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NATO Attacks!

By Pepe Escobar

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First thing we do, let's kill all the myths. The North Atlantic Treaty Organization is nothing but the Security Council of the Empire of Chaos.

You don't need to be a neo-Foucault hooked on Orwellian/Panopticon practices to admire the hyper-democratic "ring of steel" crossing average roads, parks and even ringing castle walls to "protect" dozens of NATO heads of state and ministers, 10,000 supporting characters and 2,000 journalists from the real world in Newport, Wales – and beyond.

NATO's summit in Wales also provides outgoing secretary-general Anders "Fogh of War" Rasmussen the chance to display his full attack dog repertoire. It's as if he's auditioning for a starring role in a remake of Tim Burton's epic *Mars Attacks!*

Fogh of War is all over the place, talking "pre-positioning of supplies, equipment" – euphemism for weapons; boosting bases and headquarters in host countries; and touting a 10,000-strong, rapid reaction "spearhead" force to respond to Russian "aggression" and deployable in a maximum of five days.

Meanwhile, in a bad cop-bad cop routine, outgoing president of the European Commission, outstanding mediocrity Jose Manuel Barroso, leaked that Russian President Vladimir Putin told him over the phone later last week he could take Kiev in a fortnight if he wanted.

Well, Putin could. If he wanted. But he doesn't want it. What matters is what he told Rossiya state TV; that Kiev should promote inclusive talks about the future statute of Eastern Ukraine. Once again, the Western spin was that he was advocating the birth of a Novorossiia state. Here, The Saker analyzes in detail the implications of what Russia really wants, and what the Novorossiia forces really want.

With Lithuanian president Dalia Grybauskaite predictably spinning that Russia is “at war with Europe”, and British Prime Minister David Cameron evoking – what else – Munich 1938 (Chamberlain appeasing Hitler), Fogh of War has had all the ammo he needs to sell his *Einsatzgruppen*. Cynics are excused to believe NATO's spearhead force is actually The Caliph's IS goons raising hell in “Syraq”.

Warmongering, though, is not an easy sell in a crisis-hit EU these days. Not only Germany, but also France, Italy, Spain, Romania, Hungary and even Poland have expressed “reluctance” one way or another to back NATO's strategy of a more “robust” presence in Eastern Europe and the Baltic. Moreover, the Empire of Chaos and its Brit junior partner in the “special relationship” want everyone to shell out more cash (a minimum of 2% of GDP). Even as the EU is facing no less than its third recession in five years.

The bottom line is there will be no more rotation on NATO's Eastern front. Legally, the set up cannot be defined as “permanent”, because it will go against a 1997 NATO-Russia pact. But it will be permanent. That applies to Szczecin, in Poland, near the Baltic, and the so-called multinational Corps Northeast – land, air and sea. Estonia and Latvia for all practical purposes are being touted as “Putin's next targets”. And defending them from “Russian aggression” is NATO's new red line.

Additionally, Finland and Sweden may sign NATO Host Nation agreements. This implies NATO forces may use Swedish and Finnish territory in the future on the way to what's hazily referred to as “operations”. At least deployment of foreign troops still needs parliamentary approval – and Swedes and Finns are bound to raise eyebrows.

No R2P for you, buddy

Even with all this *Mars Attacks!* hysteria, NATO in thesis won't discuss Ukraine in depth in Wales – or an imminent R2P (“responsibility to protect”) Ukraine from the remixed “Evil Empire” (copyright Ronnie Reagan). But there will be “military consultations” and a bit of cash shelled out to the Kiev military – who are having their (bankrupt) collective behind solemnly kicked by the federalist/separatist forces in Eastern Ukraine as much as NATO had theirs kicked by a bunch of Pashtuns with Kalashnikovs in Afghanistan.

By the way, the latest US\$1.4 billion the International Monetary Fund shelled out to Ukraine – the Mobster-style interest will hit much later – will be used by an already bankrupt Kiev mostly to pay for a bunch of T-72 tanks it bought from Hungary. Money for nothing, tanks for free.

Ukraine, it must be stressed, is not a NATO member. Technically, every NATO bureaucrat in Brussels admits that a candidate country must request membership. And countries with regions mired in an international dispute are not accepted. So Ukraine would only be considered if Kiev gave up Crimea. It's not going to happen.

Still, Washington's obsessive play to annex Ukraine to NATO will keep marching on (in the matter of accession, by the way, the European Union would issue a firm "no"). Outgoing Prime Minister Arseniy "Yats" Yatsenyuk as well as President Poroshenko, are desperate for a NATO intervention, or at least Ukraine being accepted as some form of privileged ally. Yats expects "monumental decisions from our Western partners at the summit". In vain.

NATO somehow is already in Ukraine. A NATO cyber center group has been in Kiev since March, operating in the building of the Council of National Security and Defense. So it is a bunch of NATO bureaucrats who actually determine the news agenda in Ukraine – and the non-stop demonization of all things Russia.

Ukraine is all about Germany now. Berlin wants a political solution. Fast. Berlin wants Russian gas flowing via Ukraine again. Fast. Berlin does not want US missile defense in Eastern Europe – no matter what the Baltic states scream. That's why Poroshenko's latest "Invasion! Invasion! Invasion!" craze is nothing but pure desperation by a lowly, bankrupt vassal of the Empire of Chaos. Of course that does not prevent Fogh of War – who got the NATO job because he was an enthusiastic cheerleader of the rape of Iraq – to keep crying "Invasion!" till all Danish retrievers come home.

Real deal

And then there's NATO's recent record. An ignominious defeat in Afghanistan. A "humanitarian" bombing that reduced once-stable Libya to a miserable failed state immersed in total anarchy and ravaged by rabid militias. Not exactly fabulous PR for NATO's future as a coalition assembly line with global "vocation", capable of pulling off expeditionary wars all around the world by creating the appearance of a military and political consensus unified by – what else – an Empire of Chaos doctrine: NATO's "strategic concept" approved at the 2010 Lisbon summit. (See US a kid in a NATO candy store, Asia Times Online, November 25, 2010.)

Since those go-go "Bubba" Clinton years; through the "pre-emptive" Dubya era; and now under the R2P dementia of Obama's warring Medusas (Rice, Power, Hillary), the Pentagon dreams of NATO as global Robocop, dominating all the roles embodied by the UN and the EU in terms of security. This has absolutely nothing to do with the original collective defense of NATO signatories against possible territorial attacks. Oh, sorry; we forgot the attacks by those (non-existent) nuclear missiles deployed by evil Iran.

The Ukraine battleground at least has the merit of showing the alliance is naked. For the Full Spectrum Dominance Pentagon, what really matters above all is something that's been actually happening since the fall of the Soviet Union; unlimited NATO expansion to the westernmost borders of Russia.

The real deal this September is not NATO. It's the SCO's summit. Expect the proverbial tectonic shifts of geopolitical plaques in the upcoming meeting of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization – a shift as far-reaching as when the Ottoman empire failed at the gates of Vienna in 1683. On the initiative of Russia and China, at the SCO summit, India, Pakistan, Iran and Mongolia will be invited to become permanent members. Once again, the battle lines are drawn. NATO vs SCO. NATO vs BRICS. NATO vs Global South. Therefore, NATO attacks!