

# Blood in the Water: the Trump Revolution Ends in a Whimper

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*The Flynn fiasco is not about national security advisor **Michael Flynn**'s conversations with the Russian ambassador. It's much deeper than that. It's about Russia. It's about Putin. It's about the explosive rise of China and the world's biggest free trade zone that will eventually stretch from Lisbon to Vladivostok. It's about the one country in the world that is obstructing Washington's plan for global domination. (Russia) And, it's about the future; which country will be the key player in the world's most prosperous and populous region, Asia.*

That's what's at stake, and that's what the Flynn controversy is really all about.

Many readers are familiar with the expression "pivot to Asia", but do they know what it means?

It means the United States has embarked on an ambitious plan to extend its military grip and market power over the Eurasian landmass thus securing its position as the world's only superpower into the next century. The pivot is Washington's top strategic priority. As Hillary Clinton said in 2011:

"Harnessing Asia's growth and dynamism is central to American economic and strategic interests... Open markets in Asia provide the United States with unprecedented opportunities for investment, trade, and access to cutting-edge technology....American firms (need) to tap into the vast and growing consumer base of Asia..."

The region already generates more than half of global output and nearly half of global trade.... we are looking for opportunities to do even more business in Asia...and our investment opportunities in Asia's dynamic markets."("America's Pacific Century", Secretary of State Hillary Clinton", Foreign Policy Magazine, 2011)

In other words, it's pivot or bust. Those are the only two options. Naturally, ruling elites in the US have chosen the former over the latter, which means they are committed to a strategy that will inevitably pit the US against a nuclear-armed adversary, Russia.

Trump's National Security Advisor, Michael Flynn, wanted to normalize relations with Russia. He rejected the flagrantly hostile approach of the US foreign policy establishment. That's why he had to be removed. And, that's why he's been so viciously attacked in the media and why the threadbare story about his contacts with the Russian ambassador were used to force his resignation.

This isn't about the law and it isn't about the truth. It's about bare-knuckle geopolitics and global hegemony. Flynn got in the way of the pivot, so Flynn had to be eliminated. End of story. Here's a clip from an article by Robert Parry:

"Flynn's real "offense" appears to be that he favors détente with Russia rather than escalation of a new and dangerous Cold War. Trump's idea of a rapprochement with Moscow - and a search for areas of cooperation and compromise - has been driving Official Washington's foreign policy establishment crazy for months and the neocons, in particular, have been determined to block it.

Though Flynn has pandered to elements of the neocon movement with his own hysterical denunciations of Iran and Islam in general, he emerged as a key architect for Trump's plans to seek a constructive relationship with Russian President Vladimir Putin. Meanwhile, the neocons and their liberal-interventionist sidekicks have invested heavily in making Putin the all-purpose bête noire to justify a major investment in new military hardware and in pricy propaganda operations." ("[Trump Caves on Flynn's resignation](#)", Consortium News)

US foreign policy is not developed willy-nilly. It emerges as the consensus view of various competing factions within the permanent national security state. And, although there are notable differences between the rival factions (either hardline or dovish) there appears to be unanimity on the question of Russia. There is virtually no constituency within the political leadership of either of the two major parties (or their puppetmaster supporters in the deep state) for improving relations with Russia. None. Russia is blocking Washington's eastward expansion, therefore, Russia must be defeated. Here's more from the World Socialist Web Site:

"US imperialism seeks to counter its declining world economic position by exploiting its unchallenged global military dominance. It sees as the principal roadblocks to its hegemonic aims the growing economic and military power of China and the still-considerable strength of Russia, possessor of the world's second-largest nuclear arsenal, the largest reserves of oil and gas, and a critical geographical position at the center of the Eurasian land mass.

Trump's opponents within the ruling class insist that US foreign policy must target Russia with the aim of weakening the Putin regime or overthrowing it. This is deemed a prerequisite for taking on the challenge posed by China.

Numerous Washington think tanks have developed scenarios for military conflicts with Russian forces in the Middle East, in Ukraine, in the Baltic States and in cyberspace. The national security elite is not prepared to accept a shift in orientation away from the policy of direct confrontation with Russia along the lines proposed by Trump, who would like for the present to lower tensions with Russia in order to focus first on China." ("[Behind the Flynn resignation and Trump crisis: A bitter conflict over imperialist policy](#)", WSWS)

Foreign policy elites believe the US and its NATO allies can engage Russia in a shooting war without it expanding into a regional conflict and without an escalation into a nuclear conflagration. It's a risky calculation but, nevertheless, it is the rationale behind the persistent build up of troops and weaponry on Russia's western perimeter. Take a look at this from the Independent:

Thousands of Nato troops have amassed close to the border with Russia as part of the largest build-up of Western troops neighbouring Moscow's sphere of influence since the Cold War...Tanks and heavy armoured vehicles, plus Bradley fighting vehicles and Paladin howitzers, are also in situ and British Typhoon jets from RAF Coningsby will be deployed to Romania this summer to contribute to Nato's Southern Air Policing mission...

Kremlin officials claim the build-up is the largest since the Second World War. (["The map that shows how many Nato troops are deployed along Russia's border"](#), The Independent)

Saber-rattling and belligerence have cleared the way for another world war. Washington thinks the conflict can be contained, but we're not so sure.

The inexperienced Trump- who naively believed that the president sets his own foreign policy-has now learned that that's not the case. The Flynn slap-down, followed by blistering attacks in the media and threats of impeachment, have left Trump shaken to the core. As a result, he has done a speedy about-face and swung into damage control-mode. On Tuesday, he tried to extend the olive branch by tweeting that "Crimea was taken by Russia" and by offering to replace Flynn with a trusted insider who will not veer from the script prepared by the foreign policy establishment. Check out this blurb on the Foreign Policy magazine website on Wednesday:

President Donald Trump offered the job of national security advisor to retired Vice Adm. Robert Harward on Monday night...If, as expected, Harward accepts the job today, he is likely to bring in his own team, from deputy on down, with a focus on national security types with some experience under their belts...

Harward also would work well with Defense Secretary James Mattis. When Mattis was chief of Central Command, Harward was his deputy. Mattis trusted him enough to put him in charge of planning for war with Iran. Mattis has urged Harward to take the NSA job.

If Harward becomes NSA, Mattis would emerge from the Flynn mess in a uniquely powerful position: He would have two of his former deputies at the table in some meetings. The other one is John Kelly, now secretary for Homeland Security, who was his number two when Mattis commanded a Marine division early in the invasion of Iraq in 2003. (["A Mattis protégé poised to take the helm of Trump's NSC,"](#) Foreign Policy)

In other words, Trump is relinquishing control over foreign policy and returning it to trusted insiders who will comply with pre-set elitist guidelines. Trump's sudden metamorphosis was apparent in another story that appeared in Wednesday's news, this time related to Rex Tillerson and General Joseph Dunford. Here's a clip from CNN:

Secretary of State Rex Tillerson and Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Gen. Joseph Dunford meet face to face with their Russian counterparts Thursday, as the Trump administration evaluates the future direction of US-Russian relations....But even as Tillerson's plane was taking off in Washington, the Pentagon announced the meeting between Dunford and his Russian counterpart Valeriy Gerasimov, which will take place Thursday in Baku, Azerbaijan....

The military leaders will discuss a variety of issues including the current state

of U.S.-Russian military relations ...Trump's envoys have been expressing positions more keeping with previous US policies. ...

Ambassador to the United Nations, Nikki Haley, indicated the US would maintain sanctions on Russia for annexing Crimea in 2014. She condemned what she called the "Russian occupation" of the Ukrainian territory...

The US has deployed thousands of troops and tanks to Poland and Romania in recent weeks, while other NATO allies have sent troops to Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia.

"There is a common message from the President, from his security team, the secretary of state, the secretary of defense, that they stay strongly committed to NATO," he added.

Let's summarize: The sanctions will remain, the tanks are on the border, the commitment to NATO has been reinforced, and Dunford is going to explain Washington's strategic objectives to his Russian counterpart in clear, unambiguous language. There will be no room for Tillerson, who is on friendly terms with Putin, to change the existing policy or to normalize relations; Dunford, Haley, and Defense Secretary James Mattis will make sure of that.

As for Trump, it's clear by the Crimea tweet, the sacking of Flynn and the (prospective) appointment of Harward, that he's running scared and is doing everything in his power to get out of the hole he's dug for himself. There's no way of knowing whether he'll be allowed to carry on as before or if he'll be forced to throw other allies, like Bannon or Conway, under the bus. I would expect the purge to continue and to eventually include Trump himself. But that's just a guess.

The hope that Trump would bring an element of sanity to US foreign policy has now been extinguished. The so called "Trump Revolution" has fizzled out before it ever began.

In contrast, the military buildup along Russia's western flank continues apace.

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