

Uncle Sam Does Ukraine: U.S. Meddling Dims Prospects for Peace

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“It’s Uncle Sam who’s pushing us into this slaughter. And let’s be frank, many politicians in Ukraine are just following his orders.”

– Belarusian President Alexander Lukashenko

The Minsk Ceasefire Protocol has very little chance of succeeding. In fact, the meeting between the warring parties was not convened to stop the violence as much as it was to buy time for the Armed Forces of Ukraine (AFU) to retreat and regroup. In the last two weeks, the junta’s army has suffered “catastrophic” losses leaving President Petro Poroshenko with the choice of either calling for a truce or facing the unpleasant prospect of complete annihilation. Poroshenko wisely chose to withdraw under cover of the ceasefire agreement. But let’s not kid ourselves, Poroshenko only accepted that humiliation because he had no other choice. Once he gathers his forces and rearms, he’ll be back with a vengeance.

A recent survey found that 57 percent of the Ukrainian people oppose Poroshenko’s so-called “antiterror operation”. Even so, the fratricidal campaign will continue for the foreseeable future because it’s all part of Washington’s grand plan for the region. What the Obama administration is trying to do, is draw Russia into a costly and protracted conflagration in Ukraine to prove to its European allies that Russian President Vladimir Putin is a dangerous aggressor and a serious threat to global security. The US needs this justification to move ahead with its plan of establishing NATO forward-bases on Russia’s western border where they’ll pose an existential threat to Moscow’s survival. The puppet Poroshenko’s role in this bloody farce is to exacerbate the humanitarian catastrophe, crush the resistance, and try to provoke Putin into sending in the tanks. So far, the bumbling “Chocolate King” has only made matters worse by destroying his army and sabotaging US plans for NATO intervention. Obama’s frustration was apparent in the speech he gave at the NATO summit in Wales last weekend. Here’s a clip:

“Russia must stop its violations of Ukraine’s sovereignty and territorial integrity.” Russia’s “brazen assault” on Ukraine “challenges the most basic of principles of our international system – that borders cannot be redrawn at the barrel of a gun; that nations have the right to determine their own future. It undermines an international order where the rights of peoples and nations are upheld and can’t simply be taken away by brute force.”

Obama’s fulminations were meant to torpedo the ceasefire by poisoning the atmosphere and inflaming passions. Even while the negotiations were underway, the US and NATO were busy rattling sabers trying to derail the process. The summit in Wales was not so much

a conference on regional defense as it was a platform for slinging mud at Russia and denouncing its “evil dictator” Putin. Like we said, Obama and Co. are getting frustrated by the fact that Putin has out maneuvered them at every turn. Here’s a clip from the *New York Times* with some details about the truce:

“The cease-fire agreement called for amnesty for all those who disarm and who did not commit serious crimes; the release of all hostages; the disbanding of militias; and the establishment of a 10-kilometer buffer zone (about six miles) along the Russian-Ukrainian border, with compliance overseen by international monitors.

It also points the way to a possible political solution to the conflict. Mr. Putin, insistent that Ukraine be tied to Russia instead of the West, has pressed for regional autonomy for the southeastern regions, while the Ukrainian government has so far been open only to the idea of decentralization.” (“A Cease-Fire in Ukraine”,*New York Times*).

Naturally, one would expect NATO and the US to tone down the rhetoric and postpone further escalation in order to show their support for the fragile ceasefire. But that hasn’t happened.

On Sunday, two NATO warships entered the Black Sea through the Bosphorus joining French and US destroyers already located in the area. According to *Itar Tass*:

“The NATO ships’ crews will conduct the Sea Breeze exercises from September 8 to September 10. It is expected that along with the four abovementioned ships the drills will involve Turkey’s frigate Oruc Reis, Romania’s frigate Regele Ferdinand and Georgia’s patrol boat Sukhumi,” the source added.” ([“Two NATO warships enter Black Sea – source”](#), Itar Tass)

The Sea Breeze exercises will be conducted at the same time as NATO military drills in Latvia that will involve more than “2,000 soldiers from nine different countries...(and which) ” simulate the deployment of NATO soldiers and equipment during a crisis situation.”

“We want to send a clear message to everyone who wants to threaten NATO, that it’s not a thing you should do,” General Hans-Lothar Domrose, commander of the NATO military command in Brunssum, Netherlands, told reporters.” (“NATO stages massive military drills in Latvia.”)

The drills have nothing to do protecting civilians from foreign aggression. They’re a blatant attempt to intimidate Putin and show that the western alliance is willing to risk a Third World War to achieve its objectives in Ukraine. The same could be said about NATO’s new Rapid Reaction Force, which is a 4,000-man combat group that will be deployable to any place in Europe within 48 hours. The new “Spearhead” force creates the dangerous precedent of a NATO standing army which will be used by the same reckless organization that assisted in the destruction of Serbia, Afghanistan and Libya. NATO’s interventions have been nearly as disastrous as those of the United States.

Aside from the additional troop deployments, warships to the Black Sea, and Rapid Reaction Force; we should not forget that the US Air Force deployed two B-2 stealth bombers to be stationed in east Europe earlier in the year. The B-2’s, which are capable of delivering

nuclear weapons to their targets, are a clear message to Moscow that Washington will take whatever steps it deems necessary to defend its interests in Eurasia.

Also, Poroshenko announced on Friday that he reached an agreement with a number of western governments on the delivery of lethal weapons. (Officials from the US have since denied that they will send arms to Kiev.)

In any event, the pattern is clear: Escalate, escalate, escalate. The United States is determined to establish a NATO beachhead in Ukraine consistent with its plan to pivot to Asia. The alarming buildup of military assets in the Balkans and the Black Sea, as well as the steady drumbeat of anti-Russia propaganda in the media, suggests that Washington is embarking on a major operation that could explode into a full-blown war.

Europeans Oppose Arming Ukraine

Despite the nonstop demonization of Russia in the media, there's no indication that the European people support the current policy in Ukraine. Check this out:

"The Journal du dimanche reported yesterday that the German Marshall Fund think-tank is preparing to release a poll showing that 81 percent of Frenchmen and 85 percent of Germans oppose arming the Ukrainian regime. The same poll found that in every European country except Poland, a majority of the population opposes the entry of Ukraine into either NATO or the European Union.".....("Fighting flares in eastern Ukraine despite ceasefire", Johannes Stern and Alex Lantier, World Socialist Web Site)

Finally, after 13 years of continuous warfare, the people have lost their appetite for US-NATO adventurism. Maybe there's reason for hope, after all.

SANCTIONS: No Proof Needed

On Monday, the EU stepped up its economic war on Moscow by announcing a forth round of sanctions that could go into effect as early as Thursday. (The sanctions have been temporarily delayed so EU members can judge the effectiveness of the ceasefire.) The new measures will be the most painful to date and are aimed primarily at "three major state-run oil companies - Rosneft, Transneft and Gazprom Neft, as well as several companies of the military industrial sector." The objective is to inflict maximum damage on the Russian economy by cutting off access to the capital markets, pushing the economy into recession, and triggering political instability. (The ultimate goal is regime change.) Not surprisingly, there won't be any sanctions on the gas sector, particularly, Gazprom, which is Europe's biggest gas supplier. EU leaders have shown repeatedly that they are only too willing to stand on principal as long as their own interests aren't effected.

It's worth noting that the new sanctions will be imposed without any evidence of wrongdoing and without any legal process for Russia to defend itself. The US and EU cannot be bothered with anything as trivial as due process or the presumption of innocence, which are the cornerstones upon which English Law rests dating back 500 years. Simply put: Russia is guilty because, well, because we say so.

There's only the slimmest chance that the ceasefire in Ukraine will last, mainly because Washington needs a war to achieve its broader strategic objectives. What Obama and his

lieutenants really want is “to break up Russia, subjugate its economic space, and establish control over the resources of the giant Eurasian continent. They believe that this is the only way they can maintain their hegemony and beat China.” (Quote: Sergei Glaziev, Putin’s economic advisor) That means, there won’t be peace in Ukraine until Washington’s puppets in Kiev are removed and Ukrainian sovereignty is restored.

Mike Whitney lives in Washington state. He is a contributor to [Hopeless: Barack Obama and the Politics of Illusion](#) (AK Press). *Hopeless* is also available in a [Kindle](#)

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