

Advancing a Constructive Agenda for U.S. - Russia Relations

*September 8 - 9, 2014
Moscow, Russia*

The current state of U.S. - Russia relations is coming to resemble the confrontational Cold War era. This is extremely harmful to both nations and underscores the urgency for a more proactive diplomacy to reestablish mutual security through political, commercial, scientific, educational, and cultural cooperation.

The Forum will be held at the President Arbat Hotel and Moscow State University. The agenda will feature many insightful panels with the leading American and Russian experts.

In addition to the Forum and its abundant networking opportunities, the participants will have ample time and a great starting point to sightseeing and exploring the cultural riches of Moscow.

For additional information and registration please visit

www.RussiaHouse.org/wrf.php





The Silence of American Hawks About Kiev's Atrocities

The US-backed regime in Kiev has repeatedly carried out artillery and air attacks on city centers, creating a humanitarian catastrophe – one all but ignored by the US political-media establishment...



In a democratic political system, the establishment media are expected to pierce the official fog of war. In the Ukrainian crisis, however, mainstream American newspapers and television have been almost as slanted and elliptical as White House and State Department statements, obscuring the atrocities, if reporting them at all, and generally relying on information from Washington and Kiev. Most Americans are thereby unknowingly being shamed by the Obama administration's role. Those who do know but remain silent in government, think tanks, universities and media share its complicity...

On May 2, in this incendiary atmosphere, a horrific event occurred in the southern city of Odessa, awakening memories of German extermination squads in Ukraine and other Soviet republics during World War II. An organized pro-Kiev mob chased protesters into a building, set it on fire and tried to block the exits. Some forty people, perhaps many more, perished in the flames or were murdered as they fled the inferno. A still unknown number of other victims were seriously injured.



Still more shameful, no American official at any level appears to have issued a meaningful statement of sympathy for civilian victims of the Kiev government, not even those in Odessa. Instead, the administration has been unswervingly indifferent. When asked if her superiors had any concerns about the casualties of Kiev's military campaign, State Department spokeswoman Jen Psaki has repeatedly answered no....”

Stephen F. Cohen, professor of Russian studies and history at New York University and Princeton – *The Nation*

Who Violated Ukraine's Sovereignty?

June 26 editorial in the neocon flagship Washington Post, "Potemkin drawdown: The West must hold Russia to a real withdrawal from Ukraine," charged that "the rebellion in the east is manufactured by Russia to undermine Ukraine's sovereignty. The United States and Britain guaranteed support for that sovereignty in 1994 when Ukraine gave up its nuclear weapons."

That claim brought my thoughts back to a conference of distinguished scholars at the U.S.-Russia Forum in the Hart Senate office building on June 16. With Professors Stephen Cohen and Robert Legvold presenting, it was the most sensible discussion of the Ukraine imbroglio that I have witnessed to date.

The point was made that Russia had violated the Budapest agreement in annexing Ukraine. But were the Russians the only culprits? What about the rest of the story? Russia, the UK and the U.S. all pledged "to respect the independence and sovereignty and existing borders of Ukraine?" Okay. Gotcha on Putin considering the "existing borders."

But what about the political destabilization supported by the U.S. government, including the \$5 billion that Assistant Secretary of State Nuland publicly announced had been invested in Ukraine's "European aspirations" – or the scores of projects financed by the U.S.-funded National Endowment for Democracy, training activists, supporting "journalists" and organizing business and political groups.

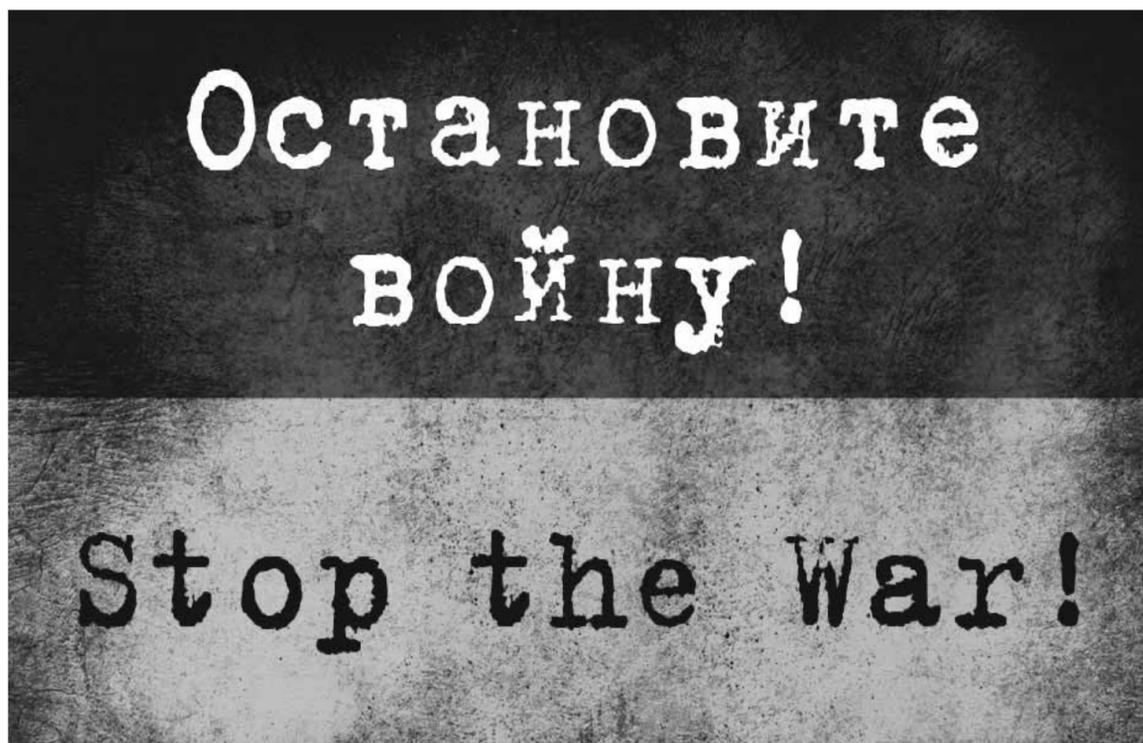
During the crisis, U.S. officials even showed up

in Kiev's Maidan square to urge on the protesters seeking to overthrow Yanukovich. Sen. John McCain gave a speech on a platform of the right-wing Svoboda party under a banner hailing the late Nazi collaborator Stepan Bandera. Nuland went so far as to pass out cookies to the demonstrators and discuss with the U.S. ambassador to Ukraine who should be take over after Yanukovich was ousted.

How does this overt and covert interference square with the Budapest pledge "to respect the

independence and sovereignty ... of Ukraine?" And how do the strong-arm tactics of the EU square with the commitment "to refrain from economic coercion designed to subordinate to their own interest the exercise by the Ukraine of the rights inherent in its sovereignty?"

Raymond McGovern, Retired CIA analyst, Co-Founder, Veteran Intelligence Professional for Sanity (VIPS)



The world is moving on and the US has trouble keeping up

The Ukraine crisis was a product, in large part, of the policy of indefinite expansion of NATO to the east. If there had been no possibility of Ukraine ever becoming part of NATO, and therefore Sevastopol becoming a NATO base, Russia would not have invaded Crimea. It is as simple as that. Americans have lived for nearly two centuries with the Monroe Doctrine. Why don't we understand that other countries are sensitive about military bases from potential rivals not only coming up to their borders, but taking land which they have historically considered theirs? These are extremely emotional issues – issues that are made to order for any authoritarian ruler that wants to strengthen his rule.

Jack Matlock is Former U.S. Ambassador to the Soviet Union during the Reagan term in the White House speaking at the June 16, 2014 US - Russia Forum in Washington and during the interview with ForeignPolicy.com

Democracy, Freedom, and Apple Pie Aren't a Foreign Policy. We like to think our way of life is the best in the world. But trying to spread American values always backfires.

As we have seen in Iraq, Afghanistan, Libya, and many other places, violent "regime change" by definition means destroying existing political and social institutions. Unfortunately, the collapse of the old order and the subsequent foreign occupation make it even less likely that an effective democracy will emerge....

The United States and other liberal states would do a much better job of promoting their most cherished political values if they

concentrated on perfecting these practices at home instead of trying to export them abroad. If Western societies are prosperous, just, and competent, and live up to their professed ideals, people in other societies will want to emulate some or all of these practices, suitably adapted to local conditions....

Stephen M. Walt is Professor of International Affairs at the Kennedy School of Government - ForeignPolicy.com

American "democracy on the march" not in its favor

According to the polls, the vast majority of the American people believe that US foreign policy has gone disastrously astray since the days when Reagan was president.

One can have different views of Reagan and his legacy, but one thing is for certain. Under his leadership, freedom and democracy made a huge leap forward when without a single shot fired, over two dozen nations, including Russia, freed themselves from the communist yoke. Some of them joined the Western alliance but as a result of the misguided policies of successive American presidents from George H. W. Bush to Bill Clinton, George W. Bush, and Barack Obama, the rare historic opportunity to include the largest and the most important of these nations, which is Russia, into this alliance was missed, and probably for good.

As a result, not only the relations with Russia have been badly damaged, but America's own interests have been hugely undermined. Moreover, the US so-called global democracy promotion campaign has brought tremendous misery for countries on the receiving end of this "promotion" and, to make things worse, it has backfired on the United States again and again.

Edward Lozansky is President of the American University in Moscow - rt.com



The war on churches

St Alexander Nevsky Cathedral in Slavyansk, eastern Ukraine, was hit by Ukrainian shelling on Sunday, shortly before the end of President Petro Poroshenko's unilateral ceasefire, the local diocese reported, as quoted by the Interfax agency.

The 30-minute shelling took place during Sunday liturgy. About a thousand people were in the area; many of them had come for the regular distribution of humanitarian help. No one was injured or killed.

"After the shooting began everyone rushed to the church. The cathedral was filled, people prayed to God with tears. The shelling wave broke several stained glass windows, people started praying even more ardently. The shelling lasted about half an hour. The Artyom District and the central market were also shelled," the priest said. Civilians were hit.



This is the seventh time that Slavyansk churches were shelled, Interfax reported.

On 26 May, a mine killed a woman near the Church of the Derzhavnaya Icon of the Mother of God when the Artyom District was shelled. Pieces of the mine broke windows in the church, damaged its facade and destroyed the church fence.

On 8 June, the day of the Holy Trinity, the downtown Church of the Holy Spirit was heav-

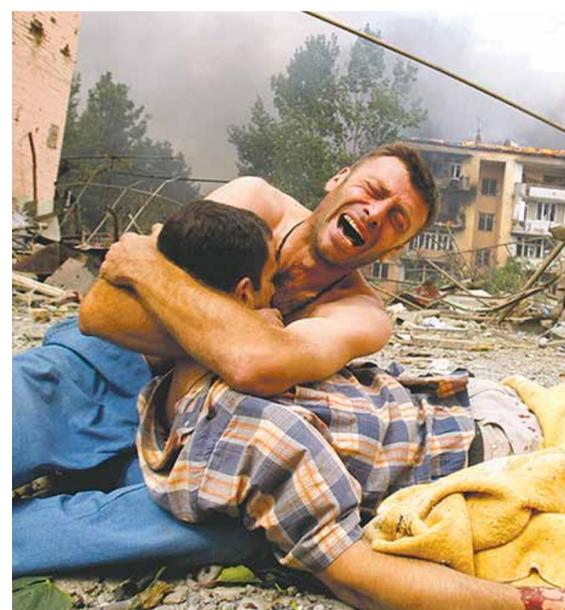


ily shelled.

Overnight on 16 June, St Seraphim Church in Cherevkovka was also shelled. The ward house and canteen were fully destroyed. The same day, St Alexander Nevsky Cathedral was hit.

On 19 June, the 18th century Church of the Resurrection was caught in the crossfire. On 21 June, the cathedral was hit again.

AsiaNews.it



The destruction of churches in the Eastern Ukraine is not a solution to the current volatile situation. An armed conflict does not justify the destruction of holy places of worship and reverence. An order must come from Kiev to guard against any further attacks on churches.

William J. Murray, Chairman, Religious Freedom Coalition

Who's really playing a zero-sum game in Ukraine?

We might do well to consider what role the West has played in the years prior to the explosion of popular unrest on the Maidan....

The years 2008-2013 might, without exaggeration, be seen some years down the line as the West's 'March on Moscow.' In April 2008, NATO held a summit in Bucharest at which it was declared that "NATO welcomes Ukraine's and Georgia's Euro-Atlantic aspirations for membership in NATO. We agreed today that these countries will become members of NATO." This took place only two months after the U.S. and the EU decided to recognize Kosovo's independence in the face of furious Russian opposition. What resulted that summer, the Russian-Georgian conflict, should have come to a surprise to no one....

The declaration that both Georgia and Ukraine

"will become members of NATO" was followed by the formation of the EU's Eastern Partnership project in May 2009. The project was created with the explicit goal of integrating six former Soviet states into the EU: Georgia, Ukraine, Moldova, Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Belarus. The partnership, the joint brainchild of Swedish and Polish Foreign Ministers Carl Bildt and Radek Sikorski, began the process by which Ukraine would be maneuvered into the Western camp. Some claim, erroneously, that the Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Agreement (DCFTA) proffered by the Union is simply a free trade agreement. That is wrong. The DCFTA requires Ukraine to adopt EU laws and regulations and this would have an exclusionary effect on trade with Russia. It too would require Ukraine to adopt common defense and security measures in line with EU member states, almost all of

which are NATO members....

And so the March on Moscow continued in 2009 when, according to a report in the Norwegian newspaper Aftenposten, NATO Secretary General Anders Fogh Rasmussen wanted to explore the possibility of cooperation between NATO and the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO). Once the U.S. Mission in Brussels got wind of this, then U.S. Ambassador to NATO Ivo Daadler was instructed to de-rail Rasmussen, because "it would be counterproductive for NATO to engage with the CSTO, an organization initiated by Moscow to counter potential NATO and U.S. influence in the former Soviet space."

James Carden is a Contributing Editor to The American Conservative magazine, former advisor to the US-Russia Presidential Commission at the State Department - Russia-Direct.org.