



'U.S. claims of Russian threat to Ukraine are groundless'

By Dmitry Strauss

The following interview with Struggle-La Lucha co-editor Greg Butterfield was originally published by the website Ukraina.ru.

Dmitry Strauss: Greg, Russia has raised the issue of nonproliferation of U.S. and NATO missile strike systems near its borders. This topic will be discussed by Russia with NATO and the United States in the coming days. In your opinion, how legitimate is this point of view of Russia?

Greg Butterfield: I believe Russia's position is completely valid and correct. The unbridled growth of the U.S.-dominated NATO military alliance over the last three decades is a threat to Russia and its allies, and one of the greatest threats to peace in the world. The growth of NATO has meant not just the spread of Western troops and weaponry in eastern and central Europe. It has also meant the ascension of governments like those in Poland, Hungary, Ukraine and the Baltic States, that look to the fascist collaborators of World War II as their example.

President Putin and the Russian government have consistently spoken about the danger inherent in NATO's integration of Ukraine – the last major “domino” on Russia's western border. The situation has been precarious ever since the U.S.-backed coup in 2014 brought a far-right regime to power that nurtures openly fascist elements who eagerly desire war with Russia.



More U.S. and NATO weapons are being sent to the Ukraine puppet government.

In the final days of the Soviet Union, when the Gorbachev government withdrew support from the USSR's socialist European allies, the U.S. pledged not to expand NATO to the east or threaten Russia and other post-Soviet states. Of course, Washington never honored this pledge. Republican and Democratic administrations alike have consistently betrayed that promise and steadily increased the danger of another devastating war in Eurasia.

DS: The U.S. and NATO talk about Russia's “aggressive plans” with regard to Ukraine as their reason for the placement of missile strike systems. Russia says it has no such plans, and explains that the concentration of its troops near the

Ukrainian border coincides with its right to place its troops in its own territory the way it likes. Which argument is more convincing?

GB: The claims by the U.S. and NATO of a threatened Russian “invasion” of Ukraine are completely baseless. They are not taken seriously by any knowledgeable person. Unfortunately, the workers and general population in the West are denied that knowledge. This is the greatest challenge facing the anti-war movement here. U.S. officials expect the lack of objective information and constant beating of war drums in the capitalist media to convince the masses of people that Russia is a threat to people here. They are pursuing

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the same kind of war propaganda against China.

Since the Maidan coup in 2014, Washington and its puppets in Ukraine have repeatedly tried to provoke a situation where Russia would be forced to intervene to protect the population of the Donetsk and Lugansk republics. In the West, where the legitimacy of the Donbass republics has never been acknowledged, such a defensive and humanitarian action by Russia would be portrayed as an act of aggression that justifies NATO intervention.

So far, the governments and militaries of Russia and the Donbass republics have managed to skillfully deflect these provocations. The current campaign in the West to convince the populace that a Russian invasion of Ukraine is imminent, which started two months ago, is the most dangerous and sustained since 2014.

DS: What do you think is the reason for the conflict between Russia and Ukraine and Russia and the United States? Is it the geopolitical repartition of the world? Is it aggression of Russia? Is it an outdated approach of the United States to current world events?

GB: The conflict stems directly from the destruction of the Soviet Union 30 years ago. When socialism was overthrown and the Soviet republics split up, Washington and Wall Street expected the entire region to quietly become "banana republics" of the West. For the first decade under Yeltsin, it seemed this would be the case. But the rise of an independent-minded capitalist oligarchy in Russia, represented by the Putin administration, put a wrench into U.S. plans.

Even today, two decades later, the U.S. ruling class and its political establishment cannot reconcile themselves to the existence of a sovereign Russia, Belarus and Donbass, whether capitalist or socialist.

DS: Why do you think there is such a tense political situation in the world? How close do you think we are to a war? Or is it just an external impression, but in fact everything is as usual now, with no especially deep troubles?

GB: The danger of war is growing. The unending drive of the world capitalist economy for greater profits engenders war between nations and states. This is especially true of the U.S., whose global economic and military



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hegemony is constantly being eroded. To keep their fragile grip on power, the U.S. capitalists are driven to increasingly dangerous actions.

It's clear that the powers in Washington will never reconcile themselves to Russia's independent existence. Sooner or later, war will break out – unless there is significant movement toward socialism by the working class and oppressed peoples, in solidarity with the countries that value independence and sovereignty.

In the meantime, Russia, China and other countries are wise to take strong measures to defend themselves.

Source: Ukraina.ru

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