

Clinton Lectures Russia On Elections, NATO Chief On Missiles

U.S not in a position to criticize Russian elections

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Interview with Rick Rozoff, the manager of the Stop NATO [website](#) and [mailing list](#) and a contributing writer to [Global Research.ca](#)

Rozoff worked against the Chicago political machine for 25 years, 1976-2000, including as a ward-wide voter registration coordinator, founder and leader of an independent ward organization, congressional district coordinator for Mayor Harold Washington's 1987 reelection bid, campaign manager in two state representative and an alderman election, and third party candidate for state office.

What's the reaction there to the Russian elections? We've heard a lot of statements that I think are a way out of line from the U.S. State Department, in particular Hillary Clinton. What's your opinion of these statements?

They are outrageous. They are unwarranted. Regardless of what the actual details are about the recently concluded Duma elections, parliamentary elections, in Russia, the statements, emanating as you mentioned from Secretary of State Hillary Clinton and others, are arrogant to a degree. If the situation were reversed and Russian and other major political figures in other nations commented similarly on U.S. elections, which are not without their flaws as we can talk about, I hope, there would be as strong as possible protests from the State Department and the White House.

The statements by Clinton, for example, include the fact that she has serious concerns about the elections on Sunday, presuming to speak on behalf of the Russian people, stating that Russian voters deserve, and I quote her, "a full investigation of electoral fraud and manipulation."

This is somebody who is from the Chicago suburb of Park Ridge. And like her commander-in-chief, Barack Obama, who is from Chicago and is a product of the Chicago political machine, she is hardly in a position to complain about electoral fraud and manipulation and ballot box stuffing. They are products of the political machine that all but invented the process.

I've spoken with fellow Chicagoans who had lived in the former Soviet Union and they talked about the fact that when elections were held election days were holidays so that people were off work and could not only vote but could participate in the political process, including in the polling place, which is not a luxury accorded to Americans, though we hold ourselves

up, of course, as being the model for democratic processes, including elections...She made this statement about the recently concluded parliamentary elections in Russia, for the State Duma, and mentioned, again in her own words, "electoral fraud and manipulation."

What are some of the other flaws in the US system? Can you tell us something about foreign observers? Why aren't they allowed into the US?

The second question is particularly fascinating. As to the first, "Their name is legion", to use the line from the Gospels. That is, there are so many flaws in the American electoral system, not the least of which is that next year several billion dollars are going to be spent by lobbyists and others to choose their candidates or buy their candidates into office, what is politely put an auction block. I'll give you the best example I can think of. Today at work in Chicago most everyone was glued to television sets to learn which sentence was going to be passed on former governor Rod Blagojevich on 18 counts of corruption. He was sentenced to 14 years, as it turns out. We have to recall his major transgression was trying to sell the senate seat of at the time incoming U.S. president Barack Obama. During the course of the initial trial, [Blagojevich mentioned that he had had several phone calls with Rahm Emanuel](#) - he is now the mayor of Chicago; at the time he was Chief of Staff of the White House - about just that, about selling the Senate seat, selling the right to appoint the successor to the incoming president of the country that President Obama in December of 2009 referred to as "the world's sole military superpower."

But it's tolerated in the United States simply because the United States is the United States, what's referred to as "American exceptionalism," so that we have an electoral system tainted by billions of dollars changing hands as though all offices go to the highest bidder. As to foreign observers, the U.S. will not tolerate any intrusion on its own sovereignty - but will interfere in the grossest fashion imaginable in other peoples' internal political processes.

NATO?

NATO Secretary General Anders Fogh Rasmussen has recently presumed again to lecture Russia, just as Hillary Clinton does on how Russia should conduct its elections. Rasmussen is telling Russia, though he is in no formal position to do so, how to defend itself, saying for example that Russia should not follow up on the pledges and on some of the actual commitments made by President Medvedev to increase radar and other surveillance installations in Northeast Russia and to reposition tactical missiles in the Kaliningrad enclave, in Northeast Russia, and so forth.

But the statement by Rasmussen was particularly condescending and patronizing, at one point basically telling the Russian government it had better take care of its own people first, or words to that effect. Again, just reeking of arrogance and contempt. The sort of talk one expects from a NATO chieftain and Rasmussen, though less abrasive than some of his predecessors, feels empowered evidently to tell nations - major nations - like Russia what they ought to or ought not to do in terms of defending the borders of their own country. I should add that the current U.S. permanent representative to NATO, Ivo Daalder, made a statement two days ago where he said the US and NATO are forging ahead with the interceptor missile system in Europe - and I believe I'm quoting him word for word - "whether Russia likes it or not."

If anything, we are hearing more and more ambitious plans. For example, the upper house

of the Romanian parliament, their Senate, yesterday ratified the agreement with the U.S. to station 24 Standard Missile-3 interceptors in Romania, which as we know is immediately across the Black Sea from Russia. This is in conjunction with the comparable deployment of missiles in Poland in addition to the Patriot Advanced Capability-3 missiles that are already present in Poland; the missile defense, so-called, radar facility that will be placed in Turkey. And there is discussion now about maybe in the dozens, perhaps in the scores, of NATO nations' warships being converted to what's called the Aegis Combat System so that they could be equipped with either radar or in most instances missiles, Standard Missiles-3s, for what's called the European Phased Adaptive Approach, U.S.-NATO missile system. So they are forging ahead on all fronts, at the same time the secretary general of NATO is lecturing Russia on what it should or should not do in terms of self-defense. And the U.S. ambassador to NATO, who is a pretty influential person in his own right - he is a former senior fellow with the Brookings Institution, I'm talking about Daalder, of course - who could make such a curt and arrogant statement as the one I just cited, that the U.S. and NATO are going ahead with the missile shield "whether Russia likes it or not."

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