

Trump's "Peace For Strength"- Reagan's Slogan of War

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On Tuesday, December 6th Donald Trump stated that he would "only engage the use of military forces when it's in the vital national interests of the United States." This statement of course is nothing new as every military action of the United States is excused as being in its "national interests." It is simply another aspect of the ever-constant "America First" policy which has governed the actions of the United States since its creation as a republic; using war to achieve domination of the world's resources and markets

"We don't want to have a depleted military, fighting all over the place," Trump said, words many people heard with excitement, misunderstanding him that this meant less war, and peace in our time, as he simultaneously vowed to boost defense spending.



He wants to do this, he says, so that America maintains military dominance, to "ward off any threats". But we know that when American presidents speak of "warding off threats" they are speaking of nations that refuse to kowtow to them. They want to maintain their military dominance, not because of any threats, for no one threatens them except in their imagination, or on the fields of battle of the nations they have invaded and occupied, or themselves actively threaten, but because without that dominance they cannot break the arms of those that choose to live outside their shadow, nor bribe the rest, since loss of military dominance would mean the end of the hegemony of the dollar, whose inflated value depends on American military tyranny.

This aggressive policy he describes as "Peace through strength," words that speak volumes about the thrust of the incoming president's foreign policy since it is the same phrase that Ronald Reagan used to justify the massive military buildup during Reagan's two terms in office that led, in part to the destruction of the Soviet Union.

This is the same policy of "peace through strength" that saw Reagan try to overturn the Sandinista victory in Nicaragua, using the terrorists known as the "contras" to tear Nicaragua apart until the Sandinistas were forced from power.

This is the same policy that saw the US supporting the suppression of the popular left movement in El Salvador where US death squads murdered thousands, and supporting the abduction and murder of thousands of leftists across Latin America in Operation Condor. In 1983 Reagan ordered the invasion and destruction of the socialist government of the tiny island of Grenada. He supported Baby Doc Duvalier in Haiti and his ton tons macoutes, Marcos in Philippines, the white apartheid government of South Africa, egged on both sides in the Iraq-Iran War while selling weapons to them both and used Osama Bin Laden in

Afghanistan to destroy its socialist government and harass the USSR there.

Trump, in effect has just announced the official resumption of the Cold War, that euphemism for a heightened state of threat and insecurity provoked by the United States in order to intimidate the rest of the world and during which real wars take place while total war is daily threatened.

The evidence that American foreign policy will be just as aggressive with Trump as it would have been with Clinton is clear. Anyone who doubts it need only look at General “Mad Dog” Mattis and his appointment as Secretary of Defence, and the appointment of another aggressive general, and head of military intelligence, Michael Flynn as National Security Adviser. He will appoint Marine General John Kelly to head of “Homeland” security. Another general, the disgraced Petraeus, is being considered as Director of National Intelligence, or as UN ambassador.

Trump’s continuation of America’s belligerence was signaled with the insult to China when he accepted a call from the leader of the government of the Chinese province of Taiwan, the island to which the Kuomintang anti-communist forces fled in 1949. It has long been the policy of the United States to accept Chinese sovereignty over Taiwan and therefore the US has no official diplomatic links with Taiwan as a sovereign state. The Chinese regard Taiwan as a rebel province and so any attempt by a foreign head of state to communicate with its government should go through Beijing. Trump deliberately threw that respect for China down the drain by openly talking with the Taiwanese leader who is known to want to make Taiwan independent. For the Chinese this was taken as a signal that the US recognizes Taiwan as independent, and the US meant it to be seen as such. The Chinese protested angrily and warned of trouble in reaction.

All the words of oil poured on these troubled waters by the Obama administration to reassure China that things will stay as they have been are meaningless since this phone call is just a natural and logical advancement of Obama’s “pivot to Asia,” that is the US intention to reduce China to a dependency or at least a vassal state that needs US permission to sail in its own waters while the Americans presume to own its seas and coasts.

Trump’s action is completely in line with the increasing aggression by the United States towards China evidenced by Obama’s shifting of large portions of the American navy and air forces to the Pacific and South China Seas, including the transfer last summer of B1 and B2 bombers to Guam which can be used to carry nuclear tipped cruise missiles and by the routine violation of Chinese territorial waters by American warships all this year. The appointment of Iowa governor Branstad as US ambassador to China, a man who has connections in China, does not offer any real hope of Trump moderating American policy towards China. All that appointment means is that Branstad will be used as the nice cop while the US Navy sits off the Chinese coast waiting to come in as the bad cop if Branstad can’t sweet talk the Chinese into surrendering their sovereignty.

Meanwhile NATO aggression against Russia continues, “sanctions” have increased and been renewed to a permanent state, and the anti-Russian propaganda, already at hysterical levels, is maintained with the appearance in the Washington Post of a list of news media, journals and blogs considered to be “Russian agents.” It is clear that this list was put together and released, through the device of a front group called Propornot, by American intelligence services.

This is a dangerous step and threatens further action aimed at suppressing the alternative media and writers that oppose US aggressive foreign policy and the regressive and cruel economic policies inflicted on the people of the United States by its industrial-financial ruling class. Already the media are full of stories about “fake” news and what is and what is not. We are now forced to continually defend ourselves as the ones writing about the real facts while the mass media put out the fabrications and distortions. It is difficult enough to get the facts out without having to defend against charges of serving the “enemy” while doing so.

Trump’s complaint that America is “fighting in areas we shouldn’t be fighting in” is not a sign of a man of peace but of a man who has listened to those American military strategists who realize that the objective of trying to seize the oil supplies of Iraq, Iran and Russia through attacking the periphery of Asia is not working due to local resistance and help given to the resistance by Russia, China, Iran and others. So the strategy will shift further towards conflict with the larger powers that stand in the way of US global hegemony. Once they are neutralized then local resistance will be easier to deal with.

This is confirmed by the release by the Pentagon of its latest National Military Strategy, dated 2015, that states its primary purpose is to maintain an “international order advanced by US leadership” for the benefit of a “a US economy in an open international economic system.” It then lists the main obstacles to achieving this dominance, Russia, primarily, then China, Iran and North Korea, which are described as threats to American national interests.

“International order advanced by US leadership,” means an American world order, that is American rule of the world, and for the sole benefit of American capitalism. The defeat of the US and EU in Syria will not lead to a lull in American imperialism. We must remember that the Reagan military build up to create “peace through strength” was a reaction to the strategic defeat of the United States in Vietnam which in turn was partly due to Soviet assistance in the Vietnam war during which the Soviet air defence forces aiding the Vietnamese inflicted massive losses on American air forces. The aftermath of that defeat was the build-up of US forces and we see the same thing promised now by Trump.

We can expect nothing from the new American regime except more of the same, more war, more world misery, more repression and increasing climatic disasters with the Trump appointment of Mr. Pruitt as head of the American Environmental Agency, a man who denies that climate change is due to man’s industrial activity, and whose irrational and dangerous thinking will mean the end of any attempts to prevent the climate catastrophe that is unfolding around us.

Those of us who struggle to attain some semblance of economic, political and social justice in the world must carry on regardless, carry on speaking, writing, and hoping that the young ones with the energy will see what needs to be done and do what needs to be done, take the power from those who abuse it. We can hope, for how can anyone who cares about humanity and this world not feel sick at the injustice of it all.

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