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SAKER: Andrei (The Saker) is taking time off for health reasons. The blog will function as normal.
 MESSAGE:

The Secret American Plan to Make Russia Great Again

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By Dmitry Orlov for the Saker Blog

It is generally a good idea to avoid ascribing nefarious intent to actions explained by mere stupidity. But this is a case where mere stupidity cannot possibly explain the long, steady procession of foreign policy errors spanning three decades, all of them specifically aimed at strengthening Russia. It is not possible to argue that a surplus of hubris, ignorance, greed and political opportunism and a deficit of competent foreign policy analysts can produce such a result, for that would be essentially the same as arguing that some monkeys armed with drills, mills and lathes can produce a Swiss watch. But the only alternative would be to claim that there is a network of Kremlin's agents ensconced deep within the bowels of the American Deep State and that they are all working in concert to advance Russia's interests while meticulously maintaining plausible deniability all the while and at all levels of the operation.

Ostensibly, the plan was to weaken and destroy Russia; but then, following the Soviet collapse, Russia was weakening and destroying itself very well all by itself, no intervention needed. What's more, every US effort to weaken and destroy Russia has made it stronger; had there existed even a most rudimentary feedback mechanism, so vast a discrepancy between policy goals and policy results would have been detected and adjustments would have been made. Superficially, this may be explained by the nature of America's sham-democracy, where each administration can blame its failures on mistakes made by the previous administration, but the Deep State remains in power throughout, and it would simply be forced to admit to itself that there is a problem with the plan to weaken and destroy Russia after a few cycles of this unfolding fiasco. The fact that it hasn't detected any such problem brings us full circle, back to the suspicion that there are Putin's agents toiling tirelessly deep within the Deep State.

But that's pure conspiracy theory and we shouldn't want to go anywhere near that. Suffice to say, there is at present no adequate explanation for what happened. After the Soviet collapse, very little was needed to speed along the collapse of Russia itself. But none of these steps have been taken, and the steps that were taken (with the ostensible goal of weakening and destroying Russia) have done the exact opposite.

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Why? Below are listed 10 of the most successful initiatives of what appear to be a US Deep State MRGA campaign. If you have an alternative explanation, I'd like to hear it.

1. If Russia were immediately accepted into the World Trade Organization (which it wanted to join) it would have been swamped with cheap imports, destroying all of Russian industry and agriculture. Russia would simply sell oil, gas, timber, diamonds and its other resources and buy whatever is needed. Instead, the US and other WTO members spent 18 years negotiating Russia's entry into the organization. By the time it joined, in 2006, very little time remained before the financial collapse of 2008, after which time the WTO hasn't been too much of a factor.

2. If Russia were immediately granted visa-free travel to the West (as it wanted) most working-age Russians would have readily diffused out of Russia, leaving behind a population of orphans and the elderly, much as has happened with contemporary Ukraine. After losing much of its productive population, Russia would not have posed any sort of economic or military threat. Instead, Russia was never granted visa-free travel and instead faced restrictions that have only increased over time. By now most Russians have internalized the idea that they are simply not wanted in the West and that they should seek their fortune back home.

3. After the Soviet collapse, Russia itself collapsed into a loose mosaic of regional centers. Many of them (Tatarstan, Bashkortostan, Urals Republic, Chechnya) entertained notions of secession. Left untouched, Russia would have devolved into a loose confederation with no ability to formulate joint foreign policy. Instead, resources and mercenaries were pumped into Chechnya, turning it into an existential threat to Moscow's authority and forcing it to become militarily assertive. The fact that Chechen volunteers are now fighting on the Russian side in the Ukraine underscores the failure of America's Chechnya policy.

4. If, following the Soviet collapse, NATO simply recognized that the threat it was intended to counter no longer existed and either dissolved or simply became quiescent, Russia would never have thought it necessary to rearm itself. Indeed, Russia was happily cutting up its ships and missiles for scrap metal. Instead, NATO saw it fit to bomb Yugoslavia (for a made-up humanitarian reason) and then to relentlessly expand eastward. These actions have communicated most adequately the message that it wasn't the USSR, and Communism, that the West opposed but Russia itself. And while, by the time the 1990s rolled around, not too many Russians were eager to fight and die for the greater glory of communism, rising to the defense of Motherland is an entirely different story.

5. If Russia's near-abroad were simply left alone, Russia would never have considered venturing outside of its already vast and underpopulated territory. But then came a provocation: acting with US sanction, Georgian forces attacked Russian peacekeepers in South Osetia during the Beijing Olympics of 2008, forcing Russia to react. The fact that Russia could demilitarize Georgia in just a few days was a major confidence boost and taught it that NATO and NATO-trained forces are soft and squishy and not much of a problem. Russian territory expanded to include South Ossetia, with Abkhazia thrown in as an added bonus, paving the way for further territorial expansion (Crimea, Donbass, Kherson... Nikolaev, Odessa...).

6. If the US left alone Syria, a close Russian ally for close to a century, Russia would not have expanded into the Mediterranean region. As it is, Syrian government invited Russia to help it turn the tide in its war against US-supported ISIS and Russia destroyed ISIS with the help of a rather small contingent of air-and-space forces at just one airbase. The action in Syria has showcased modern Russian weapons systems and has led to a 20-year backlog in weapons orders from around the world. What's more, Russia's allies around the world know that if the US/NATO, or their mercenaries, give them any trouble, all they have to do is whistle and Moscow will rush in with their precision bombs and neatly stack the corpses.

7. After the 2014 Kiev putsch and the re-accession of Crimea, US/Western sanctions were immensely helpful in helping jump-start a large-scale program of import

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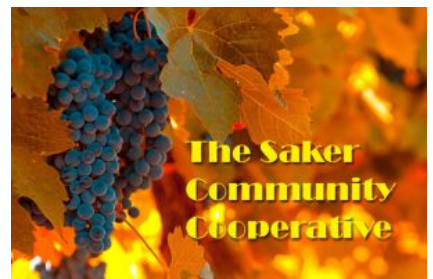
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replacement, rejuvenating both Russian industry and agriculture. Russia is now largely self-sufficient in food and a major food exporter. Its position as the world's main breadbasket will be further improved by the addition of Eastern and Southern Ukrainian "black earth" regions of uniquely fertile land. The sanctions were accompanied by speculative attacks on the ruble which drove its value down from 30 to the dollar to 60 (where it stands today) making Russian products much more competitive internationally and stimulating foreign trade.

8. The endless hollow threats to block Russia from using the SWIFT interbank messaging system have prompted Russia to create its own payment system, which is now integrated with China's. The arrest of the \$300 billion Russian sovereign wealth fund that was held on deposit in Western banks, along with freezing the funds of Russian oligarchs, have taught Russians not to trust Western banks and to avoid keeping their money abroad. All of these hostile actions in the finance space have paved the way for a rather measured response that has instantly made the ruble the most valuable and stable currency on the planet, leaving the dollar and the euro vulnerable to hyperinflation.

9. The eight-year war waged by the Ukrainian army, with unquestioning US/NATO support, against the Russian civilian population in the Donbass, has produced a very specific understanding throughout Russia's population: that the West wants to exterminate it. When the Ukrainians then declared that they want to build nuclear bombs, and when it was discovered that Pentagons bioweapons labs in the Ukraine were working on creating pathogens specifically targeting Russians, and when, finally, it became clear that it was not just the Ukrainians but all of NATO was behind it, that the Ukrainians-plus-NATO were poised to launch an all-out attack, Russia pre-empted it by launching its own Special Operation. Cynical as this may seem, the previous eight-year shelling of buildings full of old people, women and children, shown live on Russia's nightly news but steadfastly ignored in the West, was instrumental in producing approval ratings for the Special Operation that has reached 76%, with similar ratings for Putin, his government and even many of the regional governments. Now that, Western arms shipments notwithstanding, the Ukrainian military is being whittled away at a rate that will finish it off in approximately 20 days (the calculated "Day Z"), Russia is poised to emerge as an outright victor in World War III which, just like the Cold War, which it had lost, was barely even fought. This will restore Russia's military's mystique of being perpetually victorious.

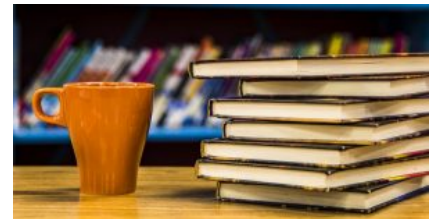
10. Finally, Russia should be grateful for the lavish funds provided over the years by the US and the collective West in support of free speech and freedom of the press in Russia, by which is meant pro-Western propaganda. First, it did help liberate Russia's media space, to a point that now Russia is much more open to freedom of self-expression than any of the European countries or the US, with barely a hint of corporate censorship or cancel culture that are rampant in the West. Second, so ham-handed and overbearingly dumb was the Western propaganda onslaught that the Russians, after processing it for some years, now openly laugh at the pro-Western narrative, and opinion research agencies report Russian support for pro-Western policies only in trace amounts. The process was helped by the sheer ludicrousness of various developments in the West: cancel culture, MeToo, LGBT, child sex change operations, promotion of pedophilia and all the rest, which produced a wave of revulsion. This 180° reversal, from overwhelmingly pro-Western opinions of the early 1990s to the current situation, are a crowning achievement of the entire three-decade-long Deep State campaign to Make Russia Great Again (MRGA).

I do not wish to argue that the existence of MRGA within the US Deep State is demonstrably, provably true. But I urge you to follow Arthur Conan Doyle's famous dictum that "Once you eliminate the impossible, whatever remains, no matter how improbable, must be the truth" and let me know what you come up with.

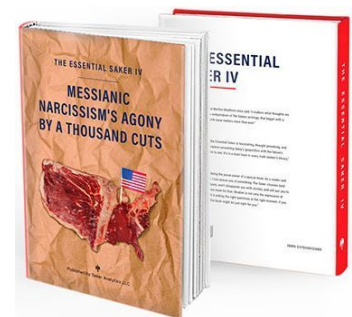
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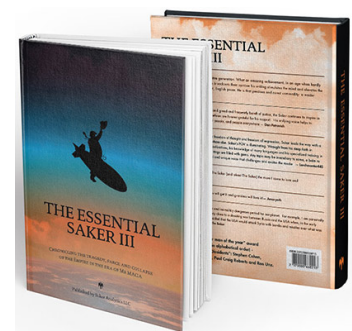
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