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Bashing Putin's Diplomatic Proposal

By Stephen Lendman
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It bears repeating what other articles stressed. Putin represents responsible geopolitical leadership. Obama is polar opposite.

Responses to Putin's diplomatic proposal didn't surprise. According to State Department spokeswoman Jen Psaki:

> "(W)e need to see more from President Putin than simply calling for (Eastern Ukrainian referendums) to be postponed."
>
> "And we believe and we would call on Russia to use its influence to – with the militant groups to ensure a safe and secure environment for all Ukrainians to cast their ballots on May 25th. And that's how they can deliver on these words."

Russia is withdrawing its forces from close to Ukraine's borders. They never threatened Ukraine. They engaged in Western-monitored military exercises.

Putin said Western nations can use satellite intelligence to confirm what he announced.

Not according to Psaki, saying: "We have not seen evidence of such movement to date."

"(T)here are still efforts underway to hinder the preparations for the May 25th elections," she claimed.

Tougher US sanctions are being considered, she added. She ludicrously called Kiev's coup-appointed government "legitimate."

She blames Russia irresponsibly for US crimes. So do other US officials. They represent the worst of Washington's dark side.

Mainstream media support what demands denunciation. The New York Times responded dismissively to Putin's responsible diplomatic proposal. It did so offensively, saying:

> "(I)t remain(s) unclear to analysts and political leaders on both sides of the Atlantic whether he was truly reversing course on Ukraine or if this was just another of his judo-inspired feints."

According to Times editors:

> "NATO officials said they saw no pullback of the 40,000 Russian troops who have been threateningly massed on the Ukrainian border for several weeks now."

Ongoing Eastern Ukrainian events “may have demonstrated to the Russian president that his strategy of manipulated rebellion could be getting out of hand.”

> “Moreover, a referendum on secession in rebel-controlled zones would have produced a predictably lopsided vote without a shred of credibility, but would have curtailed Mr. Putin’s exit options.”

Fact: Putin’s announced pullback was genuine.

Fact: He wouldn’t have publicly said so otherwise.

Fact: Redeployment takes time.

Fact: By now, satellite images may show it clearly.

Fact: Washington bears full responsibility for Ukrainian crisis conditions.

Fact: Eastern Ukrainians acted solely on their own volition.

Fact: No evidence whatever suggests Russian involvement.

Fact: As of May 8, Donetsk and Lugansk referendum will be held as planned.

Times editors irresponsibly accused Putin of initiating a “lightening-fast annexation of Crimea.”

He “use(d) the threat of similar annexations in southeastern Ukraine to press Kiev and the West to agree to a federation structure (to) give Russia a strong influence over the eastern provinces and an effective veto against Ukraine forming alliances with the West,” they said.

False! Putin annexed nothing. Nearly 97% of Crimeans voted for reunification with Russia. Turnout was 83%.

Putin endorsed their wishes. He could do no less. No evidence whatever suggests he seeks territorial gains anywhere. Nor does any exist showing he’s meddling in Ukraine’s internal affairs.

He respects Ukrainian unity. He supports democratic governance. It’s up to citizens of countries themselves to pursue it.

International law prohibits outside interference. Putin respects its core provisions honorably. Washington consistently rejects them.

Times editors call Kiev’s coup-appointed government “legitimate.” They turned truth on its head claiming it.

Putin “deviously…exploited divisions in Ukraine,” they said. They lied. They do so in numerous anti-Russian editorials.

They suggested Putin’s diplomatic initiative may “prove to be another feint.” If so, they added:

> "(T)he United States and Europe are left with no choice but to press ahead with extensive and stern economic sanctions against Russia."

Fact: Times editors are notorious.

Fact: They're irresponsible.

Fact: They march in lockstep with the worst of Washington's dark side.

Fact: They substitute misinformation, distortion, and bald-face lies for truth and full disclosure.

Fact: It's longstanding Times policy.

Washington Post reporting matches the worst of Times' disinformation.

On May 7, it misinformed readers saying "key questions remained about whether Putin's efforts would actually rein in violence, including whether Russia retained control over the bands of armed separatists who have taken over cities across eastern Ukraine and whether his proposals were palatable to the Ukrainians."

Fact: Eastern Ukrainians aren't "separatists."

Fact: They're ordinary people.

Fact: They're freedom fighters.

Fact: They want rights everyone deserves.

Fact: Putin has no involvement in their activism.

Fact: Coup-appointed putschists unleashed violence.

Fact: They did so at Washington's behest.

Chicago Tribune editors asked if Putin "blinked on Ukraine."

They irresponsibly accused him of perhaps wanting diplomacy to resolve crisis conditions "he had a huge hand in creating."

Fact: Since trouble erupted last November, he's gone all-out to resolve things responsibly.

Fact: Washington escalated conflict lawlessly.

Fact: It deplores peaceful conflict resolution.

Fact: Longstanding policy prioritizes violence and instability.

Former national security advisor Zbigniew Brzezinsk is a notorious Russian hater. Tribune editors irresponsibly quoted him, saying:

"What is at stake is a secure and open Europe." The alternative is "some sort of a Russian imperial enterprise next door, based largely on force, and as a result probably quite

unstable. So the stakes are really enormous."

Tribune editors added:

> "Russian tanks may or may not roll into Kiev one day, the way Soviet tanks rolled into Budapest in 1956 or Prague in 1968."
>
> "Europe can't pursue business as usual with Russia. Not unless it wants to be responsible for losing Ukraine."

Fact: Soviet Russia bears no relation to today's. Any more than Berlin matches Nazi era harshness.

Don't expect Tribune editors to explain. Putin bashing remains official policy.

Coup-appointed prime minister Arseny Yatsenyuk accused Putin of "talking through his hat." His appeal was "hot air," he added.

Leading Kiev presidential aspirant/multi-billionaire Petro Poroshenko said:

> "We are even ready to have a (national) referendum but not under the barrels of machine guns or automatic rifles."
>
> "After the presidential election. After restoring law and order, we are ready to discuss any referendum and…constitutional changes…with anyone."

Fact: After Kiev fascists solidify power!

Fact: After they crush democratic resistance.

Fact: After they eliminate freedom initiatives.

Fact: After more Odessa massacres.

Fact: After potentially replicating Cambodia's Killing Fields.

NATO Secretary General Anders Fogh Rasmussen reacted dismissively to Putin's proposal, saying:

> "This is not yet the moment when we can announce with enthusiasm that the crisis is over. We both hope that perhaps Putin's words indicate some kind of a more optimistic scenario, but today it is too early for us to confirm that."

Poland marches in lockstep with lawless US policy. It's Prime Minister Donald Tusk added:

> "The Nato assessment, in line with ours, is that we should approach President Putin's statement with great caution."

Washington reacted as expected. Deputy Secretary of State William Burns accused Russia of heading down a "dangerous and irresponsible path."

He promised stepped up US pressure. He ignored Washington full responsibility for ongoing events. He turned a blind eye to Russia's forthright efforts to resolve them peacefully and

diplomatically.

Anti-Russian political economist Nicolas Eberstadt got featured Wall Street Journal op-ed space.

"History is full of instances where a rising power, aggrieved and dissatisfied, acts aggressively to obtain new borders or other international concessions," he said.

> "In Russia today, we see a much more unusual case: This increasingly menacing and ambitious geopolitical actor is a state in decline."

Irresponsible Russia bashing infested his op-ed. He outrageously accused Putin of "leading a country in serious decline."

"If his dangerous new brinksmanship" continues, "we should expect more of it in the future, possibly much more, " he claimed.

He ignored out-of-control US imperial adventurism. It's risking possible WW III.

Francis Boyle addressed the threat, saying:

> "The Ukrainian crisis had been planned as well as the war. There was a war plan. Then it was revised and implemented."

"We are seeing steps now being taken that were planned in advance." It's despite no threat other than Washington invents.

It's "being used as a pretext to" involve NATO belligerently. Things "are clearly going ahead" as planned.

> "The US has already resumed the Cold War with the neo-Nazi coup d'etat in Ukraine that the United States sponsored, controlled, and directed."

Washington wants "to provoke Putin to invade Ukraine. I think they plan to take over all of Ukraine to solidify control of Ukraine by the neo-Nazi thugs in Kiev, and then at least de jure to bring NATO military forces into Ukraine under one pretext or another."

Former CIA analyst/State Department official Larry Johnson fears something similar. A dangerous dynamic is unfolding, he said.

"Now there is a very strong element in the United States which is pushing for really almost a confrontation with Russia over Ukraine and they haven't really thought through it," he said.

> "When they talk about arming the dissidents or arming folks opposing Russia in the Ukraine, they don't appreciate the possibility of the escalation that that can create."

"We tend to try to portray these things in a way that doesn't really take into account all the dynamics that are involved. And I think it's really dangerous," he added.

Sergey Lavrov repeated earlier statements about "fostering a national dialogue aimed at carrying out fair constitutional reform that would take into account the interests of all political forces and regions" in Ukraine.

"Otherwise, the presidential elections in Ukraine scheduled for May 25 will be senseless," he added.

Responsible comments like Lavrov's fall on deaf ears. Reprehensible ones head things recklessly toward potential East/West confrontation.

Francis Boyle is right. Things are headed dangerously in the wrong direction. It bears repeating what previous articles stressed. The worst of all possible outcomes may follow.

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Stephen Lendman lives in Chicago. He can be reached at lendmanstephen@sbcglobal.net. His new book as editor and contributor is titled "Flashpoint in Ukraine: US Drive for Hegemony Risks WW III." http://www.claritypress.com/LendmanIII.html Visit his blog site at sjlendman.blogspot.com. Listen to cutting-edge discussions with distinguished guests on the Progressive Radio News Hour on the Progressive Radio Network. It airs three times weekly: live on Sundays at 1PM Central time plus two prerecorded archived programs.