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Western plutocracy goes bear hunting

By Pepe Escobar

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The post-Cold War status quo in Eastern Europe, not to mention in Western Europe, is now dead.

For Western plutocracy, that 0.00001% at the top, the real Masters of the Universe, Russia is the ultimate prize; an immense treasure of natural resources, forests, pristine water, minerals, oil and gas. Enough to drive any NSA-to-CIA Orwellian/Panopticon war game to ecstasy. How to pounce and profit from such a formidable loot?

Enter Globocop NATO. Barely out of having its collective behind unceremoniously kicked by a bunch of mountain warriors with Kalashnikovs, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization is now fast "pivoting" - that same old Mackinder to Brzezinski game - to Russia. The road map will be put in place at the group's summit in early September in Wales.

Meanwhile, the MH17 tragedy is undergoing a fast metamorphosis. When the on-site observations by this Canadian OSCE monitor (watch the video carefully) are compounded with this analysis by a German pilot, a strong probability points to a Ukrainian Su-25's 30 mm auto-cannon firing at the cockpit of MH17, leading to massive decompression and the crash.

No missile - not even an air-to-air R-60M, not to mention a BUK (the star of the initial, frenetic American spin). The new possible narrative fits with on-site testimony by eyewitness in this now

famously "disappeared" BBC report. Bottom line: MH17 configured as a false flag, planned by the US and botched by Kiev. One can barely imagine the tectonic geopolitical repercussions were the false flag to be fully exposed.

Malaysia has handed out the flight recorders to the UK; this means NATO, and this spells out manipulation by the CIA. Air Algerie AH5017 went down after MH17. The analysis has already been released. That begs the question of why it is taking so long for MH17's black boxes to be analyzed/tampered with.

Then there's the sanctions game: Russia remains guilty - with no evidence - thus it must be punished. The EU abjectly followed His Master's Voice and adopted all the hardcore sanctions against Russia they were discussing last week.

Yet there are loopholes. Moscow will have reduced access to US dollar and euro markets. Russian state-owned banks are forbidden from selling shares or bonds in the West. Yet Sberbank, Russia's largest, has not been sanctioned.

So Russia in the short and medium term will have to finance itself. Well, Chinese banks could easily replace that kind of lending. Don't forget the Russia-China strategic partnership. As if Moscow needed another warning that the only way to go is to increasingly bypass the US dollar system.

EU nations will suffer. Big time. BP has a 20% stake in Rosneft, and it's already freaking out on the record. ExxonMobil, Norway's Statoil and Shell will also be affected. Sanctions don't touch the gas industry; now that would have propelled the EU's counterproductive stupidity to galactic levels. Poland - hysterically blaming Moscow for everything under the sun - gets more than 80% of its gas from Russia. The no less strident Baltic states, as well as Finland, get 100%.

The ban on dual-use goods - civilian and military applications - will badly affect Germany, the top EU exporter to Russia. On defense, the UK and France will suffer; the UK has no less than 200 licenses selling weapons and missile launching gear to Russia. Yet the French 1.2 billion euro (US\$1.6 billion) sale of Mistral assault ships to Russia will go ahead.

Meanwhile, in the demonization front ...

This is what Associated Press spins as "analysis" and distributes to papers around the world; a collection of cliches desperately in search of a thesis. Dmitri Trenin of the Carnegie Moscow Center, faithful to who pays his bills, gets a few things right and most things wrong. David Stockman at least has a ball deconstructing the lies of the Warfare State.

But the real thing is definitely Putin's economic adviser Sergei Glazyev. One of his key theses is that European business must be really careful to protect their interests as the US attempts to "ignite a war in Europe and a Cold War against Russia".

This, though, is the ultimate bombshell - delivered by a cool, calm and collected Glazyev. Watch it carefully. A detailed reappraisal of what Glazyev has been saying for weeks now, mixed with

some outstanding comments here leads to a inevitable conclusion: key sectors of Western plutocracy want a still ill-defined war with Russia. And journalism's Holy Grail - never trust anything until it's officially denied - confirms it.

NATO's Plan A is to install missile batteries in Ukraine; that is already being discussed in detail in the run-up to NATO's summit in Wales in early September. Needless to say, if that happens, for Moscow, that's way beyond a red line; it implies a first strike capability at Russia's western borderlands.

Washington's short Plan A, meanwhile, is to organize a wedge between the federalists in Eastern Ukraine and Russia. This implies progressive, direct funding of Kiev in parallel to building up, via American advisers already on the ground, and vast weaponizing, a huge proxy army (nearly 500,000 by the end of the year, according to Glazyev's projection). Endgame on the ground would be to seal the federalists off into a very small area. Ukrainian President Petro Poroshenko has been on the record saying this should happen by early September. If not, by the end of 2014.

In the US, and a great deal of the EU, a monstrous grotesquerie has developed, packaging Putin as the new Stalinist Osama bin Laden. So far, his strategy on Ukraine was to be patient - what I called Vlad Lao Tzu - watching the Kiev gang hang themselves while trying to sit down with the EU in a civilized manner working for a political solution.

Now we may be facing a game changer, because the mounting evidence, which Glazyev and Russian intel relayed to Putin, points to Ukraine as a battlefield; a concerted drive for regime change in Moscow; a concerted drive aiming for a destabilized Russia; and even the possibility of a definitive provocation.

Moscow, allied with the BRICS, is actively working to bypass the US dollar - which is the anchor of a parallel US war economy based on printing worthless pieces of green paper. Progress is slow, but tangible; not only the BRICS but BRICS aspirants, the G-77, the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM), the whole Global South is absolutely fed up with the Empire of Chaos's non-stop bullying and want another paradigm in international relations. The US counts on NATO - which it manipulates at will - and mad dog Israel; and perhaps the GCC, the Sunni petromonarchies partners in the Gaza carnage, which can be bought/silenced with a slap on the wrist.

The temptation for Putin to invade Eastern Ukraine in 24 hours and reduce the Kiev militias to dust must have been super-human. Especially with the mounting cornucopia of dementia; ballistic missiles in Poland and soon Ukraine; indiscriminate bombing of civilians in Donbass; the MH17 tragedy; the hysterical Western demonization.

A bear with limited patience

But Putin is wired for playing the long game. The window of opportunity for a lightning strike is gone; that kung fu move would have stopped NATO in its tracks with a fait accompli, and the ethnic cleansing of 8 million Russians and Russophones in Donbass would never have developed.

Still, Putin won't "invade" Ukraine because Russian public opinion doesn't want him to. Moscow will keep supporting what is a de facto resistance movement in the Donbass. Remember: in give or take two months, General Winter starts to set in those broke, IMF-plundered Ukrainian pastures.

The leaked German-Russian peace plan will be implemented over Washington's collective dead body. This New Great Game, to a great extent, is also about preventing Russia-EU economic integration via Germany, part of a full Eurasian integration including China and its myriad Silk Roads.

If Russia's trade with the EU - about US\$410 billion in 2013 - is due to take a hit because of sanctions, then that also spells out a Go East movement. Which implies a Russian fine-tuning of the Eurasian Economic Union project. No more a Greater Europe from Lisbon to Vladivostok - Putin's original idea. Enter the Eurasian Union as a brother in arms of China's myriad Silk Roads. Still, this spells out a strong Russia-China partnership at the heart of Eurasia - and still this is absolute anathema to the Masters of the Universe.

Make no mistake, the Russia-China strategic partnership will keep evolving very fast - with Beijing in symbiosis with Moscow's immense natural and military-technological resources. Not to mention the strategic benefits. A case could be made this has not happened since Genghis Khan. But it's not like Xi Jinping is pulling a Khan to subdue Siberia and beyond.

Cold War 2.0 is now inevitable because the Empire of Chaos will never accept Russia's sphere of influence in parts of Eurasia (as it doesn't accept China's). It will never accept Russia as an equal partner (exceptionalists don't do equality). And it will never forgive Russia - alongside China - for openly defying the creaking, exceptionalist, American-imposed order.

If the US deep state, guided by those nullities who pass for leadership, in desperation, goes one step beyond - it could be a genocide in Donbass; a NATO attack on Crimea; or worst case scenario, an attack against Russia itself - watch out. The Bear will strike.