

Countering the Neo-Cold Warriors

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During his confirmation hearings before the Senate Armed Services Committee, Dunford said he viewed Russia as the greatest threat to America. But not just any «threat». In language that could have been pulled out of a U.S. newspaper from the 1960s, Dunford testified, «If you want to talk about a nation that could pose an existential threat to the United States, I'd have to point to Russia», adding, «and if you look at their behavior, it's nothing short of alarming».

While Dunford's Cold War rhetoric warmed the cockles of the hearts of leading Senate committee war hawks such as John McCain, McCain's eyelash-batting pal Lindsey Graham – a 2016 presidential candidate – and Texas Joseph McCarthy lookalike Ted Cruz, it was not well-received at the White House or the State Department. White House Press Secretary John Earnest distanced President Obama from Dunford's views, stating at a press conference that Dunford was expressing «his own view and [it] doesn't necessarily reflect the . . . consensus analysis of the president's national security team».



Marine Corps General Joseph Dunford

State Department spokesman Mark Toner, in commenting on Dunford's remarks, was more emphatic when stating that Secretary of State John Kerry rejected the general's comments, «The secretary doesn't agree with the assessment that Russia is an existential threat to the United States, nor China, quite frankly». Toner was referring to Dunford's testimony that China was second only to Russia in posing a significant threat to the United States.

However, it was Kerry who promoted Nuland, who is married to arch-neoconservative and Project for the New American Century (PNAC) architect Robert Kagan, to the position that placed her in charge of U.S.-Russian relations. Previously, Nuland served as Secretary of State Hillary Clinton's press spokeswoman. And if Mrs. Clinton's penchant for «standing by her women» is any indication, a Hillary Clinton presidency could see Nuland, who once worked for Vice President Dick Cheney, promoted to a higher-level position, including Secretary of State or National Security Adviser. Obama and Kerry can distance themselves from Dunford's alarming comments all they want, however, it is they who have permitted individuals like Nuland, Breedlove, Dunford, and the saber-rattling Defense Secretary Ashton Carter to become major policy officials within the Obama administration.

Dunford and Breedlove appear to have been pulled from central casting for a remake of the 1960s Stanley Kubrick noir comedy film, «Dr. Strangelove». Dunford, who bears the problematic nickname «Fighting Joe» and has been described as a «fervent Catholic», sounds like the blustering General Buck Turgidson, who, after a wayward B-52 continues on to Russia, against orders, to drop its nuclear payload on a missile base, tells a bewildered president, «It is necessary now to make a choice, to choose between two admittedly regrettable, but nevertheless 'distinguishable,' postwar environments: one where you got twenty million people killed, and the other where you got a hundred and fifty million people killed». Breedlove, on the other hand, is just as much an ideologue as is the fictional General Jack Ripper, who in «Dr. Strangelove» tells his British liaison officer, «Today, war is too important to be left to politicians. They have neither the time, the training, nor the inclination for strategic thought».

Dunford, Breedlove, Nuland, and Carter could very well push the United States and Russia to the brink of a hot war. Breedlove championed the creation of NATO's Very High Readiness Joint Task Force, or VHRJTF as it is known to the acronym- and abbreviation-addicts of the Pentagon. VHRJTF brings ground forces from nine NATO nations to Russia's borders. The new rapid-response unit took part in the first «live fire» exercise in Poland, code-named NOBLE JUMP, since the end of the Cold War. VHRJTF also consists of U.S.-supplied drones. The possibility that an unmanned drone could bring about a replay of the 1960 U-2 incident, in which a manned American spy plane was shot down over Russia, this time with a drone straying into Russian airspace from one of the Baltic countries, cannot be ruled out.

Obama and Kerry were quick to distance themselves from «Fighting Joe» Dunford's saber rattling before the Senate committee. However, if they wanted to truly reset relations with Russia, Kerry could fire Nuland, Obama could pull Dunford's nomination, and both could ask NATO to request a new Supreme Commander. However, as President Dwight Eisenhower warned in his 1961 Farewell Address about the menace of the «military-industrial complex», Obama and Kerry are powerless to get rid of those who were placed in power by what has now become a «military-intelligence-contractor» complex.

What is even more troubling is that Breedlove, Dunford, Nuland, and Carter appear prepared to not only take on Russia and China in a new Cold War, but are willing to confront the new «anti-NATO», the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), which just wrapped up its summit in Ufa, the capital of the Russian Federation's autonomous republic of Bashkortostan. If the «gruesome twosome» of Nuland and Breedlove, soon to become the «terrible troika» after Dunford is confirmed by the Senate, have their way, NATO and the United States will not only be willing to face off militarily against SCO members China and Russia but also the new members of Pakistan and India, in addition to charter members

Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan.

Russia has savaged the West's attempts to isolate it and China has broken America's attempt to establish a military containment «cordon sanitaire» around China by welcoming Belarus as a new observer nation of SCO, joining Afghanistan, Mongolia, and Iran as prospective full members of the alliance. Cambodia, Nepal, Armenia, and Azerbaijan joined the organization as dialogue partners, supplementing existing partners Sri Lanka and Turkey. Egypt, Bangladesh, and Syria are also prospective members of the organization that is a counter to the ever-expanding NATO. SCO's geopolitical security mission, coupled with the emerging economic power of the BRICS alliance of Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa, equates to a majority of the world's population rejecting America's military and economic dominance and NATO's and the Pentagon's menacing swagger. It is as if Dunford, Breedlove, and Nuland have never heard of SCO, BRICS, or the Eurasian Economic Union.

It is amazing that Dunford and Breedlove can issue challenges to their perceived enemies when Carter has announced a 40,000 troop strength cut for the U.S. Army. Instead, Carter plans to supplement NATO forces in Europe with more Bradley Fighting Vehicles and tanks that would be manned by a smaller number of U.S. troops. Like the Roman Empire, the United States has over-extended itself around the world.

It is not Russia nor China that maintain troops in 150 countries around the world. That dubious distinction falls on the United States. Fighting Joe Dunford and General Breedlove can talk all they want about the Russian and Chinese «threat». But for the rest of the world, which sees SCO and BRICS as welcome foils to the plans for further NATO expansion, it is America and its policy of fostering «color revolutions» and displaying military shows of force that represent the true threats to global stability.

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