

GLOBAL NATO: The “Military Enforcement Wing” of The West’s 1%

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On April 7 Fox News Chicago reported on Occupy Chicago’s march through the city’s downtown, the Loop, recording that hundreds of protesters chanted “End the war, tax the rich” during part of the group’s Chicago Spring actions throughout the city “as the movement prepares for NATO.”

Earlier in the day Occupy activists received training for the anti-NATO march and other activities to be held on May 20 and 21 as the military bloc and its leaders descend on the Windy City, including preparing for arrests and other harassment they may be subjected to by the Rahm Emanuel administration. The main march on May 20 and other anti-NATO activities are being organized by the Coalition Against NATO/G8 War & Poverty Agenda with the participation of Occupy, the United National Antiwar Coalition, the American Friends Service Committee, the 8th Day Center for Justice and other peace and social justice organizations.

Three weeks before, the Chicago Tribune reported that Occupy leaders from around the nation met in St. Louis to “set their sights on their biggest target of the spring — the NATO summit in Chicago,” with Occupy representatives from Chicago urging their counterparts in attendance from twenty other cities to plan for the Chicago summit and actions to be held against it with their respective general assemblies.

The decision by the Barack Obama White House to shift the venue of the Group of 8 summit originally scheduled to be held in Chicago as well, on May 18-19, to Camp David was heralded as a victory for the movement against war and militarism, corporate domination of the economy and the political process, and draconian infringements on civil liberties locally and nationally.

Washington intended to take the wind out of the sails of upcoming mass protests by decoupling opposition to the G8 from that to NATO, but has instead left one salient target, and that the more dangerous of the two - the North Atlantic Treaty Organization - as the lightning rod for people’s anger and protest.

The global agendas of NATO and what the G8 represents - unelected, unrepresentative, unaccountable Western-dominated institutions which also include the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, the World Trade Organization, etc. - are much closer, in fact are inextricably linked, than may at first be apparent.

Fox News, cited above, is the preferred propaganda outlet of the 1% and the main channel through which it indoctrinates the general populace with its corporate, militarist and

misanthropic dogmas. It is owned by Rupert Murdoch through its parent company News Corps. (News Corporation) .

Four years ago Murdoch received the Atlantic Council of the United States' Distinguished Business Leader Award at the organization' s Annual Awards Dinner.

The Atlantic Council of the United States is the control center and prototype for some sixty comparable groups around the world pushing NATO expansion and, in nations not yet full member states, integration into the alliance.

In recent years recipients of its annual rewards have also included Alan Greenspan, Colin Powell, George H.W. Bush, Tony Blair, current Central Intelligence Director David Petraeus, former top NATO military commander and U.S. National Security Advisor General James Jones, former chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Admiral Michael Mullen, current Central Command chief General James Mattis, Bill Clinton and Henry Kissinger.

On May 3 the Atlantic Council will hold its fiftieth anniversary Annual Awards Dinner to honor U.S. European Command commander and NATO Supreme Allied Commander Europe Admiral James Stavridis (Distinguished Military Leadership Award) and Chairman of the Board and CEO of Coca-Cola Muhtar Kent (Distinguished Business Leadership Award).

The day after Rupert Murdoch received the 2008 Distinguished Business Leadership Award, he published a column (a version of his acceptance speech) in the Wall Street Journal, which he also owns, entitled "Enlarging the Atlantic Alliance." Hailing the 28-member military bloc as having "ensured the advance of democracy from the Atlantic to the Urals," he advocated its expansion beyond the "accident of geography" to include nations as far afield from the North Atlantic as his native Australia, Israel, Japan and Colombia.

In the last case he praised "brave and innovative president" Álvaro Uribe, who before stepping down from his post in 2010 had officiated over the longest counterinsurgency war in the world, one intensified to a new order of magnitude in 1999 when the Clinton administration pushed Plan Colombia through Congress, which made the nation the third largest recipient of U.S. military aid.

Shortly before leaving office, President George W. Bush awarded Uribe the U.S.'s highest civilian honor, the Medal of Freedom. On June 29 of 2009 President Barack Obama hosted Uribe at the White House and not long afterward it was announced that the Pentagon planned to deploy troops to seven air and naval bases in Colombia.

Murdoch was no doubt satisfied.

The month after Obama and Uribe met to establish the first major U.S. military bases in South America, NATO announced that a Group of Experts would be convened to discuss and plan its new Strategic Concept, which was formally adopted at NATO's last summit in Lisbon, Portugal in November of 2010. Former U.S. Secretary of State Madeleine Albright chaired the group; its co-chairman was Jeroen van der Veer, who until June 30, 2009 was chief executive officer of Royal Dutch Shell. The connection between the West's military, energy and corporate interests could not have been made more transparent.

The twelve-member Group of Experts or Wise Men toured several nations in Europe and North America promoting NATO's new global doctrine for the 21st century.

As part of the buildup to the Lisbon NATO summit and the ratification of the new Strategic Concept, on October 1, 2009 Lloyd's of London – which identifies itself as “the world's leading insurance market” – hosted a conference introduced by its chairman, Lord Peter Levene, and keynoted by NATO Secretary General Anders Fogh Rasmussen.

Referring to NATO's “third millennium” Strategic Concept, Lord Levene of Portsoken pronounced: “Our sophisticated, industrialised and complex world is under attack from a myriad of determined and deadly threats. If we do not take action soon, we will find ourselves, like Gulliver, pinned to the ground and helpless, because we failed to stop a series of incremental changes while we still could.”

According to the NATO website, he addressed a gathering of “200 high-level representatives from the security and business community.”

The day before, The Daily Telegraph published a column co-authored by Levene and Rasmussen titled “Piracy, cyber-crime and climate change – bringing NATO and insurance together.”

Its contents included:

“We share a common goal – to adopt a fresh approach to managing risk...[W]e believe that the time has come for a much more open and more systematic collaboration between government and business when it comes to managing risk.

“We have already made a start: industry leaders, including those from Lloyd's, have been involved in the current process to develop NATO's new guiding charter, the Strategic Concept; indeed, the vice-chair of the group is the former chief executive of Shell, Jeroen van der Veer.”

“We must be prepared to think the unthinkable. Lloyd's developed its 360 Risk Insight programme and its Realistic Disaster Scenarios, and NATO its Multiple Futures project, precisely to lift our eyes from the present and scan the horizon for what might be looming.”

Rasmussen elaborated on the above theme at the conference at Lloyd's on October 1:

“Let me begin by thanking Peter Levine for hosting us in this very impressive building. This is my first time here, but it is the second time that NATO and Lloyd's have come together to discuss emerging security challenges. And while a security Alliance and an insurance market might not seem to have too much in common, another look makes it clear that we do: managing risk. We are both focused on predicting threats, taking steps to reduce their likelihood, and, when necessary, managing the effects. Which is why it makes sense that we are doing this together.

“It also makes sense because the challenges we are looking at today cut across the divide between the public and private sectors.”

The NATO chief also presented his idiosyncratic (and hardly altruistic) interpretations on climate change and energy efficiency:

“Rising sea levels will have a clear effect on the ability of our armed forces to do their jobs. Look at Diego Garcia. It is an important logistical hub, including for this country; it is also only a few feet above sea level at its highest point. A one metre rise in sea levels and most

of it would be flooded. We need to assess the impacts that these kinds of events would have.”

“We can also look, within NATO countries, at doing something concrete: increasing the fuel efficiency of the military vehicles in our national inventories. Militaries are the largest vehicle owners in any country. Improving efficiency would have clear benefits: saving big money on fuel; reducing national carbon emissions; and improving the range and effectiveness of our forces in the field. If we could make real progress in this area, we could also help reduce our overall dependence on foreign sources of fuel, which is a big part of sustainable energy security.”

In fact the leader of the largest military alliance in history identified no fewer than seventeen non-military issues that NATO, in collusion with its international business and financial partners, is prepared to address.

In Rasmussen’s own words, they are:

Piracy

Cyber security/defense

Climate change

Extreme weather events – catastrophic storms and flooding

Sea levels will rise

Populations will move...in large numbers...always into where someone else lives, and sometimes across borders

Water shortages

Droughts

Food production is likely to drop

Arctic ice is retreating, for resources that had, until now, been covered under ice

Global warming

CO2 emissions

Reinforcing factories or energy stations or transmission lines or ports that might be at risk of storms or flooding

Energy, where diversity of supply is a security issue

Natural and humanitarian disasters

Big storms, or floods, or sudden movements of populations

Fuel efficiency, reduc[ing] our overall dependence on foreign sources of fuel

Regarding piracy, not surprisingly the main topic discussed by Lloyd’s Levene and NATO’s Rasmussen at the London conference, the jointly-authored column mentioned above complained that it (an obvious reference to the Horn of Africa and the Gulf of Aden) “has cost businesses and insurers hundreds of millions of dollars so far.”

A few weeks before the London Conference NATO launched Operation Ocean Shield, a successor to Operation Allied Protector, a naval operation off the Horn of Africa which in recent weeks was extended until the end of 2014. In no small part to guarantee that Lloyd’s of London’s insurance settlements are decreased.

Rupert Murdoch’s media empire, Royal Dutch Shell and other major Western oil companies, and international insurance concerns, in addition to private security firms like DynCorp and Academi (former Xe and Blackwater) and construction contractors Kellogg Brown & Root and Halliburton, have a friend they can count on: The North Atlantic Treaty Organization, the

military enforcement wing of the West's 1%.



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