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Important message about the blog from Andrei

MESSAGE:

A panicked Empire tries to make Russia an 'offer it can't refuse'

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By Pepe Escobar, originally posted at The Cradle, reposted with the author's permission

Realizing NATO's war with Russia will likely end unfavorably, the US is test-driving an exit offer. But why should Moscow take indirect proposals seriously, especially on the eve of its new military advance and while it is in the winning seat?

Those behind the Throne are never more dangerous than when they have their backs against the wall.

Their power is slipping away, fast: Militarily, via NATO's progressive humiliation in Ukraine; Financially, sooner rather than later, most of the Global South will want nothing to do with the currency of a bankrupt rogue giant; Politically, the global majority is taking decisive steps to stop obeying a rapacious, discredited, de facto minority.

So now those behind the Throne are plotting to at least try to stall the incoming disaster on the military front.

As confirmed by a high-level US establishment source, a new directive on NATO vs. Russia in Ukraine was relayed to US Secretary of State Antony Blinken. Blinken, in terms of actual power, is nothing but a messenger boy for the Straussian neocons and neoliberals who actually run US foreign policy.

The secretary of state was instructed to relay the new directive – a sort of message to the Kremlin – via mainstream print media, which was promptly published by the *Washington Post*.

In the elite US mainstream media division of labor, the *New York Times* is very close to the State Department. and the *Washington Post* to the CIA. In this case though the directive was too important, and needed to be relayed by the paper of record in the imperial capital. It was published as an Op-Ed (behind paywall).

The novelty here is that for the first time since the start of Russia's February 2022 Special Military Operation (SMO) in Ukraine, the Americans are actually proposing a

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variation of the "offer you can't refuse" classic, including some concessions which may satisfy Russia's security imperatives.

Crucially, the US offer totally bypasses Kiev, once again certifying that this is a war against Russia conducted by Empire and its NATO minions – with the Ukrainians as mere expandable proxies.

'Please don't go on the offensive'

The *Washington Post's* old school Moscow-based correspondent John Helmer has provided an important service, offering the [full text of Blinken's offer](#), of course extensively edited to include fantasist notions such as "US weapons help pulverize Putin's invasion force" and a cringe-worthy explanation: "In other words, Russia should not be ready to rest, regroup and attack."

The message from Washington may, at first glance, give the impression that the US would admit Russian control over Crimea, Donbass, Zaporozhye, and Kherson – "the land bridge that connects Crimea and Russia" – as a fait accompli.

Ukraine would have a demilitarized status, and the deployment of HIMARS missiles and Leopard and Abrams tanks would be confined to western Ukraine, kept as a "deterrent against further Russian attacks."

What may have been offered, in quite hazy terms, is in fact a partition of Ukraine, demilitarized zone included, in exchange for the Russian General Staff cancelling its yet-unknown 2023 offensive, which may be as devastating as cutting off Kiev's access to the Black Sea and/or cutting off the supply of NATO weapons across the Polish border.

The US offer defines itself as the path towards a "just and durable peace that upholds Ukraine's territorial integrity." Well, not really. It just won't be a rump Ukraine, and Kiev might even retain those western lands that Poland is dying to gobble up.

The possibility of a direct Washington-Moscow deal on "an eventual postwar military balance" is also evoked, including no Ukraine membership of NATO. As for Ukraine itself, the Americans seem to believe it will be a "strong, non-corrupt economy with membership in the European Union."

Whatever remains of value in Ukraine has already been swallowed not only by its monumentally corrupt oligarchy, but most of all, investors and speculators of the BlackRock variety. Assorted corporate vultures simply cannot afford to lose Ukraine's grain export ports, as well as the trade deal terms agreed with the EU before the war. And they're terrified that the Russian offensive may capture Odessa, the major seaport and transportation hub on the Black Sea – which would leave Ukraine landlocked.

There's no evidence whatsoever that Russian President Vladimir Putin, and the entire Russian Security Council – including its Secretary Nikolai Patrushev and Deputy Chairman Dmitry Medvedev – have reason to believe anything coming from the US establishment, especially via mere minions such as Blinken and the *Washington Post*. After all the *stavka* – a moniker for the high command of the Russian armed forces – regard the Americans as "non-agreement capable," even when an offer is in writing.

This walks and talks like a desperate US gambit to stall and present some carrots to Moscow in the hope of delaying or even cancelling the planned offensive of the next few months.

Even old school, dissident Washington operatives – not beholden to the Straussian neocon galaxy – bet that the gambit will be a nothing burger: in classic "strategic ambiguity" mode, the Russians will continue on their stated drive of demilitarization, denazification and de-electrification, and will "stop" anytime and anywhere they see fit east of the Dnieper. Or beyond.

What the Deep State really wants

Washington's ambitions in this essentially NATO vs. Russia war go well beyond Ukraine. And we're not even talking about preventing a Russia-China-Germany

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Eurasian union or a peer competitor nightmare; let's stick with prosaic issues on the Ukrainian battleground.

The key "recommendations" – military, economic, political, diplomatic – were detailed in an [Atlantic Council strategy paper](#) late last year.

[And in another one](#), under "War scenario 1: The war continues in its current tempo," we find the Straussian neocon policy fully spelled out.

It's all here: from "marshaling support and military-assistance transfers to Kyiv sufficient to enable it to win" to "increase the lethality of military assistance transferred to include fighter aircraft that would enable Ukraine to control its airspace and attack Russian forces therein; and missile technology with range sufficient to reach into Russian territory."

From training the Ukrainian military "to use Western weapons, electronic warfare, and offensive and defensive cyber capabilities, and to seamlessly integrate new recruits in the service" to buttressing "defenses on the front lines, near the Donbass region," including "combat training focusing on irregular warfare."

Added to "imposing secondary sanctions on all entities doing business with the Kremlin," we reach of course the Mother of All Plunders: "Confiscate the \$300 billion that the Russian state holds in overseas accounts in the United States and EU and use seized monies to fund reconstruction."

The reorganization of the SMO, with Putin, Chief of the General Staff Valery Gerasimov, and General Armageddon in their new, enhanced roles is derailing all these elaborate plans.

The Straussians are now in deep panic. Even Blinken's number two, Russophobic warmonger Victoria "F**k the EU" Nuland, has admitted to the US Senate there will be no Abrams tanks on the battlefield before Spring (realistically, only in 2024). She also promised to "ease sanctions" if Moscow "returns to negotiations." Those negotiations were scotched by the Americans themselves in Istanbul in the Spring of 2022.

Nuland also called the Russians to "withdraw their troops." Well, that at least offers some comic relief compared with the panic oozing from Blinken's "offer you can't refuse." Stay tuned for Russia's non-response response.

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