

US-Russia Confrontation: Breakdown of International Diplomacy, “More Abrasive and Dismissive than During Cold War”

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[Voice of Russia and Stop NATO](#)

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The owner of Stop NATO, Rick Rozoff, recently spoke to the Voice of Russia about NATO’s global plans and Russian-US relations. In part 2 of our interview Rozoff states that the US has been intentionally baiting and insulting Russia as it encroaches on Russian geopolitical space. He says that it is only the diplomatic maturity and the sense of responsibility of the Russian government that has prevented the situation from becoming a far worse crisis.

You took part in a debate. Can you remind our listeners about that?

Yes. The NATO planning committee in Chicago, under pressure from the ad hoc coalition that was protesting the NATO summit and other forces, agreed to have a televised debate between two NATO spokespeople and two people taking the opposite position, that is, people in opposition to the world’s first global military bloc. And initially this was to have included two fairly high-ranking NATO officials who were subsequently pulled, that is cancelled. Subsequent to that the plan was to bring on, on the NATO side, two former US ambassadors to NATO and that plan was scrapped.

So, eventually two university professors in Chicago with some military background were brought on to defend the NATO position and two of us – a woman who had been a US Marine Corps veteran of the Iraq war and myself – put forward the anti-NATO position. But because of the resources available to the people who sponsored it, a think tank in Chicago, it was not only televised globally on YouTube but lengthy excerpts of it appeared on Chicago television. So, for the first time ever I suppose, at least here in the US, the anti-NATO forces were given an opportunity to air their grievances against the bloc.

Has there been any blowback?

Yes, in fact even at the time an aura of intimidation and fear-mongering was intentionally pushed by the city administration, and I’m sure the White House behind it. The very day of the demonstration, for example, the two daily newspapers had banner headlines announcing a “terrorist plot” in Chicago. That is, that five people had been arrested ostensibly for planning pipe bombs or Molotov cocktails or something of the sort. The case has really gone no place, but it was enough to intimidate people.

I personally spoke to people at the demonstration and to people I work with who, in both cases, stated that friends or relatives of theirs had intended to come to the demonstration

but were scared off by this tactic. There was an effort made to intimidate people and to keep them away from anti-NATO activities. Nevertheless, there was a respectable showing in the march. It included people like the Reverend Jesse Jackson, who was at the front of the march, but it also included several dozen young US former service members who had fought in the Iraq and Afghan wars.

The Russian-US working group, the NATO group recently met. Where did you see Russian-NATO-US relations going? Was it worse than you thought or better?

Let's say no better, no worse, but surely no progress. We know for example there is now a new Russian representative in the NATO-Russia Council who has replaced his predecessor. That format is still active. It had not been, of course, for a long period of time after Georgia's invasion of South Ossetia in August of 2008 and the fact that the US and NATO both immediately afterwards set up special cooperation formats with Georgia to all but award it for its aggression and to pledge continued support to the Saakashvili regime in Tbilisi, as well to modernize its so-called defenses, which is in many cases offensive military capabilities.

What we have seen is that the US and NATO still resolutely refuse Russian offers to provide legal guarantees for the interceptor missile system in Eastern Europe. They have sabotaged and effectively destroyed the Russian offer to set up sectoral defense where Russia would have interceptor missiles covering a certain swath of land and then it would be picked up by NATO and the US. So, at every turn the United States and NATO are spurning Russian offers to cooperate on a genuine defense system and forging ahead with the unilateral system that, in its initial deployments, will be in countries either bordering Russia or comparatively close to it. You know, Poland and Romania in the first place. But we do have to recollect that the very same Patriot Advanced Capability-3 missiles that are heading to Turkey were deployed to eastern Poland in May of 2010; a battery was stationed there which remains there, which is only an estimated 40 miles from Russian territory, from the Kaliningrad district. So, I think it is irreputable, what's happening is that the US and NATO are encroaching upon Russian geopolitical space and essentially taunting Russia. And every effort made by Russia to extend offers of cooperation and so forth are essentially being refused.

What's your opinion on where Russia-US relations are going?

In many ways the US attitude towards the Russian Federation is even more abrasive and dismissive than the US attitude and behaviors towards the Soviet Union during the Cold War and I think that's an incontestable fact. With the recent passage of the so-called Magnitsky Bill in the US, what we're seeing is almost gratuitous efforts to belittle or demean or insult Russia and whenever Russia attempts to take any countermeasures they are accused of - this is slightly off the point, but I mean it gives you an indication of where the things are going - when Russia, Kazakhstan and Belarus tried to set up a customs union, we had the Secretary of State Hilary Clinton warning about the "resovietization" of former Soviet space. That's a brash and almost lunatic claim, but this is what passes muster in today's world. And the US feels that at will they can make accusations like that, so contemptuous are they of Russia, and I would add of the rest of the world for that matter, but we are talking about Russia.

And this follows on the heels of, now I guess the former, US ambassador to the UN Susan

Rice and Hillary Clinton herself over the past years using words like “despicable” and so forth in relation to Russian actions, particularly in the United Nations. I’m old enough to remember the Cold War, and I frankly do not remember leading US diplomats using that kind of language in relation to the Soviet Union, the sort of language we are now hearing.

I don't remember anything like that myself.

But this is a sort of imperial hubris that accompanies some nation that’s reached the same sort of delusions of grandeur that an individual afflicted with bipolar disorder might. Being “the world’s military superpower”, and that quote is from President Barack Obama, they are allowed to engage in any kind of swagger they choose to and that they can insult one of the major nations in the world – Russia – and one moreover whose military capacities are the only ones that seriously rival the United States’. So, to insult and provoke Russia the way it is doing – it is only the diplomatic maturity and the sense of responsibility of the Russian government that’s prevented this from flaring up and becoming a far worse crisis.

But one wonders when the next provocation is going to occur. The next time Russia is going to be accused of “resovietizing” the former Soviet space, the next time they are going to be called “despicable” or “shameful”? Such language has no role whatsoever in international diplomacy and really casts a very dark mark on the ruling elite in the US.

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