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March Toward Global War

by NORMAN POLLACK

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The New York Times (NYT) is a trusted source of Administration thinking, particularly in foreign policy, more, an uncanny, sensitive barometer of deep-lying structural-military-diplomatic events which are presently culminating, beyond the New Cold War brewing since Clinton's international posture in Europe and the Pacific, in the actuality of heated confrontation directed against both Russia and China. Under Obama, the page has turned. No longer can we pretend a chess match in which tough rhetoric and vast expenditures form a comfortable (and highly profitable) surrogate for open warfare, a stage of inner discipline favorable to the suppression of dissent, the creation of industrial-financial-commercial fortunes, and the habituation to violence (transmissible in spirit and acquiescence from urban settings to foreign interventions). Now is different. Capitalism in America has reached the point of definitive sclerosis, a terminal, pathological hardening of the ideological arteries, in which the overgrowth of the fibrous/ interstitial tissue of profit-madness, hubris, and conquest for its own sake, has won out, has defeated whatever has been left of the Constitutional rights of the American formative context. We are a long way from the late 18th century, and with brief exceptions, notably, those brought on by the struggles of the exploited and the persecuted themselves, the progression has been downhill all the way, coinciding with the falsification of government's public trust and the concentration of private wealth and power.

So what is happening now is not surprising. Upper groups, in their narcissistic death wish, want it all, the entire globe at their feet—and sensing ultimate defeat are prepared to bring the curtain down. How else explain the rash of mediocrities scurrying for the presidential nomination in 2016 and receiving support from vested wealth, the latter secure in the knowledge there will be no deviation from the quest for eternal hegemony or bust in trying? How else the glib, unctuous response to climate change, or to drone murder, or to ever more dangerous brinkmanship, confident the show must and will go on—or else!—to the benefit of ruling groups? Here we owe NYT a debt of gratitude for displaying America as it really is, in power-wielding, policy-making circles.

I have in mind Peter Baker and Steven Erlanger's article, "Russia Wields Aid and Ideology Against West to Fight Sanctions" (June 8), which conjures up a Russian threat to Europe under Putin's megalomaniac unscrupulous direction. The occasion for the article, and Obama's G7 meetings over the weekend is to ensure united EU approval for Russian sanctions over Ukraine, due to expire at the end of June. Obama is unquestionably the principal arm-twister, cheerleader, war monger here, using Ukraine as the symbol of Russian aggression when it was his own cabal of hawks who engineered the coup d'état overthrowing the legitimate government and thus bringing to power one that was compliant with US-EU-NATO policy and wishes menacing Russia's borders. Yet the NYT article refers to Putin's "subterranean—and sometimes overt—efforts" to destabilize Europe through "win[ning] allies in the West." Putin is the new Stalin, possibly still more dangerous and cagey than the original. Here is Biden, last month at Brookings, to set the tone: "As it tries to rattle the cage, the Kremlin is working hard to buy off and co-opt European political forces [no mention of US-sponsored NGOs, staggering foreign military aid, numerous military bases, etc. exercising undoubted influence up and down Europe], funding both right-wing and left-wing anti-systemic parties throughout Europe." The purpose, "to create cracks in the European body politic which he [Putin] can then exploit." Although the reporters see no problem about extending the sanctions, they knowingly add: "But there is no appetite for adding more sanctions, as some American officials would like."

Horror of horrors, among Putin and Russia's activities, besides expanding RT, its international television network, in delighting to point out "the foibles of the West" to the French and Germans, "American and European officials have accused Moscow of financing green movements in Europe to encourage protest against hydraulic fracturing, or fracking," from a US perspective, a venomous deed. Thus far, the only concrete proof of support to the European Right has been a \$11.7 M loan to Le Pen's National Front in France "from the First Czech-Russian Bank in Moscow, which has been tied to the Kremlin." But where bribery is difficult to prove, there are other forms of Russian influence, "involv[ing]," according to the Political Capital Institute in Budapest, "professional and organizational help." Parenthetically I'm sure Russia has its own NGOs, too. Dempsey, US Joint Chiefs chair, "has expressed similar worries about what he calls Russia's "ability to employ other instruments of power" besides armed force. Out of the mouths of babes, again Dempsey: "President Putin considers NATO to be a threat and will look for opportunities to discredit and eventually undermine the alliance. Putin's ultimate objective is to fracture NATO." Correct, though unsurprising. Only Fiona Hill, who

worked at national intelligence on Russia, and is currently at Brookings, queried: “The question is how much hard evidence does anyone have?”

My NYT Comment on the Baker-Erlanger article, same date, follows:

Is Fiona Hill the only sane one left in Washington? For what we are seeing, under Mr. Obama’s direction, is the orchestration toward war. Baker’s article is laughable were it not that it forces the reader to THINK about what’s coming from the other side, to wit, US-led encroachment on both Russia and China, again more acutely by the present administration than its Republican predecessor, in a push for global supremacy.

Were it not for the existence of nuclear weapons, America would in a matter of weeks be engaged in a war with one if not both nations. When historians take the measure of Obama, they will see a synthesis of Joe McCarthy (massive surveillance) and the Dulles brothers (containment expanded into confrontation). I shudder to think of what awaits the world in the coming decade, the architecture already in the works for global conflagration, yes, under American initiative.