

In the intervening years since the Syrian Civil War has wracked the Middle East with violence, vast sums of money have been expended in order to prop up the régime of Bashar al-Assad and help him mobilize his armed forces in order to persecute a war against his own people. But how much has been expended? This paper looks to answer through a critical, quantitative analysis of publicly available sources, exactly how much has been spent by Russia and other regional players to further along the war in Syria, ostensibly for al-Assad's sake. The paper then looks to forecast the political, and economic environment which will greet the American alliance against ISIS following that group's demise in northern Syria, as well as the broader environment in all of Syria.

For a classical analysis of the finances of the Bashar al-Assad régime in Syria, or any rogue régime, it would behoove the investigators to have physical, or electronic sources directly from within the régime in question. However for this particular analysis it hardly goes without saying that the Régime of the al-Assad family, which has been operating in Syria since the early 1960's, and considering that the al-Assads have ruled with such a despotic, and tribal system for so long, that their ceases to be any self published sources available to the general

public regarding the finances and expenses of the régime, especially considering the recent turmoil not only in Syria, as well as in the Middle East as a whole. However there is one source which the author has relied on heavily an order to help determine the true finances of not only Bashar al-Assad, but the country as a whole as well, the World Bank. It is by using the data which the World Bank has compiled using both public as well private data, both researched as well as self reported data, that I'm able to come to the conclusions which I have in this paper.

I intend to prove that $\alpha + \beta = \Psi - \Delta = \Sigma \div \Psi = \Phi \div \lambda = \Omega \div \Sigma = K$

Where α = Short Term External Debt β = Interest Arrears on Long Term Debt Ψ = Net Personal Short Term Debt Δ = Net Inflows Σ = Net Inflows Minus Short Term Debt Φ = Net Inflows Ratio λ = Reserves to External Debt Stocks Ratio Ω = Reserves to External Debt Stocks to Net Total Inflows Ratio K = Net Foreign Outflows to Syrian Government

The numbers inserted into the equation come from the World Bank¹ and after some extrapolation reproduced here as thus:

¹ World Bank Website Home Page: <http://www.worldbank.org>

I then intend to test my theory by creating a numbers system using set theory, and further the methodology of comparative analysis on the number set. I intend to prove that...

$$\left\{ \begin{array}{l} -\$460 - \$345 - \$45 \\ -\$531 + \$991 - \$45 \\ -\$12,981 + \$403 - \$263 \end{array} \right\}$$

$$-\$850 - \$415 - \$12,841 = -\$13.276 \text{ Billion}$$

$$\text{Net Gazprom Debt Servicing} = -\$13.276 \text{ Billion}$$

$$\text{Gross Russian Debt} = -\$810.546 \text{ Billion}$$

$$\text{Net Russian Debt} = -\$823.822 \text{ Billion}$$

$$\text{Price of Gazprom Sale} = \$145.281 \text{ Billion}$$

$$\text{Net Russian Debt} = -\$678.541 \text{ Billion}$$

$$\text{or} = \sim -\$698 \text{ Billion}$$

The number set will consist of numbers that have been created from the World Bank statistics. These numbers will calculate both Syrian Public, and Syrian Private Debt. The Public debt numbers will consist mostly of the short term Assad specific debt. That is, debt which corresponds only to debt which Syrian President Bashar al-Assad is personally responsible. The Syrian

Private debt is debt which Assad's Government is personally responsible for. This debt includes figures which have been held back from the World Bank and includes monies from entities such as Russia (both public and private citizens), Iran (both public, and private citizens), Central Asian, South East Asian, North Korean, Middle Eastern, and African Stake Holders. The other numbers contained in the numbers set were derived from the last current public filings from Gazprom, the Russian oil and gas energy giants, annual report. The annual report used from Gazprom is current as of early 2016. The validity of the numbers set is based on the determinant of the first equation earlier expressed to calculate Net Foreign Outflows to the Syrian Government. The numbers used to calculate the numbers set consist of the 2016 Numbers which were calculated using chiefly the World Bank Figures published on the World Bank's website. Name of the World Bank report that is sourced is the International Debt Statistics Publication² from the World Bank Website³. The numbers are then prepared using an analogous equation which allows for the computing of the Net Foreign Outflows to the Syrian Government.

² The International Debt Statistics publication is a once yearly publication dedicated to the accurate calculation of current international debt for all the countries of the world including Syria. The report used is accurate as of June 18, 2017 it can be found at: <https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/bitstream/handle/10986/25697/9781464809941.pdf>

³ World Bank Website Home Page: <http://www.worldbank.org>

Estimated Net Syrian Inflows/Net Russian Outflows to Syria

Year (Estimates)	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	(2016)
Short Term External Debt In Millions (US\$)	562	546	364	430	532	504	531
Interest Arrears on Longterm Debt in Millions (US\$)	221	222	321	406	461	479	460
Net Inflows in Millions (US\$)	1039	500	-281	-19	47	-46	-45
Reserves to External Debt Stocks Ratio (%)	369.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Net Personal(Short) Term Debt in Millions (US\$)	783	768	685	836	993	983	991
Net Inflows Minus Personal Debt in Millions (US\$)	256	-268	-966	-855	-946	-1029	-1036
(Net) Total Inflows Ratio (%)	0.326947637292465	-0.348958333333333	-1.41021897810219	-1.02272727272727	-0.952668680765357	-1.04679552390641	-1.04540867810293
(Reserves to External Debt Stocks) To (Net Total Inflows) Ratio (%)	0.088603695743215	-393.841735839844	0.358067429063856	-285.624212009768	0.333539189154166	-313.844836812434	0.333097300156543
Net Russian Outflows to Syria in Millions (US\$)	22.6825461102631	105549.585205078	136227.153284672	244208.701268352	901.224572004028	322946.337079995	-345.088802962179
Net Russian Outflows to Syria Increase		4653.33938668024	0.774805775941842	1.79265803755022	-270.974304135219	358.341690974834	-935.835455418671
Net Russian Outflows to Syria Increase Percentage (%)	100%	465,333.93%	77.48%	179.26%	-2,709.74%	3,583.41%	-93,583.54%
Net Russian Outflows to Syria Year to Date in Millions (US\$)	22.6825461102631	105572.267751188	241799.42103586	486008.122304212	486909.346876216	809855.68395621	809510.595153248

The equation is of the neo-classical school of Economic thought, though it is of a proprietary nature. The data gathered and used is almost completely theoretical in nature. The necessity for such calculations is mostly due to the dubious accounting of both the current Bashar al-Assad led Syrian government, but also the corrupt crony capitalism of the Russian, and Russian owned Gazprom quasi governmental accounting standards. This is also in part due to the World Bank accounting measures which seek to attain the "most accurate" statistics on international debt obligations by countries, which occur either through traditional, but also untraditional channels.⁴ It should also be noted that the countries, and companies in question also have a history of opaque, and dubious accounting standards which prevents the average researcher from being able to accurately, and with good confidence compute the actual summation, of the particular statistics in question. Particularly as relates to the sum of total government expenditures, debt obligations, and for companies; the amount of debt currently held, and annual revenues, amongst other bottom lines. The consequences of such opaque book keeping extend into the popular public domain as

⁴ This is according to the method of collection as spelled out in the text of the World Bank report on International Debt Statistics 2017, <https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/bitstream/handle/10986/25697/9781464809941.pdf>, accessed June 21st, 2017

well, as the recent sale of the Russian monopoly Gazprom clearly elucidates.⁵ And though for all the estimations, and "guesses" which are presumed, and there are many, I still feel that with confidence these are in fact the numbers and figures which align almost uniformly with the proportions which I seek to ascertain through my methodologies.

In addition to the aforementioned World Bank figures, I also hope to prove the fraudulence, and simultaneously esoteric functioning of 2015 Gazprom annual report numbers; which came out at the height of Russia's involvement in the Syrian Civil War. By comparing these numbers to both World Bank Figures Current 2017, as well as Russian and overall Sovereign Wealth Fund figures, I hope to draw a correlation linking the amount of debt which Syria owes, and the overall health of both the Russian Sovereign Wealth Funds, as well as the overall Sovereign Wealth Fund picture. **This correlation is drawn to support the conclusion that monies acquired from assets leveraged from Western European, and North American nations, by Sovereign Wealth Funds (Russia in particular), were then used to in turn further leverage Russian (and possibly central Asian) petroleum**

⁵ The details of which are extremely scarce and so it is difficult to come up with an accurate accounting of either the size, scope, or exact price of the sale, or even whom the buyers are.

**and gas assets, which in turn had monies which were leveraged an
order to Train, Support, and Defend, the Bashar al-Assad Régime.**

In the spring of 2011 the "Arab Spring", a popular movement of revolt in the Middle East was in full swing and had made it's way to Syria. The Shiite Alawite government of Bashar al-Assad was under pressure both internally, and internationally to listen to the people on the streets and give up power so that democracy could stand in his stead. The al-Assad government however, had no intentions of giving up the reins of power and what began was a concerted, and calculated effort to crush all manner of opposition in Syria by using military means. This brutal, and oppressive counter to the Syrian freedom movement beget opposition armies which in turn began the Syrian Civil War. At first the geo-political calculations of the Syrian Civil War for western powers were simple, Assad must go, and the United States and it's allies must do everything in its power to facilitate that transfer of power. The mechanics of which came to a head on October 17, 2012, when the al-Assad government used

GAZPROM'S KEY BUDGET TARGETS

2017 ASSET SALES	2Q	3Q	4Q			
Proceeds, billion rubles	122.5	157.5	70			
2016-2019 MARKET OUTLOOK, BUDGETS	2016*	2017	2018	2019		
Urals crude, \$/bbl	40	48	52	55		
Ruble/USD exchange rate	68.9	63.3	62.1	61.3		
Average gas price in EU, Turkey, \$/1,000cm	169	166-168	175	180		
Investments, billion rubles***	854	911	850	850		
Dividend payments, billion rubles**	186.8	186.8	186.8	186.8		
External borrowings, billion rubles	188	288	705	641		
incl. long-term loans	87	160	396	391		
incl. bonds	101	128	308	250		
* 2016 plan for parent company						
<u>set in Oct.</u>						
** Payments implying 7.89 rubles/share						
*** It is Believed that This is the Amount Which						
Russia Will Owe During the Intervening Years in Billions of US Dollars.						

chemical weapons on civilians in Idlib Province.⁶ This was in violation of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW), and its United Nations Mandate. Ironically only days before the United States Government had warned of a "red line" which the Syrian government must not cross, or they would face the consequences. However the bulk of the threat against the Assad regime was unenforceable at the time, as the United States, and its partners had no appetite for invading another Middle Eastern country.

Throughout the time of the Syrian Civil War many resources, and sources of resources, as I intend to prove, were exhausted mainly by the Assad regime, by spending exorbitant sums of money to keep the regime in power. This was all at a time when oil, and natural gas prices were realizing smaller, and smaller returns for the nations which chiefly mine these minerals. And whom also happen to chiefly be the proponents of the al-Assad régime. The links, as I intend to prove, are not solely between countries directly linked to the Syrian régime. But also to countries which are linked to countries directly linked to the Syrian régime, chief amongst these being Russia.

⁶ Use of Chemical Weapons in the Syrian Civil War, [wikipedia.com](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Use_of_chemical_weapons_in_the_Syrian_Civil_War#Incidents), found at: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Use_of_chemical_weapons_in_the_Syrian_Civil_War#Incidents, accessed: 7/17/17

It has been determined that Russia, and other Syrian Proxies may have expended in excess of \$800 Billion US dollars in the war in Syria. Russia, whose involvement in the war, if the numbers are to be believed, goes back to at least 2011, and recently required them to Sell a Large Stake in Gazprom to a Mystery

Fig. 15.5: Sovereign Wealth Funds Investing in Real Estate by Location

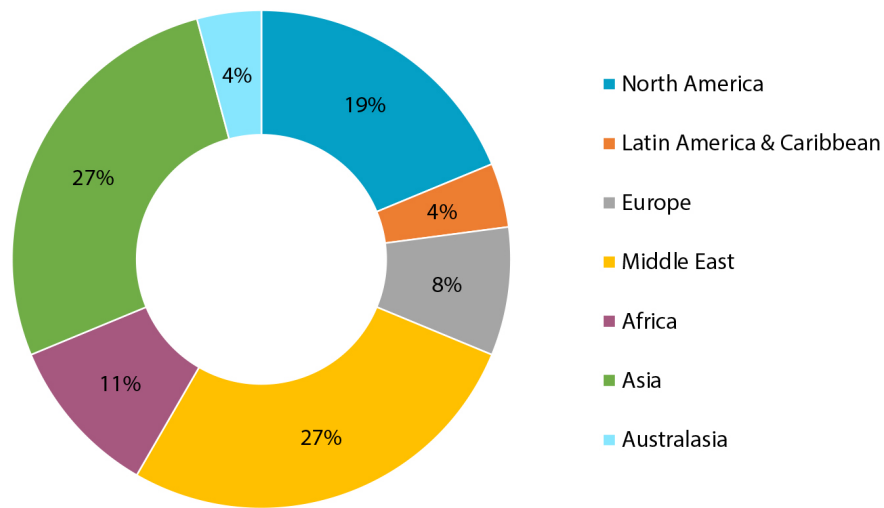
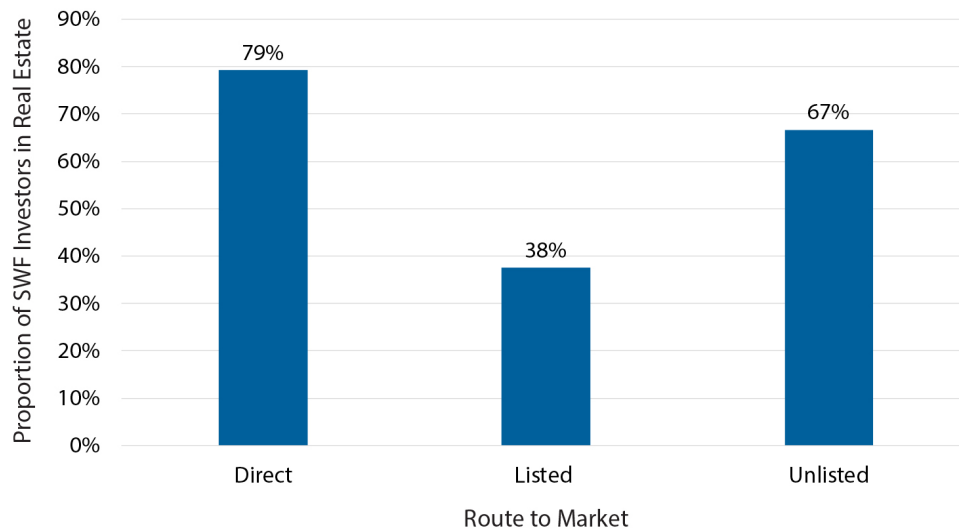


Fig. 15.6: Sovereign Wealth Funds Investing in Real Estate by Route to Market



Buyer. All this comes at a time where the battle for Syria has forced Russia, and Syria, to expend vast sums of money against battle hardened rebel groups supported by the United States.

The numbers⁷ which paint a story that was mostly intact through the narrative in the media reveals that during the year 2011, shortly after the Arab spring protest erupted in Syria, and turned violent, the Syrian government was vouchsafed a sum totaling in excess of \$105 Billion US dollars to put down the protest. In the following year, 2012 – when the protest had by then morphed into a civil war, the sum is increased by 77% with a lump sum, or added value injection of currency equal to \$136 Billion US dollars. The amounts from their begin to vary radically from year to year with an estimated \$224 Billion being expended in 2013, \$901 million in 2014, before the amounts multiply again, coinciding with the stepped up presence of Russia in Syria, topping out at \$322 Billion in 2015 before again bottoming out in 2016 where an estimated \$935 Million was actually taken from Syria's coffers. If the numbers are to be believed the astronomical price which the Russian's paid to keep

⁷ $\alpha + \beta = \Psi - \Delta = \Sigma / \Psi = \Phi / \lambda = \Omega / \Sigma = K$ Where α = Short Term External Debt β = Interest Arrears on Long Term Debt Ψ = Net Personal Short Term Debt Δ = Net Inflows Σ = Net Inflows Minus Short Term Debt Φ = Net Inflows Ratio λ = Reserves to External Debt Stocks Ratio Ω = Reserves to External Debt Stocks to Net Total Inflows Ratio K = Net Foreign Outflows to Syrian Government

Gazprom Board of Directors approves adjusted Investment Program, budget, and cost reduction program for 2016

October 18, 2016, 13:50

The Gazprom [Board of Directors](#) approved the adjusted Investment Program, budget (financial plan), and cost optimization (reduction) program for 2016.

Pursuant to the adjusted Investment Program, total investments will stand at **RUB 853.01 billion**, up RUB 11.011 billion versus the Investment Program approved in December 2015. Accordingly, the amount of long-term financial investments will equal RUB **173.159 billion**, with RUB 10.011 billion for the acquisition of shares.

In line with Gazprom's adjusted budget for 2016, the external financial borrowing will total **RUB 187.8 billion**. The approved financial plan will provide for a full coverage of Gazprom's liabilities without a deficit.

The adjusted cost optimization (reduction) program for 2016 includes cost optimization (reduction) measures with an expected cumulative effect of RUB 16 billion.

The adjustments to the Investment Program for 2016 can be primarily attributed to an increase in long-term financial investments.

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[Gazprom forging ahead with its innovative projects](#)

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October 3, 2016, 19:30

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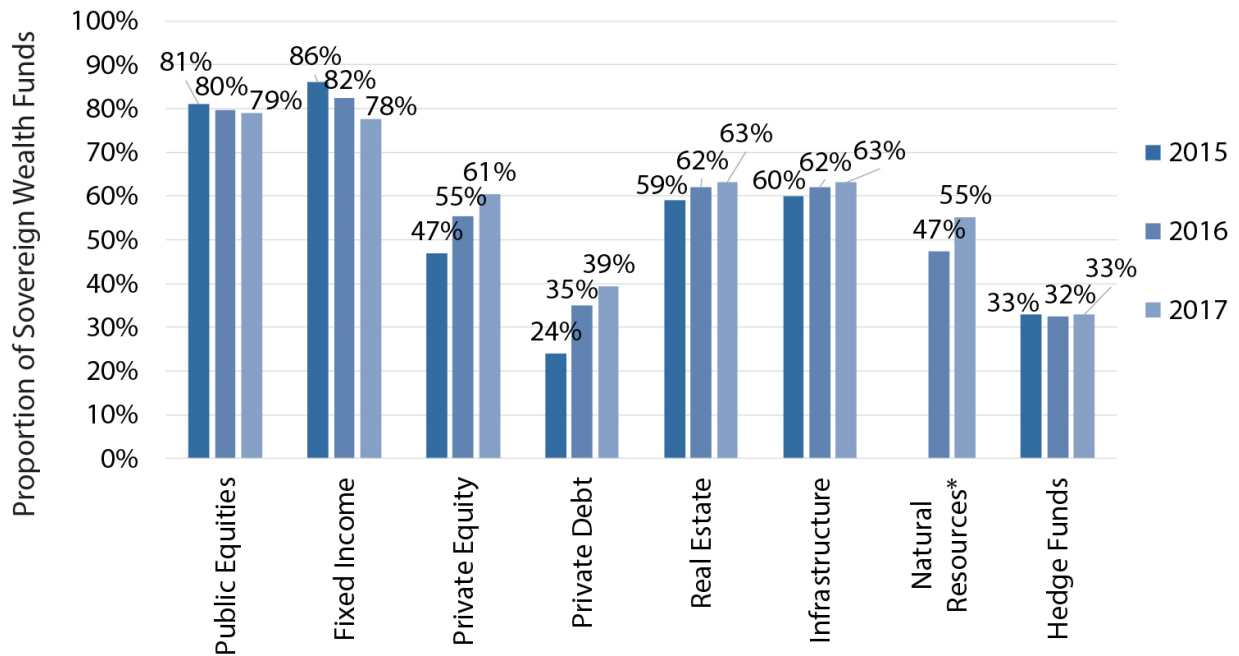
Assad in power comes in at a cool \$809 Billion Dollars.

For all of this it seems that the Russians may have, or could recoup almost all of the money by the aforementioned sale of a stake in Gazprom, a Russian company which keeps notoriously opaque books. As well as by shuffling debt through their Sovereign Wealth Fund(SWF), and its foreign asset reserves. The amounts begin to truly get out of proportion when it's considered that the leveraging of these foreign asset reserves was done many times over an order to protect the Russian government from the faults of the its Chief Administrator, Vladimir Putin. As well as the frailties inherent in a policy which basis it's grounding in the support of a chaotic and authoritarian Middle Eastern régime which is currently going through upheaval.

These maneuvers which were meant to protect the Russian government have, however, sown roots in the West, as well as other Sovereign Wealth Funds. As the primary markets for investment vehicles of this class are United States, and Western

European assets, in particular private real estate assets, as well as public bonds. If this is true it would put the Russian

Fig. 1.3: Sovereign Wealth Funds Investing in Each Asset Class, 2015 - 2017



*Please note: Preqin has only been collecting natural resources data since 2015.

governments finances back on steady ground, though at the expense of relinquishing control of some of the glittering crown jewels in the governments business portfolio. As for Assad, and Syria its estimated through the numbers released by the World Bank that Syria owes to short term debtors in excess of \$1 trillion US dollars, with Assad personally owing at least 10% of that or \$100 billion. The future of Syria after a war which has displaced 2 million people and which has killed untold scores more is still up in the air.

Fig. 12.1: Estimated Allocation of circa €600bn of LDAs by Asset Type, Key Characteristics and Location Activity

Asset Type	Estimated Allocation	Key Characteristics	Location of Expected Activity
Public Finance	50%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Among the longest dated assets in European banks; maturities of up to 70 years Some loans may have features that allow prepayment risk to be controlled Public information on fixed-rate deals indicate gross yields of 4-8% 	Germany, UK, Ireland
Project Finance	20%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Standard tenors range anywhere from 5 to 20+ years Margins for construction/greenfield projects go up to 2% while refinancing projects lie between 1.6-1.8% 	Germany, Iberia, Netherlands
Shipping	10%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maturities typically 5-10 years Gross yields of 1.5-5% 	Germany, Netherlands, UK, Ireland
Aviation and other	20%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maturities typically 25+ years Market evidence indicates gross yields of up to 8% 	Iberia, Germany, UK

Source: PwC research, latest available published financial statements

Two of some of the worlds biggest militaries, the United States, and Russia, squared off fighting a proxy war between each other in Syria which has left many wondering what is next.

If these numbers; \$800+ Billion over Seven years, and the reported sale of Gazprom are to be believed, then the use of this evidence as an instrument which can be used to further the relations between the United States, and France should not come as a surprise. France which as of late, has often shows great deference, almost reverence for Russia in its relations with the

Chief of State could possibly, under the right powers of suasion, be induced to refuse further loans, and guarantees to Russia as a measure to further the entanglement of Russia with United States Sanctions, and as a way to further diminish Russian influence and geoeconomics might, as defined by Robert Blackwill in his 2015 book War By Other Means; GEOECONOMICS is: The use of economic instruments to promote and defend national interests, and to produce beneficial geopolitical results; and the effects of other nations' economic actions on a country's geopolitical goals.⁸

What this means for the United States and French relationship, and its correlation to Russia, is that an order to influence the United States, French relationship in specific their needs to be a flourishing of economic ties between the two Countries. This, I posit in subsequent ideas for mutual cooperation, can be accomplished by first and foremost deepening ties between the equities, and securities markets. This can be accomplished by establishing free trade agreements between the United States, Canada, and Europe. And two, restructuring banking debt between

⁸ Blackwill, Robert D.; Harris, Jennifer M. (2016-04-11). War by Other Means (Kindle Locations 494-496). Harvard University Press. Kindle Edition.

the two countries which goes above, and beyond Basel II, and even Basel III.

Russia

Russian Intransigence:

Russia intends on building up its military capacity rapidly despite the fact that sanctions and low crude oil prices have taken a hold of their economy. And according to Dr. Stephen J. Blank in a white paper entitled "POLITICS AND ECONOMICS IN PUTIN'S RUSSIA: WHAT DO THEY MEAN FOR THE U.S. ARMY?" he goes on to say that:

Currently, there is a huge defense buildup that aims to spend \$716 billion between now and 2020 to make the Russian armed forces a competitive high-tech armed force, with 70 percent of its weapons being modern (whatever that category means to Moscow). Yet this system already has shown repeatedly that it cannot deliver the goods and that the attempt to remilitarize at this relatively breakneck speed (relative to other comparable powers) is failing to produce the weapons Moscow wants.⁹

Russia as recently as November of 2014 proclaimed itself as the most powerful country in the world. However development is lagging terribly behind all advanced economies and a lot of middle income countries (MIC's). In fact according to Dr. Zibigniew Brezezinski the OECD (Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development) has:

⁹ Stephen J. Blank Politics in Putin's Russia, POLITICS AND ECONOMICS IN PUTIN'S RUSSIA: WHAT DO THEY MEAN FOR THE U.S. ARMY? p. 7-8.

projections by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development for the year 2020 (that) envisage not only China's gross domestic product as approximately four times larger than Russia's, but with India ahead of Russia as well.¹⁰

When Russia and China signed an economic agreement earlier this year which stipulated oil to China for Russian rubles it was before the U.S., and E.U. had applied sanctions in response to Russia's illegal war in the Ukraine, and before the Russian separatist downed flight MH17 over Ukrainian airspace. That disaster is what ultimately led to the sanctions from the European Union and United States being applied. This is extremely important from the Russian point of view since according to the World Bank, Country Partnership Strategy (CPS) for the Russian Federation:

Russia's economy is dominated by natural resource extraction under-taken by a few large corporations, a concentration reflected in its output and export structures and its fiscal dependence.¹¹

And in fact it is dominated so much so by natural resources that Dr. Zbigniew Brzezinski in the Washington Quarterly goes on to stipulate that:

¹⁰ Zbigniew Brzezinski, "Putin's Choice," *The Washington Quarterly*, Vol. XXXI, No. 2, Spring 2008, p. 109.

¹¹ POLITICS AND ECONOMICS IN PUTIN'S RUSSIA
Stephen J. Blank Editor December 2013 RUSSIAN ECONOMIC REFORM 2012: "DÉJÀ VU ALL OVER AGAIN" Steven Rosefielde p. 39., World Bank, Country Partnership Strategy (CPS) for the Russian Federation.

No wonder that the World Bank reported in 2005 that fuels, mining products, and agriculture accounted for 74 percent of Russia's total exports, while manufacturing accounted for 80 percent of Russia's total imports.¹²

This means that although Russia was once a state with a very diverse, though centrally planned economy during the cold war. The economics of today's Russia make it a state which has yet to escape the resource curse.

Russian Oil and Gas Gambit:

Russia has neo-imperial ambitions that include but are not limited to Russian dominance of the energy markets. In fact according to Robert Einhorn and Rose Gottemoeller "Russia is working actively to reinvigorate and expand its nuclear industry and its reliance on nuclear power in the decades to come. Russian technical and political benefits and opportunities under a 123 agreement"¹³, And "These reform efforts are in line with Russia's broader energy strategy—to expand Russia's global role as an energy provider, along with Russian technical and political benefits and opportunities under a 123 agreement."¹⁴ Though the 123 agreement was meant to expand commercial ties between the U.S. and Russia's civilian nuclear sectors, these plans have presumably been put on hold. This is due to the downing of MH-17, and Russian intransigence in the Ukraine. An equally contentious area of conflict derives from the fact that Russia inherited a gas pipeline infrastructure that transports gas to Europe across territories that are now independent

¹² Zbigniew Brzezinski, "Putin's Choice," *The Washington Quarterly*, Vol. XXXI, No. 2, Spring 2008, p. 109.

¹³ The U.S.-Russia Civil Nuclear Agreement
A Framework for Cooperation, Robert Einhorn Rose Gottemoeller, p.35, May 2008

¹⁴ The U.S.-Russia Civil Nuclear Agreement A Framework for Cooperation, Robert Einhorn Rose Gottemoeller, p.35, May 2008

states, mainly Ukraine and Belarus. As Gazprom got locked into pricing conflicts with such transit states (such as Ukraine), it rapidly discovered that its own highly lucrative export to the European Union could be held hostage. Deliveries of gas to Ukraine could, for example, not be shut down without also shutting down deliveries to EU member states. The conclusion that the transit states must be sidelined was done by building bypass pipelines such as the Nord Stream, which already transports gas directly from Vyborg in Russia to Greifswald in Germany, and the South Stream, which is to transport gas from the Caspian Basin via the Black Sea to south-eastern Europe. Both Poland and the Baltic states responded vehemently to what they viewed as a project designed to shut down their energy supplies without disrupting the flow to Germany.¹⁵ All of this is going on while according to the Clingendael International Energy Programme, a European Think Tank, "In 2012 Russia exported 7.2 million barrels per day of total liquids. The vast majority of Russian exports (84 percent) went to Europe. Russia thus is dependent on the European market, although it is increasingly diverting crude oil exports to Asia, while also refining more crude at home so it can export more value added products."¹⁶

So then when we see the combination of Russia invading Ukraine while simultaneously threatening the rest of Europe with artificial energy shortages these are part of "Russia's neo-imperial project [that] no longer relies on Soviet-era instruments, such as ideological allegiance, military control, or the implanting of proxy governments. Instead, the primary goal is to exert pre-dominant influence over the foreign and security policies of immediate neighbors so they will either

¹⁵ POLITICS AND ECONOMICS IN PUTIN'S RUSSIA, ECONOMIC REFORM UNDER PUTIN 2.0: WILL PETRODOLLARS SUFFICE TO KEEP THE SHIP AFLOAT? Stefan Hedlund, p.99, Stephen J. Blank Editor December 2013

¹⁶ Fact Sheet Russia-Europe: the liquid relationship often overlooked, pg.2, Clingendael International Energy Programme

remain neutral or support Russia's international agenda.¹⁷ There is also a implied threat to Europe as a whole since the reins of energy transit, and production rest squarely with the Russian bad actors.

Gazprom may have thought that Liquefied natural gas (LNG) could be safely ignored. It is expensive and does not offer control to the extent that pipelines do. The shale gas revolution, or simply the "shale gale," changed all that. Following years of massive investment by Qatar, in particular in export terminals for LNG, and by the United States in import terminals for the same, the United States suddenly was no longer in need of imported gas. With its import terminals standing idle, LNG was instead rerouted to Europe, where a gas glut emerged. Gazprom suffered doubly, both from a loss of market shares to the cheaper LNG and from having to agree to demands from its customers that oil-price linkage must give way to spot-market pricing.¹⁸ And also according to Stefan Hedlund "...by far the greatest challenge both to Gazprom and to Russia is the arrival of "unconventional gas," notably shale gas, which has caused a complete change of scenes." ¹⁹

Russia needs to accept that the environment that they operate in is not the same as the one the Tsar's or even the soviet autocrats maneuvered in. this begins with recognizing the overwhelming priority among a plethora of things that must be done is to diversify the economy. After 15 years of the Vladimir Putin-Dmitry Medvedev tandem, Russia's economy depends more on

¹⁷ POLITICS AND ECONOMICS IN PUTIN'S RUSSIA, RUSSIA AS A POLE OF POWER: PUTIN'S REGIONAL INTEGRATION AGENDA, Janusz Bugajski, p. 175, Stephen J. Blank Editor December 2013

¹⁸ POLITICS AND ECONOMICS IN PUTIN'S RUSSIA, ECONOMIC REFORM UNDER PUTIN 2.0: WILL PETRODOLLARS SUFFICE TO KEEP THE SHIP AFLOAT? Stefan Hedlund, p.104-105, Stephen J. Blank Editor December 2013

¹⁹ POLITICS AND ECONOMICS IN PUTIN'S RUSSIA, ECONOMIC REFORM UNDER PUTIN 2.0: WILL PETRODOLLARS SUFFICE TO KEEP THE SHIP AFLOAT? Stefan Hedlund, p.103, Stephen J. Blank Editor December 2013

hydrocarbons that it did in 1999. Russia now needs a price of somewhere between \$110 and \$130 per barrel of oil to balance its budget. If the price of oil were to drop to \$80 per barrel (as of this writing it hovers around \$45/barrel), the (Russian) Reserve Fund would last (one) 1 year.²⁰ However (t)he most serious obstacles are corruption and self-interest in the political system, educational and research institutions, and Russia's epistemic communities.²¹

Russia in Ukraine: Choices and Consequences

One thing is for certain there are indeed Russian forces on a third "Southern" front in Ukraine, and these forces consist of tanks, heavy artillery, and multiple rocket launchers. The following is a list of choices and the consequences of these choices which the President, in my opinion, should keep in mind when looking forward to the future of American-Russo-European relations.

- **The First Choice:** The first choice is that he can reassure NATO allies of the U.S.'s commitment to their security under the NATO umbrella and help the Ukrainian army monetarily an order to have them stand up and defend themselves against the Russian incursion.
- **The Problem:** This choice is probably the most tempting and least chaotic of the choices in the short term but is flawed on two principles. The first is that by not directly

²⁰ POLITICS AND ECONOMICS IN PUTIN'S RUSSIA, AUTHORITARIANISM AND MODERNIZATION IN RUSSIA: IS RUSSIA KA-PUTIN? Harley Balzer, p.126-127, Stephen J. Blank Editor December 2013

²¹ POLITICS AND ECONOMICS IN PUTIN'S RUSSIA, AUTHORITARIANISM AND MODERNIZATION IN RUSSIA: IS RUSSIA KA-PUTIN? Harley Balzer, p.127, Stephen J. Blank Editor December 2013

engaging Russia with forces on the ground, or in the air this avenue seeks to only embolden the Russian threat to other eastern European countries (including Georgia) and create tangible geo-political space for China to begin "settling" it's claims on south china sea islands, as well as Taiwan. This option is also flawed since by emboldening Russia we are drawing China, and Russia closer together and allowing for other nation states to be scared into seeing them as a viable alternative to the American world order. This option pulls its weight however since were able to show that we will protect NATO allies by not actually putting anything on the line (besides money) also by taking a wait and see approach were able to test Russian resolve as they engage in battle against a far inferior but scrappy nonetheless opponent on their own border.

- The Second Choice: provide American weaponry and support to the Ukrainian government.
- The Problem: this choice is flawed on multiple fronts since by providing weaponry to the Ukrainian's from the U.S. or even from other allies this precipitates a long held belief in the West about the Ukraine that there is a "hole" in their "weaponry pocket". That is to say whatever we give them expect to end up fully intact and capable in the hands of Russia, China, and anyone else who has the funds to acquire such technology. And even when not fully functional from battlefield use, these machines of war can be reversed engineered by the Russians and Chinese and could then end up on future battlefields against the United States, or its allies.

- The Third Choice: Bomb Russian positions with U.S. drones and warplanes.
- The Problem: This choice requires the sort of intestinal fortitude that few in Washington currently have. This choice would have the dimensions of a game of chicken to it. This is because the Russians have capabilities far beyond any enemy we have faced down since the end of the cold war including battleships in black sea ports. So by cherry picking what we would bomb there's no guarantee that the Russians would likewise cherry pick only drones, and planes, and besides this idea puts our fighting men and women at great risk for little reward. Though it is a choice that truly displays the resolve of our capabilities to our allies throughout the world, however there are better less dangerous ways of doing this.
- The Fourth Choice: Deploy a NATO contingent to Kiev.
- The Problem: this choice to me actually seems like a good idea since we could display resolve and comfort allies, without actually doing anything. Though by drawing a line in the sand for Russia to cross we are daring them to siege it, the reckoning on this idea should be that if they were willing to go all the way to Kiev now, that means they were going to attack it anyway so it's a good thing that were already here.

- The Fifth Choice: do nothing and call for Russia's ouster from the U.N. Security Council before the opening of the U.N. General Assembly.
- The Problem: this choice though lacking in muscularity is actually a robust version of diplomacy. This is a choice that I can get behind if only because Russia shot MH-17 out of the sky and is bound to do something similar though I can't say that this choice, and this choice alone will comfort our allies in the region.
- The Sixth Choice: Hold NATO exercises on Russia's border with fellow NATO allied countries.
- The Problem: this is a choice that the administration has already made and though I can't see it paying dividends of peace, I do agree with the strategy if only to buy some time in the short and long term.

America: An Indictment of Russia

Since the early 2000's Russia has gone out of its way to make life harder for the United States anyway it knew how. The following is an indictment of the Russian federation and their leadership when it comes to their engagement with the world and how they have manipulated situation after situation to strengthen their own hand and leave in their wake death destruction and questions of why these things are being done by supposed "responsible partners":

- In the early 2000's throughout to Col. Qaddafi's ouster then President Vladimir Putin supplied small arms and ammunition to the Libyan dictator. He then in turn supplied these weapons to rebels in Sierra Leone and to Liberian dictator Charles Taylor during their respective civil wars; for conflict diamonds. These wars in turn killed and maimed millions and displaced millions more.
- Vladimir Putin has been accused of assisting Victor Bout in his arms sales around the world which totaled in excess of \$1 Billion. These arms later fueled tensions and wars in Kashmir, Thailand, armed the Taliban, Al Qaeda, and started wars in Central African Republic, and Congo among others.
- Vladimir Putin has been accused of funneling monies and arms to the sons of Col. Qaddafi and fomenting terrorism in Nigeria, and Mali via Boko Haram, violence in Central African Republic, and South Sudan, Uganda, as well as the conflicts in the Horn of Africa (Somalia, Somaliland, and Kenya).
- Vladimir Putin it has been proved supplied Russian made S-300 surface to air missiles to the Bashar al-Assad regime in which helped to further strengthen his hold on the country, and give him the confidence that he needed an order to gas his own people indiscriminately with Saran and VX nerve agents.
- In the summer of 2008 Vladimir Putin gave the go ahead to his forces to invade another sovereign country (Georgia) an

order to prevent them from moving closer to their western allies, in violation of international law.

- Under his direct orders Vladimir Putin had Aleksander Litvenenko Poisoned, and killed him with Polonium 210, an irradiated substance in London, a case for which still nobody has been brought to justice.
- Also under his direct orders Vladimir Putin Poisoned Victor Luschenko a Ukrainian former President while he was campaigning against the Kremlin's wishes to become President. No one has been brought to justice for this crime against humanity either.
- In July of 2014 a Malaysian Airliner that had departed Holland en route to Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia was shot down by Russian backed Ukrainian Dissidents over eastern Ukraine killing all 298 on board.

When taken as a whole these actions prove that Vladimir Putin poses a grave risk to the international community and these actions must be taken as the way that new Russia acts. And since we're dealing with a new potent and growing threat then it must be contained, indeed isolated as part of a larger vision to secure the international community against international terrorist like the Russians. That is why the only actions which make sense at this point are to declare Russia as an international sponsor of terrorism. And also to work with the UN to suspend at least temporarily if not permanently the Russian

Federations Permanent seat with veto powers on the U.N. Security Council.

America: Courting Russian Isolation

in the year 2015, President Obama made an equivocation that he would "Court" isolation for Russia over its pariah status due to the crisis in Ukraine. Less than six months later he finally got the opportunity to completely isolate Russia from the international community. With the downing of Malaysia Airlines flight MH17 by Russian equipped Ukrainian rebels using a Russian made SA-11 surface to air missile launcher. Russia has been coming tantalizingly close to becoming a pariah state without actually being designated so. That's not to say that they have not done good things in the interim whether it be Iranian nuclear talks, Syria chemical weapons destruction, or even the timely supplying of Iraq with soviet made Sukhoi fighter jets. But when those 298 civilians in Malaysian air MH17 fell from the sky in a blazing inferno, well the tape on the entire newscasts spoke for itself.

The tragedy is worse enough be it on purpose or not but for Russian television to insist that Ukraine was aiming for President Vladimir Putin's plane, but accidentally hit the Malaysian Air flight this to me is arrogance on the level of courting war. In 2008 Russia thought that it could turn war on and off with Georgia like a water faucet. But that war (which was began by the Russians) was not stopped by them but rather by the fast wheeling and dealing diplomacy of the Bush administration. So then now fast forward to immediately following the Sochi Olympics in 2014 and Russia intervenes in Ukrainian politics by sending in masked gun men to foment

revolution amongst the mostly Russian speaking citizens of eastern Ukraine, and Crimea. Again Russia treats this war as though they can turn it on and off as they wish. I'm here to tell you today that Russia may be able to control their variables when it comes to starting a war, but nowhere by no one is it possible to control the variables that will end a war, at a place and time of their choosing.

So then the logical question at that point was what is next? The first thing the U.S. did was start by sending in American Special Forces that worked alongside presumably Ukrainian Special Forces to safely and quickly surveil the crash site which stretches some five miles. They also did well to secure a route of safe passage for the Dutch equivalent of the NTSB, FBI, and international organizations that need to get to the crash site to conduct investigations. After the wreckage had been secured and every one of import to the investigation no longer needed to be there the U.S. then began to gain the popular support which is needed to not only defeat the Russian incursion into Ukraine, but also to isolate Russia on the world stage. Russia as of late has become a State Sponsor of Terrorism. This is evidenced by its explicit support of Bashar al-Assad's Syrian regime. As well as the implicit support of the Ukrainian separatist fighting the legitimate Ukrainian government. This represents a grave and growing threat to the United States of America and its allies. By labeling the Russian Federation a state sponsor of terrorism this would have in my estimation allowed for the U.S. and its European allies to impose stricter sanctions on Russia and its public private entities. This is the first step towards isolation of Mr. Putin and his allies, and the making of Mr. Putin into a pariah. Additionally if the U.S. under the Obama administration had announced at the United Nations during the opening of the General Assembly this summer that the United States along with its allies are going to be taking steps at the U.N. to, barring a change in leadership, remove Russia first temporarily then

permanently from the U.N. security council. This is a step that in my estimation is not wholly unwarranted, though under current rules at the Security Council and United Nations, highly unlikely.

I think that these are the most prudent steps that we can take short of war. Russia cannot and will not be allowed to shoot down commercial airliners as it wishes. These are extremely dangerous times and with Russia actively engaging in preventing the U.S. from ameliorating the conditions in countries in the Middle East to Europe this is something that cannot and shall not be accepted. Though the so called Minsk Agreement cease fire which was agreed to by the United States and its European Allies, is as yet holding; as recently as July 19 the Donbas separatist in Eastern Ukraine have purported, presumably with the blessings of the Kremlin to have declared a new state, Malorossiya, or "Little Russia".²² I pray for those that were aboard MH17 as well as their family members and I also pray that may God have mercy upon Vladimir Putin's soul for equipping the Ukrainian dissidents with technology that can blow a Boeing 777 filled with close to three-hundred people out of the sky.

²² Adam Taylor, Ukrainian separatists claim to have created a new country: Malorossiya, or 'Little Russia', originally accessed: 07/25/17, Found at: https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/worldviews/wp/2017/07/19/ukrainian-separatists-claim-to-have-created-a-new-country-malorossiya-or-little-russia/?utm_term=.e17fd8012d30

Russian Privateering in the Developing World

"Insecurity linked to armed conflict remains one of the greatest obstacles to human development.

It is both a cause and consequence of mass poverty."²³

When the United States unceremoniously dethroned Qaddafi, a dictator of unimaginable brutality, a people were finally free to choose their own destiny. And the Russians lost one of their largest arms smugglers in Africa. After all it was Qaddafi who, with the help of the Russians, imported massive amounts of Kalashnikov rifles and rocket propelled grenades among other panoply of war. These were given to Qaddafi at a steeply discounted price. Qaddafi in turn sold these weapons to rebels and the governments which were trying to quell their rebellions at enormous markups. We know this because of the serial numbers that accompanied the weapons (as well as the story of Viktor Bout, a Russian Arms dealer). By the time the 2000's had come around war was endemic in large swaths of Africa (Sierra Leon, Liberia, Cote D'Ivoire, Central African Republic, etc.)²⁴, and Qaddafi had created his own veritable cottage industry. This cycle of weaponry for diamonds and gold came to a screeching halt when in the summer of 2011 Qaddafi was killed in a brutal manner by the people that he oppressed for over 40 years. This weapons vacuum which has yet to be completely filled by any one entity has left the Russians with few options to make up the surge the likes of which was found in Qaddafi, until Syria arrived.

²³ United Nations Development Programme, *Human Development Report 2005: International Co-operation at a Crossroads*, 2005, New York: UNDP, pp. 151-154.

²⁴ The Usual Suspects, Global Witness, March 2003, pp. 3-4

Syria acts as one of the most successful conduits of Russian weapons systems and small arms since the end of the Cold War. By most estimates Bashar al-Assad has purchased in excess of \$1 billion in weaponry from Russia since the wars beginning, and has borrowed an estimated \$800 billion in total from Russia, and other nefarious state actors, as his economy lies in ruins. If this is any indication of how sales are going in the broader Middle East, and Africa alone, business must be good indeed. The strategic interest in Tartus, a sea port, for the Russians can't be discounted; however the amount of prestige that they have expended on Al-Assad could come at a price even heavier than the Russians can handle down the road.

They can find new end markets outside the North Africa and the Middle East (MENA) region however sanctions and emerging super powers such as China make that a difficult proposition. Russia recently stated as its goal to become the world's largest arms supplier, supplanting the United States. And though statements such as that come as a welcome respite to African despots, guerilla insurgents, and petty tyrants, I'm sure that when that was read aloud in the West a collective rolling of the eyes was no doubt the first reaction in their respective capitals. Assessments aside, the current negotiations in the Security Council, for a use of force measure to be included in the currently debated resolution needs a proper amount of leverage an order to arm twist the Russians to agreeing to it. That's why I propose that the U.S. in concert with its allies find a way to impede Russian arms sales not just in Syria, but throughout the world. Algeria has \$5.2 billion in pending orders with the Russians if they can somehow be persuaded to cancel, postpone, or possibly even renege on prior agreements and buy European weaponry, that would go a long way in this arm twisting business with minimal effort. One point of cooperation which may convince the Russians to cut their losses is the proposed North Korean-South Korean Pipeline or PNG. This pipeline would supply gas to South Korea from Russia via North Korea; its worth is

estimated at \$100 billion dollars. This is just one of the examples of how U.S.-Russian cooperation can be fruitful for both sides.

The conclusion is this: Russia must not be allowed to make a mockery of the international order, indeed international norms and common law. If we hope to prevent al-Assad's mass graves and prevent the sort of internecine conflict that we've seen in Sierra Leone for instance, a la Qaddafi, we must be prepared to confront the Russians at all stages of statecraft and persuade the world to reject Putin's autocratic bent in favor of a more prescient and tangible American path. While at the same time it's also important to understand that cooperation is possible between the two powers but only when by working hand in hand and not pitting one against the other can we make the world a safer place for all of God's creations.

Russia in Syria: A New Awakening

If the goal of the United States involvement in Iraq, and Syria is to defeat ISIS and bring peace and stability to the region, all while maintaining a predominant position in Middle Eastern affairs. It would seem that by Russia's recent incursion into Syria, an order to prop up President Bashar al-Assad the United States options have dwindled. And while it is true that the Russians have somewhat limited the coalitions options, and are rightfully so a force to be reckoned with, the idea that the United States has completely run out of options is simply a fallacy. When Russia began its incursion the first thought that came in my head was that this was probably the end of major American involvement in the affairs of Syria and Iraq, at least for the time being. It also occurred to me that Russia is trying to make a strong play for power and prestige in the region-

indeed the world, and was largely successful at it. It also struck me as a rather naïve move that Russia, a waning power by all accounts, but a power no less was making what I would consider a blunder of historical proportions. Yet with all their inanity they had won the day in Syria. I expected for the U.S. to withdraw eventually if not immediately from the battlefield and perhaps leave things to the Turks to take care of. However upon closer inspection I realized that the Russians, whom are under a lot of pressure economically couldn't keep up this breakneck pace of events indefinitely. I was right. The Russians got to Syria and immediately began bombing rebel factions friendly to the Coalition such as Tajammu Alezzah, and the Free Syrian Army (FSA). And though they struck Islamic State positions as well, the damage was done, the goodwill which was afforded them by the international community at the beginning of the campaign, was squandered fighting forces which only immediately threatened Assad's positions in the west of the country. The Russians by doing so have opened up what I believe to be two lanes of opportunity for the U.S. and its coalition partners. The first lane that I believe that has been opened up by the recent fighting is the idea of being able to counter Russia's influence in the Baltic by now moving men and military materiel into the Baltic states an order to work as a bulwark against further Russian aggression. Indeed the United States, and its European Partners, in December of 2016, did deploy troops and matériel to Russia's Western border with Europe. And the Russians countered by fomenting a feigned populist uprising in Kosovo soon thereafter. As of now however, the European continent couldn't be more decisive in their discontent with Russian policies not only in Syria, but the added on effect of Ukraine and the greater Baltic's as well. By moving troops into one or more of the occidental countries in the Baltic's The United States and its Allies in Europe have garnered praise from Latvian, and other Eastern European allies. By providing safety from further Russian aggression, which is exactly the reason why I feel we should continue to do such things.

The idea that Russia has somehow limited the amount of options for the U.S. and its coalition with the capture of Aleppo is not wholly true. By balancing Russian air power with U.S. air power, we help to relieve the stress on U.S. Syrian coalition land assets. Also by leveraging the Iraqi army to take the fight to the enemy, We can assure the eventual destruction of Islamic State, and continue the marginalization of the Syrian government and Russia as well.

If a cold war is truly beginning to develop between the United States and Russia, then it seems to me that it would prudent to expect the worst case scenario, as far as Russian intentions are concerned. We as a nation cannot allow ourselves to fall prey to Russian coercion in any part of Europe. The situation in Donetsk and Crimea is unacceptable. We must counter Russian aggression with robust plans for the long haul in Eastern Europe. With Russia's incursion into Syria and the subsequent blowback throughout the world to their actions we must seize this opportunity to affect change in the European countenance toward Russia. At no time since the end of the cold war has there been such unity in Europe against Russia. This does not mean that Russian aggression toward the rest of Europe will abate on its own. Quite the contrary, if we are to see meaningful change in Russia's disposition which can carry us through many generations of good will and comity between the U.S. and Russia, then we must prepare to defend Eastern Europe, from the grave and growing threat of Russian intransigence. It is imperative on America's part to gain the upper hand, and initiative where we can, and when we can, as regards Russia.

The idea of the Phase Adaptive Approach, or PAA is not new with regard to the Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI). However the idea of if or where we should deploy it has been under debate for some time. The threat of nuclear war coming from North Korea, or a belligerent China is real and we must do all we can to protect ourselves from such an attack. In terms of a

ballistic missile threat on our pacific coast from said states I believe that it is secure. As we've unfurled PAA an order to counter threats in the world from nuclear capable states we have also run into strong opposition not just from our enemies but from our allies as well. For our allies their idea of PAA has changed dramatically with Russia's increasingly bellicose maneuvers. In recent months and years however the threat of so called hybrid warfare has increased exponentially from Russia. This is why I'm proposing that we consult with our allies and friends in the Baltic's an order to negate the threat that Russia poses to Europe, both conventionally, and strategically. By speeding up the process through which the PAA is adopted by nations we can better get a handle on the unique threat which Russia now poses to the region.

It must not end with simply installing radar and deploying SDI to the requisite regions an order to counter Russian ballistic missile threat in Europe(more on this later), But we must also work to deploy tactical, and strategic conventional military assets an order to balance Russia's significant influence, through coercion in Europe. And while the idea of defending Europe with weaponry is important it's also important to realize that weaponry alone will not allow America a free hand in its defense affairs. It was not long ago that Ukraine and the rest of Europe were caught flat footed when Russia decided to no longer deliver vital liquefied natural gas (LNG) deposits to Europe in the winter by shutting off its pipelines. This is a situation which must not be allowed to subsist. This is why I'm recommending today that we build a pipeline to Europe across the North Atlantic Sea. By opening U.S. oil and LNG to Europe we can thereby affect a strategic advantage over Russia. By doing this we allow for a more even playing field by creating parity between Europe and Russia when it comes to economic and diplomatic issues. This is not the end of the road, but by taking these first steps, and more, I believe that we just might get there.

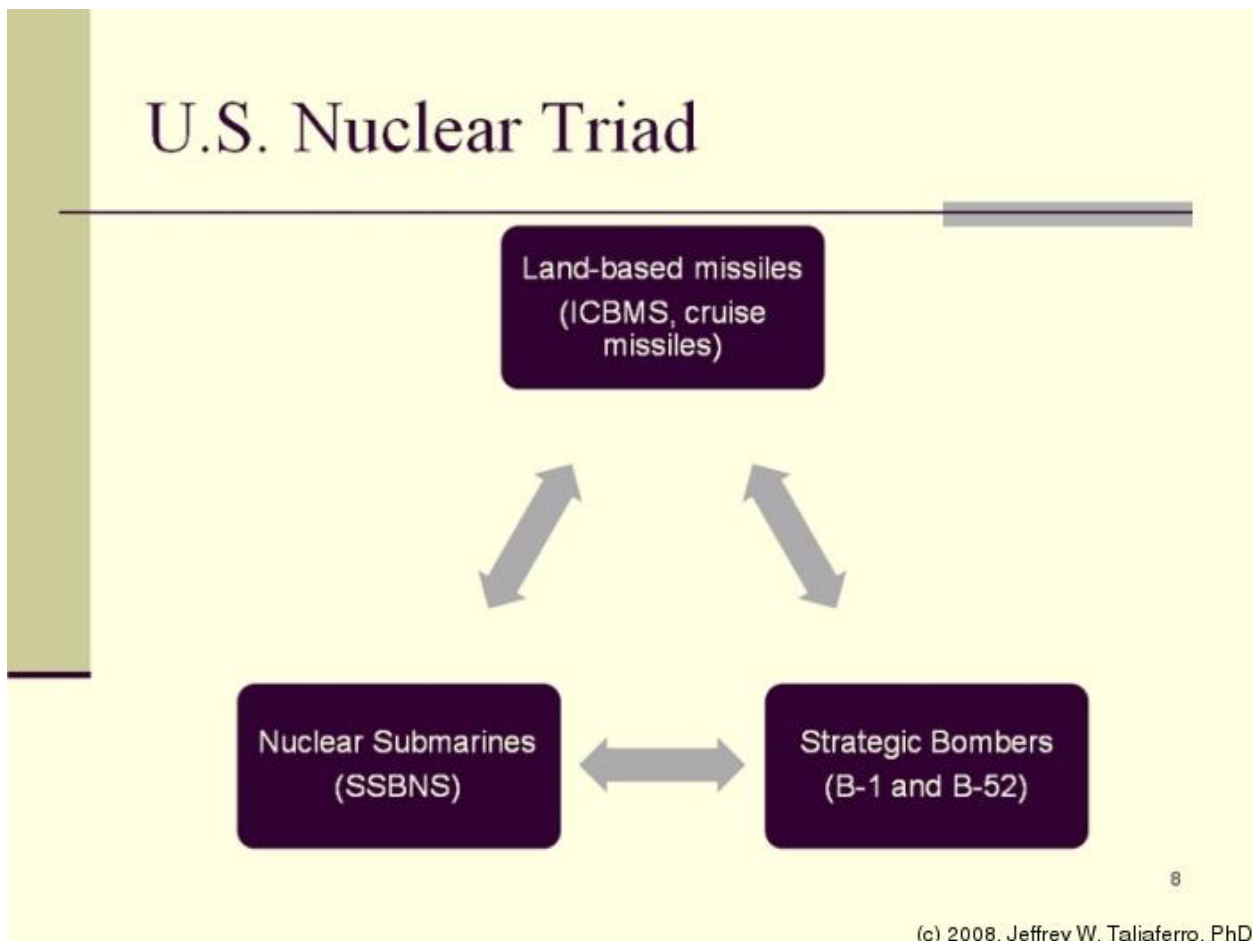
Russian Meddling in United States Elections

The byline is clear, yet the details are circumspect concerning Russian meddling in United States elections. We don't know conclusively whether anyone in the then Trump campaign "colluded" with the Russian government an order to manipulate election results. What we do know is that the highest echelons of the administration, as I write this publication are testifying about the particulars, and depth of their contacts, and any potential conflicts of interest which may have arisen from them dealing with their now established Russian contacts. These intelligence community meetings on Capitol Hill were fomented by the admission of Senior Adviser to President Donald J. Trump, Donald Trump Jr.; whom admitted to having contacts with Russian lawyers, and intelligence officials, some of whom; it is claimed, lured him into the meeting with the promise of then lucrative, and damaging information concerning the then Democratic Presidential Candidate; Hillary Clinton.²⁵ As of this eve it is still unknown exactly what transpired in these meetings, and it is yet unknown exactly how many meetings took place; the extent of damage to America's Democracy, and Democratic Institutions, as has been purported; or if anything nefarious on either side even took place in the first place. What is known is this, there is a cloud of suspicion the surrounding the now six months hence Trump Administration which has severely crippled messaging, amidst the perception of the administration portrayed in the news media. This lachrymose situation has drawn repeated comparisons to another star-crossed administration; that of President Richard Nixon. Though it is unclear exactly the extent of what happened, if anything happened at all.

²⁵ JO BECKER, MATT APUZZO and ADAM GOLDMAN, Trump's Son Met With Russian Lawyer After Being Promised Damaging Information on Clinton, Accessed: 07/09/17, Found At: <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/07/09/us/politics/trump-russia-kushner-manafort.html? r=0>

Ballistic Missile Defense, and our European Partners

Throughout much of Western Europe, and especially in the United Kingdom, the debate rages as to how is the European Union, as well as European states individually supposed to prevent a nuclear confrontation by an aggressive nation state. And though much of the focus has been on untraditional non-state actors, a thorough debate has been raging in these capitals for some time now as to how to build a credible state actor, nuclear deterrent.



This extremely important question is one that, I believe, the United States should be given an opportunity to elaborate on. The idea that a state actor would take advantage of a credible nuclear deterrent in Europe is not new, though it has become novel since the end of the cold war. Russia for instance has flown strategic bombers close to the United Kingdom, and mainland Europe on several occasions over the past two years. And though the likelihood of a preemptive first strike by a nation state in Europe is waning, and the opportunity for a nuclear catastrophe precipitated by a non-state actor is growing, it deserves a cohesive and well thought out policy. An order to safeguard our alliances in Europe, and prevent our allies from seeking their own nuclear deterrent to Russian, as well as others' aggression, we must incorporate European strategic interest into Strategic Defense Initiative, as well as (H)igh (A)ltitude (ST)atic (IN)ductive (G)eo-Spatial (S)hield, or HASTINGS ballistic missile defense capabilities.

Read: "If you want to do global boost-phase missile defense with current technology, there is one place where you can base those systems, and that is in space," Hays said at a space security conference hosted by the Center for Strategic and International Studies. "Engaging missiles while their engines are still burning holds the promise of preempting the deployment of post-boost vehicles, reentry vehicles and countermeasures, thereby avoiding the midcourse discrimination problem," analysts from CSIS said in a recent report titled, "Missile Defense 2020: Next Steps for Defending the Homeland."²⁶

The HASTINGS concept is not a new one but instead a throwback to the early, and indeed consequential days of the Strategic Defense Initiative or SDI during the Reagan Administration. The idea of stationing interceptors in space was

²⁶ Harper, Jon, Pentagon Examining Options for Space-Based Missile Interceptors, found: <http://www.nationaldefensemagazine.org/articles/2017/6/30/pentagon-examining-options-for-space-based-missile-interceptors>, accessed: 7/06/17

first seriously explored in the 1980s as part of former President Ronald Reagan's strategic defense initiative, which was designed to thwart the Soviet Union's nuclear arsenal. Known as Brilliant Pebbles, the project was canceled in the 1990s after the Cold War ended and the ballistic missile threat diminished.²⁷Essentially it involves the placing of Enemy Kill Vehicles or EKV's in the form of either missile or laser borne modules an order to destroy incoming MIRV's, or ICBM threats. This capability would also produce the added effect of acquiring, should we choose to do so, a nuclear first strike capability, from space. Indeed this has already begun to happen as when in may 2016 the United States turned on its THAAD missile defense system in Romania, much to the chagrin of the Russians. This was done an order to shield eastern European allies from attack from Russian MRBM, or Intermediate Nuclear Forces, a type of missile that is covered under the Intermediate Nuclear Forces Treaty that the Russians recently violated thus all but withdrawing from the agreement. By taking into account European interest before the umbrella HASTINGS offensive capabilities are installed, this will allow for a convenient, and widely regarded deterrent to any ballistic missile capabilities that ours, Europe's foes, or any of our other allies may have, or seek to develop. The future for (H)igh (A)ltitude (ST)atic (IN)ductive (G)eo-Spatial (S)hield (HASTINGS) into the space battlefield is promising. the inclusion of this first strike capability, along with the ability of the system to extend the reach, and scope of the THAAD missile defense system, makes for a compelling argument for its inclusion in the research and development budget of the United States. It's worth noting that the United States has made huge advances in the field of missile defense in recent years, with multiple successful kill vehicles test, and the successful launching of a fourth generation of Minutemen Intercontinental Ballistic

²⁷ Harper, Jon; Pentagon Examining Options for Space-Based Missile Interceptors, At: <http://www.nationaldefensemagazine.org/articles/2017/6/30/pentagon-examining-options-for-space-based-missile-interceptors>, Accessed: 7/6/17

Possible THAAD deployment stirs controversy

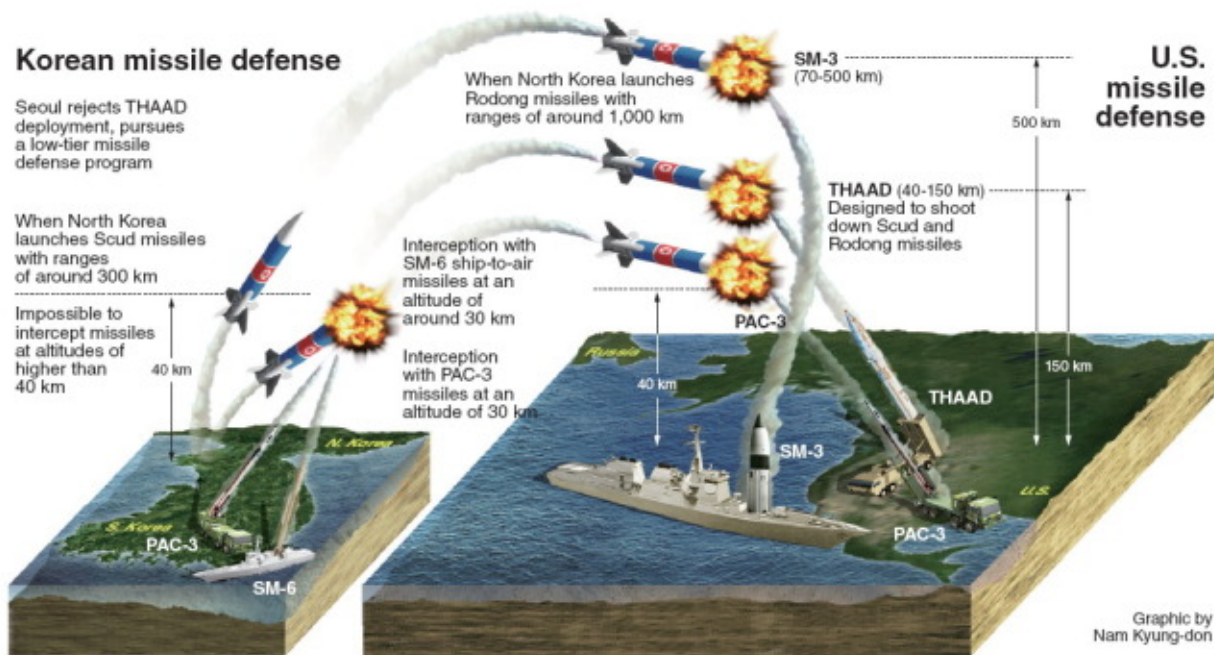
The U.S. is considering deploying an advanced missile defense system to the Korean Peninsula to better counter North Korea's missile threats. But the possible deployment is raising concerns that it could cause friction with China, which perceives the system as a threat.

U.S. Forces Korea Commander Gen. Curtis Scaparrotti has confirmed that Washington was considering sending the Terminal High-Altitude Area Defense system, one of the core assets of the multilayered U.S. missile defense program, to the peninsula.

Seoul maintains that it will not join the U.S. program. Instead, it seeks to build its independent Korea Air and Missile Defense system, a low-tier, multiple-interception program that destroys incoming missiles at altitudes of 40-50 km.

Unlike the KAMD, the U.S. program targets longer-range missiles and employs various interception systems at the three major stages — boost, midcourse and terminal stages.

At the boost stage, an airborne laser is mobilized to incapacitate a hostile missile, while during the mid-course stage, ground-based interceptors in Alaska or sea-based SM-3 missiles are to be used. For the terminal stage, THAAD, Arrow antiballistic or Patriot Advanced Capability-3 missiles are mobilized.



Missiles. However the Chinese have countered with a road mobile intercontinental ballistic missile of their own. This missile, which is capable of reaching the East Coast of the United States, from Xian Jiang province in China, should be of concern to all interested parties. "Today there's more of a political need than there has been in recent decades, [to fund space-based interceptors]" said Peter Hays, senior space policy analyst at Falcon Research supporting the principal Department of Defense space advisor staff. Space-based interceptors could be a game-changer by conducting boost-phase intercepts, experts said.²⁸

²⁸ Harper, Jon; Pentagon Examining Options for Space-Based Missile Interceptors, At: <http://www.nationaldefensemagazine.org/articles/2017/6/30/pentagon-examining-options-for-space-based-missile-interceptors>, Accessed: 7/06/17

There are many positives to weaponizing space first. Including but not limited to; gaining true first strike capabilities, owning the space before anyone else is able to enter it, defeating defensive weapons system measures, and gaining greater accuracy and agility to strike the enemy anytime anywhere with a low margin of error ratio.²⁹

Though these new space assets may become controversial to near peer adversaries, and nefarious actors in the world, there is no doubt to me that the comfort and reassurance that such a system will provide to our allies, will more than make up for controversy over its novelty. There is no doubt in my mind that this system, once deployed, coupled with the awesome deterrence of the Nuclear Triad, and the THAAD interceptor system, will provide the utmost of security for the American people. And will allow for their to be a richer, and more robust conversation, within the military, and intelligence community, about the future of our nuclear deterrence.

Unique Future: Space Assets on the Moon

The proliferation of private space industry has brought to the fore some interesting ideas as relates to space. And though in this authors opinion the privatization of space based travel is a good thing. It is not however a panacea for the future development of both terrestrial, as well as extra-terrestrial weapons systems for future Department of Defense/United States Government acquisition. The facts remain that the amount of monies required to make the sort of leaps and bounds which the United States government is known for, will require budget allocation from congress as was once and will always be. The

²⁹ “The other great positional advantage is actually the velocity that you get from being on orbit. ... This target is coming up to you in low-Earth orbit, so the distance to intercept becomes smaller and smaller [and] you get multiple shots at it,” he added. Space-based interceptors would also have much better coverage than ground-based systems, experts said. “Because a space-based system could defend against launches from virtually any location on Earth, there is no terrestrial equivalent for comparison,” CSIS analysts said in another report titled, “Implications of Ultra-Low Cost Access to Space.”, Writes Jon Harper for National Defense Magazine, found at: <http://www.nationaldefensemagazine.org/articles/2017/6/30/pentagon-examining-options-for-space-based-missile-interceptors>,

fact remains however, that the sort of novel approaches to technology and the acquisitions process itself has forever been ameliorated by the advent of this private/public partnership, and others like it. The sort of brain trust which is situated primarily on the west coast of the United States in Silicon Valley, and other areas of the West Coast has never been rivaled by any other country ever, arguably in the history of mankind. The utilization of these "intellectual assets" to hone the United States cyber espionage, and warfighting capabilities, along with the acquisitions process makes the continuation of the United States as a "hyper-power"; from a logistical standpoint, evident for the near future. One point of interest to the author is the capability in the near future for the United States to launch, and position satellites in near moon orbit. In fact by one commentators calculations, doing so would allow for the United States to view assets on Earth from a "near 45 Degree angle," in almost real time. Which would be a true treat indeed!

Rafic Hariri Special Tribunal And Assad's Ouster

The February 14, 2005, attack that killed Rafic Hariri was a terrible blow for the advancement of Lebanese nationalism, and served only to strengthen the hold that Bashar al-Assad's Syria had on the country, as an occupying power. And although the Syrian government was eventually forced to leave Lebanon in 2006 shortly before Israel's war with Hizbollah. The perpetrators of this crime were never caught.

A special tribunal was established shortly after the death of the former Lebanese Prime Minister, which has been headed by United Nations Independent International Investigation Commissioner Daniel Bellamare.³⁰ The good news is that the Special Tribunal for Lebanon (STL) will be ready to make their decision this year. The crux of the decision falls to the case Prosecutor, v. Ayyash, Badreddine, Merhi, Oneissi and Sabra case

³⁰ Daniel Bellamare, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Daniel_Bellemare Accessed: 4/29/16

("Ayyash et al."), and has been going on since 2009.³¹ The antecedents of the case stipulate that these four Lebanese nationals, conspired with the regime of Bashar al-Assad to assassinate Rafic Hariri in February of 2005. Specifically there are cellphone records, and metadata which points to Bashar al-Assad ordering these men to kill former Prime Minister Hariri, to prevent Lebanon from breaking away from Syria, after elections later that year.³²

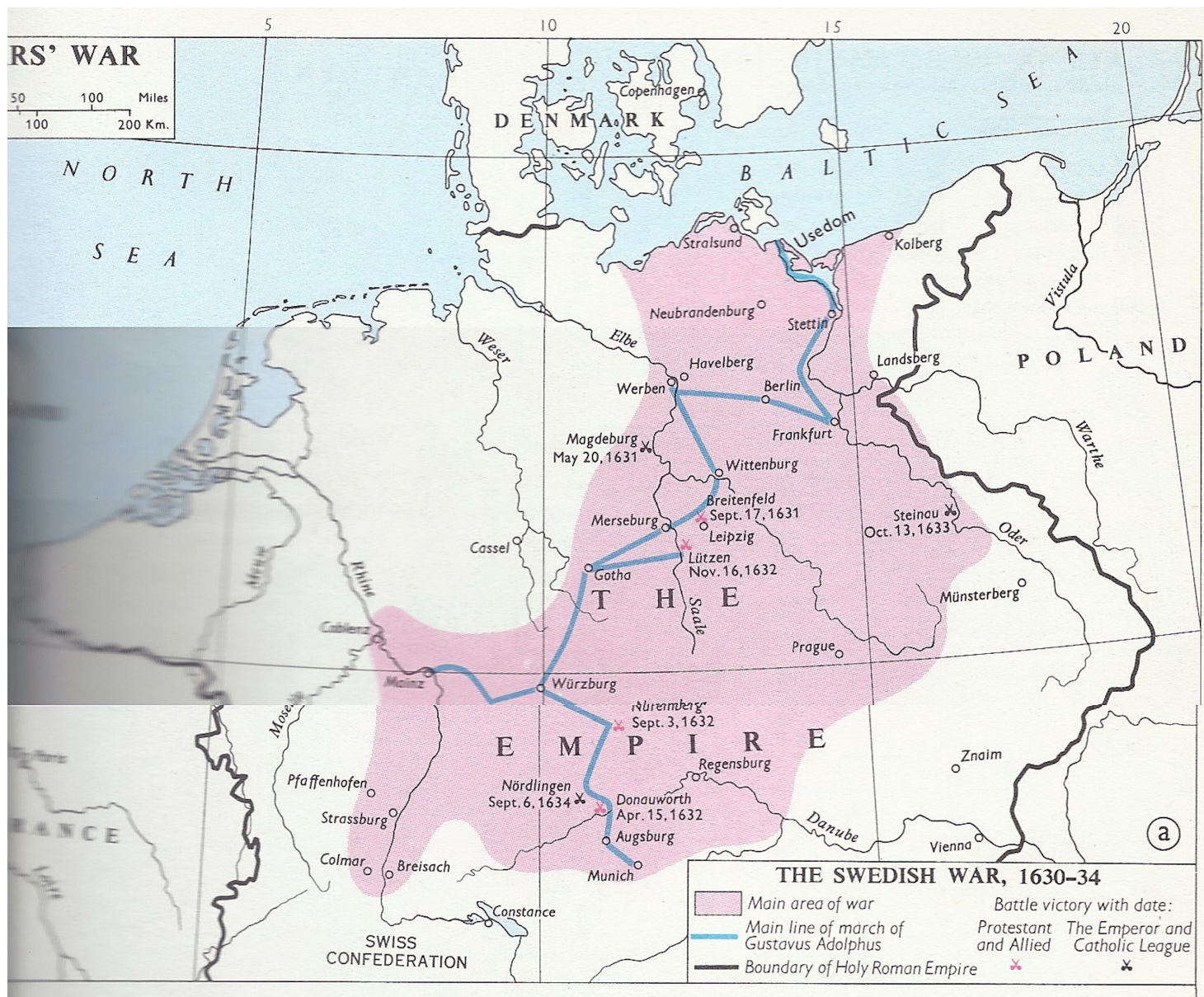
This damning evidence will be released to the world hopefully at an opportune time which will allow for the United States to expose the crimes of the Assad regime. This is an opportunity that the United States cannot let go to waste and must capitalize on so that the administration can exert maximum pressure on the Assad Regime. As relates to United States-French relations there is no subject between the two which I can think of that will bring such accord between the two nations than the relations of Lebanon, a former French colonial outpost cum Syrian protectorate, which is struggling to find its own identity as a post Syrian paraxial. But for the fact their has been much recent acrimony over the Israeli-Palestinian issue, as well as the ongoing conflict in Syria. My recommendation is that we should expedite the release of the report from the Special Tribunal for Lebanon. And have the chief prosecutor, Daniel Bellamare present the report to the United Nations Security Council at the appropriate time. This will allow us to exert maximum pressure on the Assad regime in negotiations for his resignation (or ouster) from the Presidency of Syria.

³¹ Special Tribunal for Lebanon, Special Tribunal for Lebanon Seventh Annual Report (2015-2016), <http://www.stl-tsl.org/en/documents/stl-documents/presidents-reports-and-memoranda/4833-seventh-annual-report-2015-2016> Accessed: 4/29/16

³² Special Tribunal for Lebanon, Special Tribunal for Lebanon Seventh Annual Report (2015-2016), <http://www.stl-tsl.org/en/documents/stl-documents/presidents-reports-and-memoranda/4833-seventh-annual-report-2015-2016>

Russia, the Occidental, and what Gustavus Adolphus II can teach us about Vladimir Putin

In the fall of 1632 on the battlefields of the then publicly dismembered Holy Roman Empire one Gustavus Adolphus II, or the great as he's now known was cut down in the heat of what was surely not expected to be his last battle. His death, which was publicly mourned in Sweden, and parts of Germany capped off one of the most brilliant military campaigns to have ever been conceived of in all of Europe. Clausewitz; who gives a masterful summation of his exploits in his landmark treatise On War, marvels at the intestinal fortitude, daring, and sheer genius of the tiny nation of Sweden, and the amount of military power it was able to muster considering the resources available at its disposal. He, Clausewitz, pays particular attention to the Swedish noble classes ability to produce quality military leaders and advisers, this in a country which ranks amongst the poorest per capita, and smallest by population in all of Europe. Why do I bring up the disastrous policies of the Holy Roman Emperor? An order to give you a better understanding of Russian



military doctrine in the modern day, particularly under Vladimir Putin.

The consequences of a war in Europe would be enormous especially considering the fact that a major war has not occurred in Europe since World War II. To this end Putin desires to be in the most advantageous position possible when one does

finally break out. What Putin desires is a coup d'grace in Eastern Europe, and the occidental which will irrevocably change the hype power status of the United States, and usher the newly formed Russian Czarist federation into a new era of Realpolitik. With them finally taking the stage— once again as a respected, and feared superpower. This may all sound complicated, and yet still plausible— let me explain.

The occidental of Eastern Europe is the gateway into Central Europe. And though yes there are highways and bi-ways which were used by the Germans in World War II, and for centuries prior, mainly on the continental shelf. The real super highway into Central Europe, is through the nordic states. In his campaign Gustavus Adolphus first solidifies his place in Sweden while pacifying threats which emanate from Finland, and Norway, but originate in Poland, and Lithuania. He then concentrates on defeating Poland, and Lithuania by using those very same highways which were mentioned earlier. After this he's able to come up over the top of north Eastern Germany cutting a swath (with the help of his lieutenants and vassals) through the Rhine land of Germany completely eviscerating the Germany Empire in Central and Eastern Europe. His plans called for the at least partial dismantlement of the entire German rikstag, cum magna.

It is said though that his genius lied not in swift and punctuated maneuvers. But in the ability to simply out supply, out train, and eventually outlast the enemy.

Here is where Putin miscalculates. His persona nomina thus far, on the Eastern battlefields, as well as his incursions into the Middle East have relied on, and this is the genius of this term; Hybrid Warfare. He relies not on swift movement and punctuated periods of intense conflict alone, but on cunning, and resource building, and where necessary, resource acquisition (more on this later). His real miscalculation though is in the idea that American, and indeed Supreme Allied planning is not expecting him to simply orchestrate some pretext and then once the World is led to believe that we have invaded Russia, he simply feints one way while instead going another. This is seen in his use of artillery, and Intermediate Nuclear Forces in his Occidental holding of Kaliningrad, and elsewhere. He hopes to bait the United States and its allies in Europe into thinking that a hast resolution to one matter, in this case Ukraine, or some other false pretext, and then perform some sort of breakout maneuver coupled with low intensity conflict in Poland, and Lithuania. And then a period of mis-judgement or asymmetric warfare, which then turns into a general assault through Poland,

and Lithuania. This in turns lead Russia to invade "over the top" into Finland, and Sweden, as well as Norway. This is what Russia wanted all along since they are then able to further legitimize and strengthen their hold on Kaliningrad, and provide an indefensible avenue into Germany and the rest of Central Europe.

The motive is clear, Putin seeks to unite Slavic tongues under one dominion, how long or why he desires the Slavonic crown is due to a strain of strident nationalism with anti-semitic undertones to it recently developing in Russian politics. The idea that Putin has thought about these things is unique only to me, that is to say I have no evidence supporting it. But by looking at the trials and travails in Sweden immediately before Gustavus Adolphus II ascends to the Swedish throne, and his remarkable and ruthless complete disembowelment of the Polish, and Lithuanian Regency. As well as his undeniable, and irrevocable changes to the landscape of German politics, this lesson—Gustavus The Great is one which Putin, and his General Staff undoubtedly heeds, and one which may merit further investigation by the United States, and it's allies.

Conclusion:

The situation is clear Russia has drawn blood on repeated occasions, including Syria, and Ukraine, despite repeated attempts at resolving the situations by the International Community. If there is one thing however which is unclear, it is the intransigence by the Russian Régime, led by Vladimir Putin which has ultimately led to the current impasse. If What Putin desires is a neo-imperial ambition to regain slavic speaking lands, and reorder the entire international community, he has so far failed on both counts. And much like his Soviet predecessors, his funds are not inextinguishable. However, unlike his Soviet predecessors, the system of alliances is more fragile, and the margin for error, as a result is much lower. There have been recent protest in Russia, and calls for Putin to step down, and for free, and fair elections to be held. I know not the outcome of such perilous times for the "Russian Bear". But I do know this. So long as the current Trump Administration remains in disarray, and a state of perpetual confusion, it seems apparent that Vladimir Vladimirovich Putin will always have a card to play.



