultimately lead to the gates of Moscow, in his 1997 manifesto titled *The Grand Chessboard*. Brzezinski believed the noble superpower was entitled to whatever natural resources it could access in Eurasia, a territory stretching from Europe to the borders of China. Here it was determined that oil, gas, mineral, and other reserves dwarfed those accessible anywhere else on the planet. Russia itself would be a special prize, just as Wilson in his ill-defined global liberalism had been the first to recognize.

Ever the crusader for U.S. global supremacy, Brzezinski pointed out that “Eurasia was the globe’s central arena. Hence, what happens to the distribution of power in the Eurasian region will be of decisive importance to America’s global primacy and to America’s historical legacy.” With a foothold there, moreover, Washington would secure enough leverage to simultaneously neutralize Russia, China, and Iran, Brzezinski adding: “A power that dominates Eurasia would control two of the world’s three most economically productive regions. A mere glance at a map also suggests that control over Eurasia would almost automatically entail African subordination, rendering the Western Hemisphere peripheral.”

Brzezinski looked covetously toward U.S. penetration of the old Soviet republics, starting with Ukraine and then Georgia, Armenia, Kazakhstan, and Uzbekistan. By 1997, of course, the Balkans had been taken well along the path of colonization. The overall main priority was to “prevent the emergence of any hostile force that could seek to challenge American primacy.” Brzezinski concluded, ominously: “America is not only the first, as well as the only truly global superpower, but it is likely to be the very last.” In U.S. geopolitical strategy, it follows, Russia was destined to be a vassal state fully open to the plunder of its rich natural resources.

Later neocon statements would ritually echo Brzezinski’s predatory globalism that called for unchallengeable U.S. world domination, always shrouded in sanctimonious pretenses of bringing democracy to backward cultures. Woodrow Wilson had furnished the template: “make the world safe for democracy”. Russia, with its enormous territory and super-abundance of energy and mineral resources, would be the ultimate conquest.

Brzezinski's post-Soviet world has in fact become one of grand imperial delusions. Those at the summits of Washington power did actually believe the U.S. would have the power to do what it wanted, when it wanted — despite nettlesome constraints here and there (usually in the form of “evil dictators” like Putin). They could exploit resources, labor, and markets to the maximum extent. They could bring unspeakable violence to societies with impunity, with little fear of serious blowback. Violations of U.N. statutes, global treaties, and international law would pose no problem. This outlook would define the post-Soviet “American consensus” and nowadays underpins all the hyper-ventilating Russophobia, but in an emergent multipolar world it serves nothing but geopolitical disaster.

Fortunately, Putin and the Russians have little interest in being reduced to a hapless puppet state – and they have plenty of nuclear weapons to back up their resolve. Their resources will not be the object of Western larceny. Thanks to the Ukraine war and all the counter-productive Western sanctions, Moscow is appropriately turning eastward, toward Iran, China, and India, toward the Shanghai Cooperative Organization, in effect checkmating U.S. and NATO geostrategic schemes. Still, the specter of escalating military conflict between two nuclear powers – in the absence of strong counter-forces on both sides – can hardly be comforting to a world in turmoil.

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