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The first act ...

From the perspective of international treaties, Russia's military operations in Ukraine are plainly not justified. From a *Power Politics and Realpolitik* view, however, Russia's actions take on a totally different and, thus, explicable dimension. *Power Politics* defines the dynamic relationships between great global military powers. It is a theory in international relations defining the distributions of power and national interests, or corresponding changes to those distributions, as constituting the fundamental causes of system stability and/or war. The concept of *Power Politics* provides one way of understanding systems of international relations. As long as the status quo governing those relationships is not violated, international law and respective treaties will hold and can hold for long periods of time, years and even decades. Once that status quo is disrupted, *Power Politics* will simply dictate dynamic action, first on the diplomatic level and then in terms of military action, often regardless of what the various treaties dictate.

Russia has long felt threatened in the geographical region of its vulnerable western borders with Europe - characterized by landscapes of vast plains - predominantly by NATO and, consequentially, by the US, as well as by EU policies, all of which have gradually been bringing the West militarily dangerously close to the Russian heartland. The goals of the US and NATO, expressed at times directly or indirectly, have been to undermine President Putin and the institutions of the Russian Federation, to compromise Russia's national sovereignty and leading global geopolitical status, to humiliate the historic Russian nation, and, finally, to reduce Russia from a major continental power of the Eurasian area to the geopolitical status of a small insignificant and relatively powerless nation. President Putin had repeatedly warned Washington as to the fatal consequences of US foreign policy choices, inter alia, in his historic speech in 2007 at the Munich Conference on Security Policy and very recently during his latest speech in the context of the St. Petersburg International Economic Forum (SPIEF). The 1991 and 1992 agreements stating that NATO would not expand beyond East Germany towards Russia, either officially or unofficially, have been blatantly violated, consequently igniting the current Ukrainian crisis - *Power Politics* in full motion. Vladimir Putin is determined to rectify geostrategic imbalances and to restore the traditional strategic depth buffer zone between Russia and Europe, while, on a longer-term horizon, he will attempt to resurrect *an imperial Russian nation* as a dominant if not leading force in Eurasia. Although most Western policy makers and strategists project the failure of such anticipated Russian endeavors and grand strategy, we have always disagreed with those mainstream views, which we deem to be superficial and simplistic. Russia will most likely achieve all of its short-term aims in Ukraine as well as its medium- and long-term strategic objectives, implementing a methodological stepwise approach. What we are witnessing now is the first phase of the application of Russia's grand foreign policy strategy.

President Putin's aim is a return to the world stage of an *Imperial Russia* - certainly not a *Soviet Russia* - utilizing the military doctrine of «escalate to de-escalate». His military dogma includes, if necessary, the selective use of nuclear weapons, not as much inside Ukraine but in possible future conflicts with other potential adversaries. However, it seems that the West either does not understand, does not want to understand, or does not believe in the realistic probabilities of the above dogma being actively applied. The current military operation in Ukraine is thus simply an early phase of Putin's long-term aim of restoring geostrategic balances with the West, as well as rebuilding and enlarging Greater Russia - hence, the current operation can only be assessed correctly in the context of a far larger Russian strategy. An agreed ceasefire and the easing of international tensions is a

distinct possibility as the next intermediate act. Potential Russian military aggression waged against the European heartland, unless the West itself initiates any such hostile action against Russia, is an utterly illusionary scenario. Russia has not only been modernizing its nuclear triad: it has also been developing new types of nuclear systems unparalleled in strength and large-scale catastrophic effects. Russia's submarines, integrated air and missile systems, electronic warfare, antisatellite systems, and diverse state-of-the-art nuclear arsenal are all military capabilities which so far have remained almost completely untouched during the present Ukraine military operations. Internationally too Russia is not as isolated as the West would like to think. This nation has a remarkable historical capacity for reconstitution. The West's relatively brief respite from great power competition with Russia, which prevailed in the wake of the Cold War, constitutes *a historical blink of an eye*. After 100+ days of war, Russia's grand plan to restore its Russian superpower status is only getting started.

President Putin never intended to conquer all of Ukraine, at least not within its present operations: the first leg of the Ukraine strategy, currently reaching its end phase, has been to secure an unbroken land bridge to the Crimean Peninsula, at the same time securing control of Ukraine's energy- and resource-rich east, which hold Europe's second-largest known reserves of natural gas (after those of Norway). Apart from Crimea's huge offshore energy fields, the eastern provinces of Luhansk and Donetsk contain part of an enormous shale-gas field. Furthermore, the Donbas region, a rich agricultural expanse, holds some 500,000 tons of lithium oxide, a source for refined lithium, which is the main component that powers all smartphones. In 2022, Ukraine was estimated to cover about 50% of the world's needs in sunflower, 12% in wheat, 16% in corn, and 18% in barley. In addition, Ukraine supplies about 50% of the world's neon gas, a byproduct of steelmaking, which, when further refined to 99.99% purity, is used in the production of semiconductors. Russia is therefore solidifying its dominant position as global provider of energy and strategic resources, while control of Ukraine's coastline, in effect, assures its geostrategic control of the Black Sea. Despite mistakes in the early days, the Russian military is now conducting its operations in Ukraine with methodical precision without paying much attention to the time it will take to complete their missions. In this first part of its military endeavors in Ukraine, Russia will probably end up with an occupied area equal to about half of France and a population of about 25 million, mainly of Russian origin, thus also addressing its important demographic problem.

Germany is well aware of the West-Russia standoff and the facts behind it and understands Russian foreign policy and its long-term directions very well. It is an undeniable fact that Russia holds a legitimate place in the European balance of power, having played a key role in Europe for about 400 years. No country in the world can, frankly, do without Russia. Roche, the second largest pharma-company worldwide, stays resolutely in Russia to continue serving its Russian patients. How the Russians will be repositioned in world markets, in what position of strength, and under what conditions vis-à-vis the West cannot be decided militarily, but by mutual agreements through intelligent foreign policy compromises. The reintegration of Russia into the world economy will be a pressing and imperative major challenge for the West, a very fine balancing act during the ensuing two to three years.

In the East, China has accelerated its nuclear buildup in an unprecedented way. As a result, for the first time in our history, the US is on a trajectory to face two nuclear-capable, strategic peer adversaries at the same time, who must be deterred in different ways. Consequently, the US will have to, sooner rather than later, realize that it needs to reach reconciliation with Russia and focus on the larger and more aggressive adversary, namely, China. The potential domination directly

or indirectly by China of the entire Western Pacific means domination not only of Taiwan but also of Japan, New Zealand, Korea, the Philippines, Indonesia, India, American Samoa, Micronesia, Northern Mariana, Palau, and the Marshall Islands. Such a scenario could become a daunting existential threat for the US. A progressively stronger alliance between Russia and China, together with other Asian powers, would create an undefeatable Eastern bloc and bring about a permanent remolding of the current world order in favor of the East. We believe that we are already seeing the first signs of modifications to US foreign policy and a revision of America's position towards Russia with far softer US tones vis-à-vis the Ukrainian theater of operations; and Europe is following in the same direction. It is, however, still too early to state this as a fact: we sincerely hope it is a fact, to be verified by multiple other foreign policy signals, since the alternative is the route of *the war party* in the US, which can indeed open the gates to the destruction of the world in a nuclear holocaust.

High energy prices and continuing international sales of Russian gas and oil in the first quarter of 2022 allowed Russia to post the highest current account surplus in recent history, indicating that US/EU sanctions against the country have only limited if any effects. According to figures from the Central Bank of Russia, in the first quarter of 2022 the country exported goods and services worth about USD 58 billion more than the value of its imports, surpassing more than two and a half times the current account surplus it posted in the first quarter of 2021. For the past 12 months, the Russian current account surplus totaled approx. USD 160 billion, a record sum. On the other hand, the Eurozone current account surplus fell to Euros 8.7 billion in March 2022, from Euros 39.7 billion in the corresponding month of 2021. Russian energy exports together with revolutionary current domestic economic and monetary measures decisively support the Russian ruble. The ruble's exceptional stability is undeniable, driven by Russia's all-time-high current account inflows. Despite the West's somewhat faint-hearted, highly questionable oil/gas restrictions on Russia, Russia's capital account surplus could reach USD 265 billion this year. The West's economic sanctions to bring Russia to its knees seem to be working the other way round and plainly empowering the Russian economy while devastating economies in the West. A new global economic reality is materializing as Western sanctions have accelerated the emergence of a huge opposing world economic bloc, comprised mainly of the EAEU (Russia, Armenia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, and Kyrgyzstan) and the BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa). Turkey as well as other nations, including powerful Middle Eastern players, are set to join the anti-Western club. The expansion of the EAEU-BRICS bloc could reach a level that will comprise more than 50% of the world's population. In addition, the BRICS Development Bank, established in 2014, has the potential to rival the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund in some of their operations, organizations largely controlled by US internationalists.

A global rethink on the principles and foundations of the current monetary status quo could become a factor contributing to the Chinese yuan's strength. The first Bretton Woods system sought to create a uniform global monetary system with currencies tied to the price of gold. After President Nixon some five decades ago ended US Dollar fixed convertibility to gold, Bretton Woods ceased to exist in its original form. As a result, the world transitioned to Bretton Woods II, a de facto system based on US Treasuries as the anchor. The emergence of a Bretton Woods III backed by commodity prices is a distinct possibility, the mechanisms already being in motion. Loose monetary policy in the United States, surging commodity prices, world anxiety over the weaponization of the US Dollar are among the factors that may prompt countries to reassess their relationship with the American currency over the longer term. Currency-denominated transactions in a Bretton Woods III environment are likely to be more diversified and dynamic compared to the previous status. Such international economic restructuring provides a new

opening for the yuan, the Russian ruble, and other Asian–BRICS currencies to gain prominence in international currency holding and usage.

Further south in the Aegean Archipelago of the Eastern Mediterranean, Turkey as a *revisionist power* and an emerging regional power, nourishing visions (in our view unrealistic ones) of becoming an Islamic world leader, may try to alter the status quo in the Aegean Sea via its continual provocative statements and actions against the Hellenic Republic. Turkey, which controls access to the Black Sea from the Mediterranean via the Dardanelles and the Bosphorus, has triggered the 1936 Montreux Convention, closing the straits to warships, but allowing Russian warships to return to their home port, in effect aiding Russia in its Ukraine military operations. At the same time, NATO absurdly continues to court Turkey as a reliable ally for the West. It is sad that a significant part of Greece's political world, academics, artists, and intellectuals, serve the narrative of Neo-Ottomanism in Greece. At the same time, the prevailing slogan *solidarity with immigrants* is widely voiced across the majority of the political spectrum in Greece. The ill-conceived international neo-globalism movement favors a change in the composition of the population of Greece while perpetrating sustained harassment of the Greek Orthodox Church. Greece has nevertheless healthy national reflexes, is a de-facto leading world sea power, and possesses vast symbolic power that has enabled it to survive and thrive through difficulties and crises for about 4 millennia – and in our humble view, future historical records will continue to validate that historic fact. The awesome shipping power of Greece which has dominated the world's oceans over the past 50 years, transporting not only goods but also Hellenic civilizational values across the world's seas, oceans, and continents, continues its unabated leading world course. About 1/3 of global oil tankers, more than 1/4 of global bulk carriers, slightly less than 1/4 of LNG carriers, and almost 10% of global containerships are under Greek ownership. Each one of the top-rank leading Greek shipowners owns more dwt than the sum of dwt ownership of many maritime countries taken together. Since 2012, the Greek fleet in dwt increased by almost 42% versus about 28% for the rest of the world's fleets.

From a political and socio-scientific point of view 2021 proved to be a disastrous year. Political and techno-scientific power centers, assisted by the global media, managed to use fear as a means of manipulating human emotions and behavior, to create an entire new dystopic way of life on the planet. The preconditions have been established for the destruction of the global social fabric, through social distancing, broken social and family ties, and the instrumentalization of suspicion and fear. There would not have been such developments if multiplying acts of lawlessness and apostasy from the will of God had not already firmly taken root in human society. Social and economic policies of *the Great Reset* are directly linked to compulsory vaccinations and the use of personal QR codes and health passports, all carried out in an effort to build a new world dominated by digital surveillance, that is, a digitally surveilled living environment resembling China's social grading system. Techniques of social engineering resting on citizens' obedience *to tend to the good of the collective* have been built on the foundations of degraded social relations, incitement of fear, encouragement of nihilism (i.e., loss of faith in life) - all the latter and more producing constant stress and high levels of frustration and aggression, which impact humans' both physical and psychological constitution. In today's digital age, we are experiencing an unprecedented coup d'état to establish *a global system of biopolitical totalitarianism* resting on the platform of assumed health and climate change risks. The new ideal as the end objective is *the metahuman*, who transcends the boundaries of man and machine under the denominator of *metaphysical technocracy*. Thus, a new pseudo-religion is emerging, incorporating the so-called *spiritualized man-machine*, *the digitized man*, *the posthuman*, and basically denoting the complete rejection of man as the image of God. Such new age goals presuppose the deconstruction of all the primordial

human systems, family and religious community, national culture, race, nation, and gender. At the same time, material abundance and consumerism and *the idolization of technology* falsely presented as constituent elements of religion and progress, are becoming the new ideals for human life. Gender becomes a fluid identity, as global neo-liberal capitalism deconstructs the individual himself, destroying the human being as made in the image of God, as well as the ultimate form of natural human identity. Man declares himself as the creator, usurping the role of God, while science tries to solve all problems without the Creator. Epidemics, wars, economic crises, climatic, and other crises are used as sociopolitical tools for *the Great Reset*, which could well bring an end to individual independence. Under the threat of permanent peril, the world has begun to become accustomed to the social and workplace exclusion of the disobedient and it is a sad reality that whole social groups are being treated with blatant racism without any basis in logic. Technofascism builds its unholy edifice, utilizing the doctrine *Ordo Ab Chao* while wearing the masks of progress, peace, prosperity, and growth/development. A humanity terrorized and threatened on all sides by the greatest possible chaos, sets the stage for the excuse to replace political governing parties with a global government supposedly far more capable of handling all world problems more efficiently.

Expressing firmness and resolve from the podium of the International Economic Forum in St. Petersburg, June 17, 2022, Russian President Vladimir Putin announced the inception of a new world, with nothing being the same anywhere any longer in world politics. Russia is entering the new era as a strong sovereign country. The West's sanctions against Russia have raised food prices, while the specter of hunger in the poorest countries has become a distinct possibility. The EU, still without any coherent meaningful policy, is embarking on a path leading to radicalism. Major Western economies are disastrously printing money to tackle high inflation and inequality. Erroneous policies will lead to an increase in nationalist and extremist sentiments in society; Germany is threatened by an industrial collapse, while the EU could lose up to USD 500 billion as a result of sanctions imposed on Russia. An inevitable, profound degradation of the sociopolitical and economic platform supporting the West will ultimately lead to a replacement of current world elites and other governing structures and institutions, in line with the unfolding of the last turbulent decade of the fourth generational cycle after WWII, a cycle of both destruction and renewal.

Events in Ukraine and looming conflicts in the Eastern Mediterranean and in the Middle East as well as far out in the China Seas and the West Pacific, along with revolutionary shifts in sociopolitical and economic world patterns, are not unrelated, random events. The Ukraine crisis is only the start of a series of crises: the result of the West's decades-long ill-conceived foreign policies. It will be followed by other geostrategic flashpoints igniting around the world with connected cause, effect, and end objectives. The crises will at times overlap, at times follow each other: wars, epidemics, energy and food crises, policies against climate change, etc. The entire global system is presently characterized by high instability, yet up to now it is seemingly staying afloat. Populations round the world will need to get used to living with the constant stress of merely surviving. The adverse effects of increased and chronic stress on the human physical constitution are now recorded medically in all levels/systems/organs of the human being, while in recent years changes in the epigenome have also been registered. Violent sociopolitical and shifting demographic currents, major geostrategic rivalries, and widespread militancy and conflicts, geopolitical tectonic shifts, techno-science, health, and environmental policies directly affecting private liberties and the very virtues of liberal democracy will in no way be isolated events: they are all in fact tightly interconnected. The current mainstream attitude of treating them randomly due to the lack of the necessary analytical and synthetic skills can be catastrophic for individuals,

households/families, and corporations. Barring a global nuclear catastrophe, seemingly chaotic events will converge into smaller or larger conflicts, crises, clashing and colliding waves of change, until the world finds a new equilibrium.

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