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ISSUES, ILLUSIONS AND MEASURES IN AMERICAN RELATIONS WITH UKRAINE AND RUSSIA

“It would be hypocrisy to deny that an independent Ukraine is as essential to this country as to the tranquility of the world. Very few attempts have been made to give justice to the Ukrainians and the continued neglect . . . may ultimately involve all Europe.” Lancelot Lawton, House of Commons, London, 1935.

“Whether Russian led integration on the territory of the former USSR will pose a serious, long-term military challenge to the West, depends in large part on the role that Ukraine plays or is compelled to play. . . . Ukraine will do much to determine whether Europe and the world in the twenty-first century will be as bloody as they were in the twentieth.” Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 1997.

ISSUE #1

After its hubris over seemingly winning the Cold War receded, Washington never considered, much less implemented, any policy to ensure that the Cold War it claimed it had “won,” remained that way. A post WWII-type Marshall Plan to ensure the independence of the former Soviet republics was not to be. Whatever Putin’s marketing moniker—“Customs Union” or any other-- a reconstituted Russian empire, to whatever degree, can push today’s headlines over Syria, Iran, North Korea, to the back page, or accelerate them to a runaway conflagration.

Russia acts with an idea, a purpose and a goal. We are endlessly temporizing, responding and reacting. Russia is assertive, tenacious and implacable. We are defensive, flaccid and impatient. Russia seeks to change. We seek to

“manage.” Russia has a policy of expansion. We do not have a policy—we drift. Russia has a vision. We are astigmatic.

ILLUSION #1

- How did Russia become the largest country in the world, straddling an entire third of Asia? In the 1890's, the Russian General Staff conducted a study of Russia's military campaigns between 1700 and 1870. Russia fought 38 wars. Only two were defensive. What were the rest?
- Mindless repetition by Western (and especially, US) media and politicians of Russia's "security needs," "fear of encirclement", its "backyard" and "sphere of influence," and "legitimate interests" rewrites history, denies the facts, reverses cause and effect, justifies genocide, and necessarily recasts the perpetrator as the victim. It is they--the non-Russian nations of the former Soviet Union--that have the right to fear Russian resurgence and encirclement, and are entitled to have their security needs assured. That, in turn, secures Europe, our country and the rest of the world.
- Look at a map. Ukraine is less than three percent the size of the Russian colossus. Who "encircles" whom? Who has attacked, occupied, decimated whom . . . for centuries? Who, exactly, has "security needs"?
- Not recognizing and not stating the truth is endlessly pernicious because it catalyzes and endorses Russia's own propaganda. We blindly fuel a virtual reality, nothing more than a hologram floating in air. The only deduction to be made is that the US not only condones past Russian rule and oppression of a dozen other nations, but also assumes as legitimate and acceptable its *reprise*. It denies the victims' right to exist. It torpedoed American pronouncements about global freedom, independence and democratization.

ISSUE #2

Ukraine is the largest country in Europe, the size of Germany, England and Hungary, combined. Within its borders is the geographic center of Europe. Russia's conquest and occupation of Ukraine after WWI was pivotal to the formation and ongoing viability of the Soviet Union, and therefore to the Soviet Union's its consequent threat to the US. Ukraine's declaration of independence from that "union" triggered its collapse and what the US considered to be the end of the Cold War. Overnight, Ukraine became the world's third largest nuclear power, and surrendered it all. Today, a free and

stable Ukraine, independent of Russian rule or subornation, is pivotal to Europe's and US security, and not just regional but global stability. It will be a compass for Russia's own evolution as a normal, democratic nation, at peace with the US and the world.

ILLUSION #2

- The most damning factor is the pervasive disinformation about: the "common historical and cultural ties with Russia", a "1000 year history of Russia", "Ukraine and Russia share deep historical and cultural roots," "the Russian Orthodox Church originated in Kiev", "Ukraine is a part of Russia", "Ukraine is not even a separate country", "good brothers in one Slavic house," "Russia originated in Kyiv," *ad nauseam*. All smothered in hypocritical cant: "Ukrainians and Russians are predestined to live as brothers, in peace and consent." Sergey Lavrov, Russian Foreign Minister. The terminology feeds both a conscious and a subliminal rejection of Ukraine as a normal subject of international recognition and position, and erases Ukraine as America's most critical ally in the aftermath of the Soviet Union's disintegration.
- As with Illusion #1, Illusion #2 repeats the script authored by Moscow in the late 19th century as it sought a prestigious pedigree for a backwater Russia, a country that did not even exist until half a millennium after the fall of the Middle Ages Kyivan Imperial Dynasty, the precursor of modern Ukraine. The Kremlin's enormously effective revisionism promotes the abolishment of borders and precludes condemnation of Russian interference in /control of Ukraine's "internal" affairs, as they become one and the same. Astonishingly, the United States has historically assisted Moscow in the ongoing suppression of even the notion of a separate Ukrainian identity.

ISSUE #3

Upon the fall of the USSR, Ukraine became the third largest nuclear power, globally. Based on US (and Russian) assurances of its sovereignty, Ukraine stripped itself of its nuclear capability. There was and remains no precedent for such a decision, anywhere. US commitment—or not—to Ukraine will be an object lesson for nations that the US today seeks to reassure, and regimes it seeks to dissuade as to nuclear capability.

- What credibility will Washington have in the eyes of foe and friend alike if the US walks away from Ukraine? What are the conclusions to be drawn by Iran and Israel, or North Korea, Syria or any other country?

ISSUE #4

Europe and the United States are hugely indebted to Ukraine.

As the largest political state in medieval Europe, the Kyivan Dynasty shielded Europe from the Golden Horde, and in the process was totally destroyed. In the 1600's, Ukrainian forces were key to breaking the siege of Vienna and halting the Ottoman Empire's invasion of Europe. In the 1700's, Ukraine offered the model for the US constitution. After WWI, the US and Europe dismissed Ukraine's warnings about the new Soviet regime in Moscow and its threat to the West. They turned their back on a fledgling democracy battling four invaders. Woodrow Wilson's Fourteen Points were deemed inapplicable to Ukraine, and it was dismembered into four parts after the Versailles Treaty, with the lion's share handed to Russia. After first murdering Ukraine's cultural, religious and political leaders, Moscow starved upwards of 10 million Ukrainians in 1932-3 in its bid to solidify control. Washington abetted the genocide, and further rewarded Stalin with diplomatic recognition. In WWII, "no nation lost more of its humanity than Ukraine," wrote Oxford University's Norman Davies. More than 9 million of Ukraine's population were killed or deported to Nazi Germany. After WWII, the US and Great Britain, in a joint venture with Moscow's NKVD troops, forcibly returned hundreds of thousands of Ukrainian refugees to Stalin and death. In 1986, Chornobyl exploded, a dinosaur of the Soviet system imposed on Ukraine. Generations are condemned. In 1991, as the US warned Ukraine to remain as a Russian colony, Ukraine renewed its independence, catalyzing the dissolution of the USSR. Washington declared it had won the Cold War.

MEASURES

1. Stop playing "Let's pretend". Understand that the Soviet Union was a recast Russian empire, bloody in the extreme, and therefore what it means to the US as Putin slingshots to the past. It is that empire's colonized, long suppressed nations that have the right of security and freedom. This is the best, cheapest, most certain assurance of neutralizing a re-ignition of **M(utual)A(ssured)**

D(estruction). For American lives, for its treasury and for its national security, there is no better bargain to be had.

- Russia today is the self-declared successor of the USSR, acceding to its global embassies and assets, usurping its seat in the United Nations, but never admitting, much less assuming, any of its liabilities or repenting of its genocides. Russia never followed in Germany's footsteps of acknowledgment, repentance or atonement, never mind reparations. Moscow remains implacable, unmoved, unchanged. It remains aggressive, combative, undeterred. It admits to nothing, denies everything and everyone, and demands all—as already its very own, pre-destined entitlement. Russia is a predator nation.
2. Understand Putin for what he is: a KGB (now titled “FSB”) colonel (he infamously declared, there are no “former” KGB officers”). Comprehend the implications of Putin resurrection of Stalin, and his singular focus on a reconstituted Russian empire (“Soviet Union” lite, at least; more if he can grab it.) Stalin, never coy: “We shall annihilate every one of these enemies . . . We shall annihilate him and his relatives, his family. Anyone who in deed or in thought, yes, in thought, attacks the unity of the socialist state will be mercilessly crushed by us. We shall exterminate all enemies to the very last man, and also their families and relatives!”
- Another Putin role model, OGPU officer Kartashov: “I figure that thirty–seven people were shot dead by me personally, and I sent even more to the camps. I can kill people so that the shot won't be heard . . . The secret is this: I make them open their mouth and I shoot down their throat. I'd only be splashed by warm blood, like eau-de-cologne, and it doesn't make a sound.”
 - Compare the mindset and implications behind Iran's rant that Israel does not have the right to exist, with Putin's solemn assertion that Ukraine as a nation simply does not exist.
3. Understand that it is not just an issue of Russia's military threat. Russian mendacity and duplicity, coupled with the hydraulic pressure of an exquisitely refined *dezinformatsia* and *maskirovka*, are other-worldly in their enormity and effectiveness. Karl Marx' partner Friedrich Engels was unequivocal about Russia's diplomats as pivotal in the execution:

"It is this secret society, recruited originally from foreign adventurers, that has elevated the Russian empire to its present might. With iron perseverance, with eyes fixed on the goal, not shrinking from any breach of faith, any treachery, any assassination, any servility, lavishly dispersing bribes, never grown overconfident from victory, never discouraged by defeat, . . . this gang, as talented as it is without conscience, rather than all the Russian armies put together, that have contributed to the extension of Russian's borders [It is this gang] that has made Russia great, powerful and feared, and has opened up for it the way to world domination. In so doing, however, it has also strengthened the power of tsarism internally. For the vulgar patriotic public, the glory of victory, the conquests that follow one another, the might and splendor of tsardom fully outweigh all its sins, all its despotism, all its injustices and arbitrariness: the boastfulness of chauvinism fully compensates for all the kicks received."

4. Implement a long term, comprehensive policy addressing the former Soviet republics that is geared to ensuring their independence and democratization, in order (a) to forestall the further spread of Russian hard and soft power, and a reconstituted Kremlin controlled empire; (b) to ensure economic and military stability in Europe and elsewhere; (c) to serve as a brake on Russian destabilization of the Middle East and elsewhere; and (d) to serve as a model for democratic forces and peaceful evolution within Russia.
5. Bring pressure to bear on Russia in all areas of interest to it including especially energy technology, development and delivery, specifically natural gas delivery to Europe.
6. Freeze Russia's membership applications to OECD and other international organizations, and reassess its existing membership in organizations and affiliations such as the G8
7. Implement this country's commitments under the Budapest Memorandum on Security Assurances, December 5, 1994.
 - For years, Washington has remained somnolent about Ukraine, allowing Russia to leapfrog beyond economic coercion to now outright political subordination of that country. It is incumbent upon the US and Great Britain to press the matter with Russia.

8. Publicly and unequivocally condemn, in all forums, Russian economic aggression and its consequent violations of the CSCE Final Act, WTO agreement and other international treaties and accords as they affect Ukraine's territorial integrity, stability and political independence.

9. Enact parallel "Magnitsky Act" legislation that will impose all possible economic and other pressure on Ukraine's rapacious and increasingly brutal and destabilizing Yanukovich "clan" and supporting structures. Purpose is to directly impact the personal wealth and interests of Yanukovich's supporting structures to deprive him of that support. This includes visa revocation and bans, asset freezes, and restrictions/sanctions on US businesses doing business with the "clan."
 - Maintain a clear dichotomy between the government in Kyiv—at its core, not a "Ukrainian" government--and the Ukrainian people.
 - Target all national, regional and local government functionaries engaged in violence or repression, all implicated judiciary and police personnel, all oligarchs not clearly supporting the opposition, and all Parliament members from the communist party and Party of Regions.
 - Specifically include all family members of the above.
 - Specifically include all businesses of the above.

10. Promote and publicly and financially support by all means available Ukraine's civil society/NGO's in their task of promoting a free media and other democratic institutions. Underwrite travel, visits, and cultural and educational exchanges with the West. Promote and facilitate US business with Ukrainian entrepreneurs outside of government or clan control. Ease visa restrictions and expedite political asylum requests.

11. Expand and assist all modes of communication to and among the population, including expansion of Voice of America and Radio Liberty broadcasting and other supplements to and substitution for repressed internet and social media access.

12. Provide and facilitate all possible unilateral and multi-lateral economic assistance to Ukraine under circumstances ensuring its benefit to the Ukrainian people, not the "clan."

13. Bring to justice and prosecute under applicable international crimes treaties and conventions all responsible persons.
14. Do not underestimate the power of images and pronouncements of support and readiness to share a normal live with the Ukrainian people, but do not be lulled that that is at all adequate. An unambiguous position stated clearly, unambiguously by the President is absolutely crucial.
15. Redeem the infamy of Europe and the US abetting Moscow's starvation of millions of Ukrainians in 1932-33 in its drive, as wrote Oxford University's Norman Davies, (a) to forever destroy any idea of Ukrainian independence and statehood, and thereby (b) to solidify Soviet power. Rafael Lemkin, the author and "father" of the UN Genocide Convention, called Russia's rule in Ukraine the supreme example of Russia's nation killing.
16. Press the EU to undertake parallel measures.

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