

Pepe Escobar: The West is Hell-Bent on Provoking Russia Into Hot War

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Pepe Escobar

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The warning by President Putin could not be starker: “In the event of the use of long-range weapons, the Russian Armed Forces will again have to make decisions about expanding the sanitary zone further (...) Do they want global conflict? It seemed they wanted to negotiate [with us], but we don’t see much desire to do this.”

Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov then came up with the appropriate metaphor to designate NATO’s ramped-up military outbursts: not only NATO is raising the degree of escalation but delving into a warlike “ecstasy”.

It does not get more serious than that. “They”, as Putin alluded to, do seem to want “global conflict”. That’s at the heart of NATO’s new suicidal “ecstasy” strategy.

For all their circumlocutions, [NATO Secretary Jens Stoltenberg](#), French President Emmanuel Macron, and German Chancellor Olaf Scholz have

effectively greenlighted Kiev using Western weapons for attacks deep inside the Russian Federation. The alleged debate, still ongoing, is just a “smokescreen” for the real objective: a pretext that could lead to WWII.

NATO dragging EU into WWII, it is no longer defensive alliance - French politician

NATO is dragging the European Union into World War III with statements about strikes on Russian territory and is no longer a "defensive alliance," Florian Philippot, the leader of French... pic.twitter.com/0UGYMPV0P

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There’s no reason to think Kiev will stick to “limited” strikes against relatively unimportant targets. Instead, it is likely to target critical security infrastructure in hopes of provoking an unrelenting Russian response, which in turn would pave the way for NATO to invoke Article 5 and de facto engage in a Hot War.

Already on the Edge of Doom

The escalation “ecstasy” defined by Peskov went out of control since a – secret - new batch of ATACMS was dispatched to Kiev earlier this year, complemented with longer-range ATACMS. Kiev has been using them for serious hits on Russian air bases and key air defense nodes. These ATACMS fire missiles at Mach 3 speed: a serious challenge even for the best Russian air defense systems.

All that seems to point to a crucial decision enveloped in several layers of fog: as the incoming, cosmic NATO humiliation in the black soil of Novorossiia becomes self-evident day after day, the Western elites who really run the show are betting on provoking a full Hot War against Russia.

Richard H. Black, a former US senator from Virginia, [offers a sobering analysis](#) :

“This is a continuation of the pattern in which the NATO forces recognize that, in losing the war in Ukraine, with the fragile lines of defense breaking, and the NATO response is to escalate. This is not accidental, but very deliberate. It is not the first attack on the Russian nuclear triad. The ideological folks are seeing their world crumbling, after flying the rainbow flag over conservative countries and [waging] perpetual wars. They are frantic and could escalate to nuclear war to get out of

the bind. They are taking a series of baby steps, and respond that 'they don't do anything in response,' and so they keep taking baby steps until one of them lands on a land mine and we are into World War III. (...) Putin is very aware of the disconnect in the West, who keep saying he is just saber rattling, but he is not—he is informing the West of the dangerous reality.”

In Russia, Senator Dmitry Rogozin, a former head of Roscosmos, directly warned Washington: “We are not just on the threshold, but already on the edge, beyond which, if the enemy is not stopped in such actions, an irreversible collapse of the strategic security of the nuclear powers will begin.”

General Evgeny Buzhinky advanced an ominous scenario: “I am sure that if the strikes of Taurus or ATACMS are very harmful for Russia, then I presume we will at least strike the logistical hub in the territory of Poland in Rzeszów” where the missiles are staged for delivery to Ukraine.

The connection in this case would be irreversible: Russia hits Poland; NATO invokes Article 5; WW3.

Be Careful What You Wish For

NATO warlike “ecstasy” is predictably cloaked in cowardice. For all the rhetorical garbage 24/7 about “we don't want a war with Russia”, the facts point to NATO using Kiev to attack and try to destroy a wide range of Russian military assets. There's also no denying the US Deep State's role in enabling Kiev's terror attacks against Russian civilians in the Donbass, Belgorod, and elsewhere.

Considering the serious debate finally on across several Russian platforms, all of that might constitute a reasonable pretext for a tactical nuclear drop on the – legally illegitimate – Kiev gang. At least that would finish a war that is dragging for too long.

US has not encouraged Ukrainian strikes outside of Ukraine, but Kiev has to make it's own decisions about how to defend itself, US Secretary of State Antony Blinken has claimed

Earlier, NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg proposed that Western countries must allow the use...

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Yet that would be totally out of character when it comes to legalistic Putin – who deals with Armageddon-laden issues with the patience of a Taoist monk. Yet Russia has an entire arsenal of asymmetric tools – both conventional and nuclear -- that can deliver a painful **blow to NATO** in places where the alliance least expects.

We're not there yet – even as we get ominously closer day after day. Dmitri Medvedev has issued the umpteenth red line: a US strike on Russian targets, or the US letting Kiev hit targets within Russia using American missiles and drones would be the 'start of World War'.



Military

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Yesterday

And Foreign Minister Lavrov, once again displaying his trademark Taoist patience, had to come up with another serious reminder: Russia will regard the deployment of nuclear-capable F-16s in Ukraine – which de facto can only be operated by NATO pilots – as “a deliberate signal from NATO in the nuclear field to Russia”.

And still the gaggle of armchair Dr. Strangeloves – lavishly rewarded by the rarified Atlanticist plutocracy holding real power, funds, influence and mass media control - is not listening.