

The “Battle for Europe” is Raging. How America Undermines Franco-Russian Relations

US Blackmailed France using the Banque Nationale de Paris as Hostage

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Global Research, July 02, 2014

Region: [Europe](#), [Russia and FSU](#), [USA](#)

Theme: [Global Economy](#), [Oil and Energy](#),
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On July 1st, during a meeting with all Russian ambassadors and permanent representatives, President Vladimir Putin revealed the details of a blatant blackmail against France. The US Administration used its unilateral (and de facto illegal) sanctions against Cuba, Iran and Sudan to punish France and in particular the Banque Nationale de Paris – Paribas. The Bank was blackmailed in to paying \$8.97 billion for not submitting to the malicious diktat of the power-drunk but weakening hegemon, even though the sanctions are not a decision agreed to by France.

In a development that has a direct impact on national sovereignty, Senior BNP executive Dominique Remy resigned in mid-May after New York state banking regulator Benjamin Lawskey (read Wall Street) named him as one of the 12 officials who should step down due to their roles in the “scandal”.

Putin revealed publicly something even worse. The case against France’s BNP was set up by Washington in order to blackmail France and force the country to refuse the delivery to Russia of two French-produced Mistral-class helicopter carriers for \$1.6billion.

France and Russia, however, did not back down on the Mistral deal: at this very moment 400 Russian sailors are receiving training on the first Mistral in a French port.

Far from representing a demonstration of hegemonic power, the degrading blackmail is strengthening the links between Russia and the main countries of the European Union: namely France, Germany and Italy.

Putin told the Russian ambassadors:

“... [What is being done to the French banks](#) can cause nothing but indignation in Europe in general and here as well. We are aware of the pressure our American partners are putting on France to force it not to supply Mistrals to Russia. We even know that they hinted that if France does not deliver the Mistrals, the sanctions will be quietly lifted from their banks, or at least they will be significantly minimised.

What is this if not blackmail? Is this the right way to act on the international arena? Besides, when we speak of sanctions, we always assume that sanctions are applied pursuant to Article 7 of the UN Charter. Otherwise, these are not sanctions in the true legal sense of the word, but something different, some other unilateral policy instrument....” <http://eng.kremlin.ru/transcripts/22586>

The increasingly irrational and predatory US foreign policy has reached its climax, characterised by a vast gamma of tools of pressure and intimidation. Now the US bully policy of the “with me or against me” is pushing more and more countries to look at a rational alternative.

Putin’s Russia, contrary to the desperate Wall Street media, is shining as a beacon of rationality and humanity, as the only adult and reliable person in the global saloon in which the drunk US cowboy is shooting his last bullets.

The Ukraine crisis, the creation of the grotesque ISIS in Iraq and Syria, the frantic pressure on Romania, Serbia, Italy and others to denounce the agreement with Russia for the South Stream gas pipeline and prevent Russia from exporting its raw materials – these seems to be the last bullets shot in the air.

Italy, for one, answered with a clear-cut statement by the state secretary for European affairs Sandro Gozi:

“The [South Stream project has always been and remains most important](#) for Italy.”

The interview was published on June 30, [the day before Italy assumed the presidency of the Council of the European Union](#).

“As Italy takes over the European Union presidency, we give absolute priority to establishing political and economic integration with Kiev while resuming strategic partnership between the EU and Russia,... Relations with Moscow can be neither broken off nor suspended. On the contrary, we are convinced of the need to strengthen them further.”

One of the first calls Italian Foreign Minister Federica Mogherini made at the beginning of the six month of Italian Presidency was with her Russian counterpart Sergei Lavrov announcing a visit to Moscow within the month of July.

Serbia itself, after an internal debate to evaluate the strength of the US threats, decided to go ahead with the South Stream. And, of course, so did Austria during the official visit of Putin in Vienna on June 24. As the German agency Deutsche Welle wrote, uncharacteristically allowing itself a hint of polemics:

“[Austria defies US](#), EU over South Stream during Putin visit – Austria’s OMV and Russia’s Gazprom have signed a deal for the Austrian section of the controversial South Stream gas pipeline that bypasses Ukraine. Austria’s president, Heinz Fischer, has rejected US and EU criticism.” <http://www.dw.de/austria-defies-us-eu-over-south-stream-during-putin-visit/a-17734602>

Germany is happily supplied with Russian gas through the North Stream.

Many in Europe expects now a new line from the European Union, despite the anti European policy the London’s city – controlled Brussels bureaucracy.

Behind the façade, the “Battle for Europe” is raging.

The ferocious and desperate ultimata coming from Washington appears increasingly impotent. And it is more and more clear why US-Assistant Secretary of State for European and Eurasian Affairs, Victoria Nuland in her infamous conversation with ambassador Geoffrey Pyatt in preparation for the coup d’etat in Kiev pronounced her immortal: “Fuck the EU!” The bloody destabilization of Ukraine was a means to an end: Keep Europe under control. It’s not working.

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