
Going Nuclear: Russian Response to NATO

Description

by [Gilbert Doctorow](#)

One of the valuable features of my several platforms for publishing essays is the feedback I get from readers.

In this regard I quote here what one reader sent in about my article earlier today on the violation of free speech that the detention of Scott Ritter yesterday at JFK airport and confiscation of his passport signified, followed as it was, according to RT reports, by the same happening to Judge Napolitano, who was also planning to travel to St Petersburg to participate in the International Economic Forum that begins on the 6th.

Quote

Andrew Napolitano was not taken off the plane. Scott Ritter phoned him and told him that it was “not wise to travel” to St. Petersburg.

Unquote

I watched this edition of the “Judging Freedom” show and urge you to do the same. Here the Judge discusses with Scott Ritter what happened yesterday. These facts by themselves do not change my determination that yesterday’s events amounted to intimidation by the U.S. government and were a gross violation of constitutional rights.

However, the largest part of the Scott Ritter interview was devoted to a different matter, which I wish to discuss here, namely what the consequences may be of an attack on the Russian heartland coming from Ukraine using the long range missiles it has been given by the United States, the U.K. and France.

Ritter is repeating what has been intimated by Vladimir Putin, Sergei Lavrov and other Russian officials, namely that Russia is prepared to strike back at the producers of these long range weapons, at those who are providing targeting packages to these weapons from their bases in Europe and the USA. Ritter then assumes this will necessarily proceed directly to reciprocal massive nuclear exchanges between the United States and Russia which will put an end to human civilization. And he backs up this conclusion by reference to the scenario for conducting nuclear war that has existed within the Pentagon since the days of John F. Kennedy.

I would like to propose a very different scenario basing myself on what I hear on Russian talk shows from top experts. And I juxtapose what these Russians are saying with the realities of U.S.-European mutual defense and of intra-European defense thinking that I see around me here in Belgium, including at the club luncheon on which I reported yesterday.

The first point is that the most likely revenge attack by Russia for any missile strikes on its cities or

critical civilian and military infrastructure will be....a massively destructive attack on Kiev.

Why Kiev, you may ask, when the same Russians are saying that the Ukrainians are only the fingers on the button and when all the settings, all the inputs for targeting have been made by Americans or Brits or French, depending on the specific missiles that were used. The reason is that hitting Kiev, decapitating the Ukrainian government, will result in the least possible blowback. It will not lead to a nuclear war. Europe and the USA do not give a damn about Ukrainian lives, so the cost to Russia of such a strike will be nil.

Moreover, striking Kiev will be a demonstration to Europe and to the USA that they are not bluffing, that they have the determination to go all the way in their confrontation with the West to safeguard their sovereignty and national existence. It will be implementing what the political scientist Karaganov was proposing many months ago, whether it is carried out with conventional or tactical nuclear weapons.

If nonetheless, strikes on Russian assets in the RF continue, the next point of attack by the Russians will be the marshalling centers in Poland which receive weapons and other military supplies from the United States and European NATO countries for delivery to Ukraine. One key airport is named in this connection. Why Poland? Because the rest of Europe is hardly likely to come to its aid.

Continuing up the escalation ladder, I believe that the Russians will then, and only then, attack military factories and bases in Germany, the United Kingdom, France. Like the leaders of these countries, Russia does not really expect the United States to come to their aid and honor its Article 5 obligations under the NATO treaty.

Only in the last instance will Russia attack the United States using its strategic nuclear arsenal, meaning only if it is under direct nuclear attack from the USA. This, notwithstanding the clearly stated Russian understanding that behind all of the European provocations against it stands Washington, the hegemon and puppet master. The United States will be the very last to come under Russian attack precisely because the nuclear exchange that comes will be suicidal for both sides.

This, I think, is also the understanding that the Biden administration has. But their expectation is that both sides in a Russian European war will be decimated, freeing the United States to defend its global hegemony by taking on and defeating China. In this, I firmly believe Washington is mistaken. Europe will be destroyed, Russia will be victorious, because its arms are superior, and its troops are now war hardened. The United States will have lost its European colonies and will be up against the Russia-China alliance alone.

If you are reading this lying on a chaise longue in your back yard in Arlington, Virginia, you may take comfort. If, like me, you are living close to the Russians' bulls-eye, 20 km from NATO headquarters, the above analysis can get on your nerves.