

EDITORIAL

Coup Plotters Respond to Defeat with Frenzied Push for War!

by Harley Schlanger

May 10—The combined effect of the release of Special Counsel Robert Mueller’s report on March 22, which exonerated President Donald Trump of impeachable crimes, and the ninety-minute phone conversation Trump had with Russian President Putin on May 3, has unleashed a frenzied drive for impeachment and war, as his enemies from the British Empire camp wildly lash out to defend their failed global paradigm.

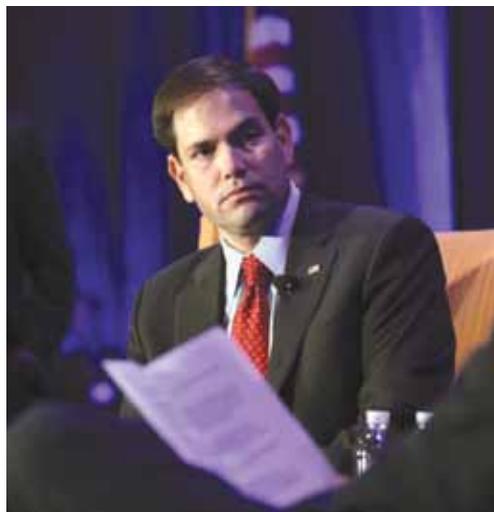
Freed from the attempted blackmail of the “Russiagate” investigation, Trump’s wide-ranging discussion with Putin showed that he now believes that he can proceed with plans for broad strategic cooperation with Russia, which could include joint collaboration with China on dealing with crisis spots and matters of trade and arms control. It is fear that this has been Trump’s intent all along, to break with the post-Cold War unilateralist paradigm of the geopoliticians, which provoked the British-directed Russiagate operation to attempt to defeat him in the 2016 election, and subsequent efforts to remove him from office in a coup after he won.

The anti-Trump efforts are spearheaded by Congressional Democrats who refuse to accept the conclusions of the Mueller report, that there was “no collusion” and “no obstruction of jus-



DoS/Ron Przysucha

Ambassador John Bolton (left) and Secretary of State Mike Pompeo confer during the 2018 G20 Leaders' Summit in Buenos Aires, Argentina.



Gage Skidmore

U.S. Senator Marco Rubio.

“tice,” and are pushing harassing investigations of the President on multiple fronts; and by members of Trump’s own administration, led by National Security Adviser John Bolton and Secretary of State Mike Pompeo, who are issuing threats of military action on a daily basis. These war threats have backing from both the Congressional Democrats and from neocons in Trump’s Republican Party, such as the deranged Senator from Florida, Marco Rubio, and are driven by fear that the days of the Empire

are numbered, unless they can tie his hands with continuing investigations and war provocations that will threaten his presidency.

The ‘Troika of Tyranny’

While Bolton and Pompeo have focused especially on Iran, Venezuela and North Korea as potential targets of U.S. military action—nations which Bolton refers to as the “troika of tyranny”—both have warned Russia and China not to stand in the way of U.S. actions. Bolton, who was a fanatic supporter of George W. Bush’s disastrous Iraq war, ratcheted the pressure up against Iran with his announcement on May 5 that the *USS Abraham Lincoln* aircraft carrier strike group would head to the Persian Gulf, and that B-52 strategic bombers would be deployed to the U.S. air base in Qatar. The planes began arriving on May 9.

In making the announcement, Bolton said the purpose is “to send an unmistakable message” to Iran, that any attack on U.S. or allied interests “will be met with unrelenting force.” He added that while the U.S. is not seeking war, “we are fully prepared to respond to any attack.” Pompeo chipped in that this “is something we have been working on for a little while,” citing “escalatory action from the Iranians,” while accusing Iran of bearing responsibility for the “ongoing violence” in the Middle East. A month earlier, the two succeeded in getting Iran’s Revolutionary Guard designated as a “terrorist organization” by the State Department, declaring there is evidence of imminent attacks on U.S. interests. Even the usually pro-war *New York Times* reported that defense and intelligence officials opposed the designation, and that those officials are unaware of any threats from Iran.

Iran has announced countermeasures, and raised the possibility of restoring its nuclear program, which was ended under the terms of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) in June 2015. The U.S. withdrew from the agreement in May 2018, citing Iranian violations, despite affirmation from the other five parties and international agencies that there had been no violations. Bolton and Pompeo also announced that new sanctions against Iran will be forthcoming. While Trump has maintained a hard line against Iran, Iranian Foreign Minister Javad Zarif told CBS News on May 5, “We don’t believe that President Trump wants con-



UN/Amanda Voisard

Federica Mogherini, EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, and Mohammad Javad Zarif, Iranian Foreign Minister, at the EU+3 ministerial meeting, September 22, 2016.

frontation. But, we know that there are people who are pushing for one.”

The U.S. military deployments to the Persian Gulf occurred just days after the failure of a coup in Venezuela by neocon stooge Juan Guaidó, which had been given a public blessing by both Pompeo and Bolton. There were grumblings from both that the failure was due to Russian interference. Pompeo refused to rule out a U.S.-backed military intervention, stating “Military action is possible,” despite warnings from anonymous U.S. military officials that a U.S. sponsored regime change uprising there could be a bigger disaster than the failed CIA-directed Bay of Pigs fiasco against Cuba in 1961.

Pompeo pushed for support of regime change in Venezuela while touring the region in early April. While visiting Chile, Paraguay, Peru and Colombia, he attacked Russia and China for refusing to accept the anti-Maduro coup. He accused China of “financial interventions [which] helped destroy the country,” and warned against participation in China’s Belt and Road Initiative, which he accused of using “predatory lending practices” to ensnare nations in a “debt trap,” and of unidentified “malign and nefarious practices” used by China, allegedly to build a new empire.

Pompeo Embraces the British Empire

That Russia and China are the ultimate targets was clear in Pompeo’s diatribe against the two nations at the

Arctic Council Forum in Rovaniemi, Finland this week, where he lectured the member states that their historic approach to joint, peaceful development of the region must end. He demanded instead that they must join the United States in denouncing imagined Chinese and Russian “aggression,” going so far as to compare China to Nazi Germany!

Pompeo followed his belligerent performance in Helsinki with an unannounced stop in Iraq, where he warned the Iraqi government against any collaboration with Iran, which he accused of plans to attack U.S. military positions in Iraq. Iran has collaborated with Iraq to defeat the terrorist ISIS-Al Qaeda terrorists there, and after Pompeo left, the Iraqi President, Barham Salih, stated that Iraq would not accept attacks on any forces there, including those aligned with Iran.

Pompeo next went to London, where he proclaimed that “the special relationship [between the United States and Britain] does not simply endure, it is thriving.” Nevertheless, he issued pointed warnings that the U.K. must back his posturing regarding Iran, Venezuela and China. After meeting with Prime Minister Theresa May



Alex Abello Leiva
Juan Guaidó addresses an anti-Maduro demonstration in Caracas, Venezuela on February 2, 2019. Standing beside him is his wife, Fabiana Rosales.

and Foreign Secretary Jeremy Hunt, he delivered the “Margaret Thatcher Lecture,” at the Centre for Policy Studies, in which he conjured up the ghost of Thatcher, asking “would the Iron Lady [Thatcher] be silent when China violates the sovereignty of nations through corruption or coercion?”

The Trump-Putin Phone Call

These provocative ravings from Pompeo and Bolton are explicit rejections of the commitments made by President Trump after his discussion with Putin. Trump said they discussed joint efforts for peaceful resolution of hotspots, including Iran, Venezuela, North Korea and Ukraine, and elevating the discussion of new arms agreements, to include China, to avoid a new global arms race. Trump reiterated in impromptu press discussions afterwards that he wants peaceful relations with Russia and China, and expressed renewed optimism that this is feasible.

The groundwork for this talk may have been arranged through meetings in mid-April in Moscow, as both Fiona Hill, the National Security Council Director for Russian Affairs, and Stephen Beigun, the envoy for North Korea met with their counterparts. And before Pompeo launched his rant against



DoS/Ron Przysucha
Secretary of State Mike Pompeo denounced imagined Chinese and Russian arctic “aggression,” at the 11th Arctic Council Ministerial in Rovaniemi, Finland on May 6, 2019.



DoS



MSC/Kuhlmann

President Trump deployed National Security Council Director for Russian Affairs, Fiona Hill, and Stephen Beigun (right, at podium), Special Representative for North Korea, to Moscow to meet with their counterparts.

Russia and China in Rovaniemi, he met with Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov, a meeting which both described as productive. When asked about Pompeo's attacks on Russia, Lavrov brushed the question aside, saying it is not useful to comment on public pronouncements, which are made for political reasons. It was announced on May 9 that Pompeo will be headed to Moscow on May 13, to meet again with Lavrov, and possibly with Putin.

Thus, while it is clear why Trump's enemies in the Congress continue to threaten national security with their rage-filled drive for impeachment, the seemingly schizophrenic behavior of his foreign policy team represents a different, more dangerous threat. This was summarized by the Schiller Institute's Helga Zepp-LaRouche, in her weekly webcast on May 9. She said:

this is the kind of behavior which makes it very difficult, and I think Trump is not well-advised to keep these neo-cons around him, because ... [as] he almost says it every day in some tweet, he wants to have good relations with Russia and China, and then the entire intelligence community, which was just caught red-handed in a coup attempt against his administration, comes out with this absolutely violent, anti-China line, and the neo-cons in his administration, namely Bolton, Pompeo, Vice President Mike Pence to a certain extent, are doing everything possible to

heat up these crisis spots so that any kind of serious policy for Trump is impossible.

This is an untenable situation, because either Trump succeeds in improving the relationship with Russia and China, and then every other crisis can be settled, or these neo-cons have the upper hand, and then the Trump Presidency will not succeed in what it set out to do.

End the 'Special Relationship'

In this context, it is necessary to ask why declarations of eternal adherence to the "special relationship," such as the fawning remarks by Pompeo in London, are tolerated.

As Pompeo was kissing the behinds of the Queen's "Five Eyes" intelligence operatives, President Trump has been blasting the Brits, in a series of tweets targeting their role in launching Russiagate. Trump referred to the bombshell May 8 release of documents, obtained from a Freedom Of Information Act lawsuit by Judicial Watch, which showed that top State Department officials were aware that "ex" MI6 operative Christopher Steele was acting with the Clinton campaign to smear then candidate Trump *a month before the 2016 election*, and days before the fraudulent filing with the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act Court requesting surveillance of the Trump campaign. President Trump tweeted, "This British spy, Christopher Steele, tried so hard to get this (the Fake Dossier) out before the election. Why?"

The answer is obvious: The British Empire opposed then, and still opposes, Trump's efforts to break with the geopolitical doctrine that is driving the U.S. toward a catastrophic confrontation with Russia and China. In his 2016 campaign, and since his election to the Presidency, Trump has repeatedly denounced the policies of endless wars and regime change. With the hot spots around the world getting hotter, it is crucial that constructive dialogue between the United States, Russia and China proceed on an urgent basis.