

Do We Really Want War with Russia?

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Global Research, June 27, 2016

[EricMargolis.com](#) 25 June 2016

Region: [Russia and FSU](#)

Theme: [US NATO War Agenda](#)

War with Russia appears increasingly likely as the US and its NATO satraps continue their military provocations of Moscow.

As dangers mount, our foolish politicians should all be forced to read, and then re-read, Prof. Christopher Clark's magisterial book, 'The Sleepwalkers: How Europe Went to War in 1914.' What is past increasingly appears prologue.

Prof. Clark carefully details how small cabals of anti-German senior officials in France, Britain and Russia engineered World War I, a dire conflict that was unnecessary, idiotic, and illogical. Germany and Austria-Hungary of course share some the blame, but to a much lesser degree than the bellicose French, Serbs, Russians and British.

We are seeing the same process at work today. The war party in Washington, backed by the military-industrial complex, the tame media, and the neocons, are agitating hard for war.

US and NATO combat forces are being sent to Russia's western borders in Ukraine, the Baltic and Black Sea. NATO is arming, financing (\$40 billion so far) and supplying Ukraine in its conflict with Russia. Prominent Americans are calling for the US to attack Russian forces in Syria. US warships are off Russia's coasts in the Black Sea, Baltic and Pacific. NATO air forces are probing Russia's western air borders.

Some of this is great power shadow boxing, trying to cow insubordinate Russia into accepting Washington's orders. But much appears to be the work of the hard right and neocons in the US and Europe in spite of the desire of most Americans and Europeans to avoid armed conflict with Russia.

Hence the daily barrage of anti-Russian, anti-Putin invective in the US media and the European media controlled by the US. Germany's lapdog media behaves as if the US postwar occupation is still in force - and perhaps it is. Germany has not had a truly independent foreign policy since the war.

In an amazing break with Berlin's normally obsequious behavior, German's foreign minister, Frank-Walter Steinmeier, just demanded that Washington and NATO stop their 'sabre-rattling' against Russia. He speaks for many Germans and other Europeans who are deeply alarmed by the alliance's provocations of Russia.

In fact, many Europeans want to see the end of NATO-imposed sanctions against Russia that were ordered by the US. No one in Europe cares about Russia's re-occupation of Crimea. The sanctions have been a big backfire, seriously hurting EU exports to Russia at a time of marked economic weakness. Nor are any Europeans ready to fight a war, or worse, even

court nuclear war, for such dark-side-of-the-moon places as eastern Ukraine's Luhansk or Mariupol.

America's numb-brained Republican members of Congress, who could not find Crimea on a map if their lives depended on it, may be counted on to beat the war drums to please their big donors and hard right religious donors.

The only Republican to buck this trend is Donald Trump who, for all his other foolish positions, has the clear sense to see no benefit for the US in antagonizing Russia and seeking war in Europe or the Mideast.

What the US and its sidekick NATO has done so far is to antagonize Russia and affirm its deeply held fears that the west is always an implacable enemy. But it seems very unlikely that the tough Vlad Putin and his battle-hardened nation is going to be cowed into submission by a few thousand US and NATO troops, a few frigates and some flyovers. Ever since Frederick the Great, wise European leaders have learned not to fight with Russia.

Not so President Obama's strategic Walkures, Samantha Power, Susan Rice and, until recently, Hillary Clinton. They proved the most bungling military-strategic leadership since Madame de Pompadour was briefly given command of France's armies by King Louis XV and proved an epic disaster.

One shudders watching Hillary Clinton aspire to be a commander-in-chief.

It's also inevitable that land, sea and air provocations against Russia will eventually result in accidental clashes and a stern Russian response. All one needs is a Sarajevo II terror incident to spark a big shooting war between nuclear powers.

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