

Washington's New Defense Strategy: Keep Russia, China Down

By [F. William Engdahl](#)

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*One thing can be said about the new Pentagon National Defense Strategy document just released under the name of **Defense Secretary Jim Mattis**. It is honest about what the target of US military policy is going forward. Washington military policy is explicitly aimed to keep China and Russia from developing any alternative counter-pole to unchallenged US military and political supremacy. The new document lays this out in no uncertain terms. The details are notable and show the disarray that is Washington today, as its once-firm grip on world power disintegrates.*

The document is worth careful reading. In the declassified public version it states at the very introduction,

“Today we are emerging from a period of strategic atrophy, aware that our competitive military advantage has been eroding. We are facing increased global disorder, characterized by decline in the long-standing rules-based international order — creating a security environment more complex and volatile than any we have experienced in recent memory. Inter-state strategic competition, not terrorism, is now the primary concern in [US national security](#).”

To refer to the period as one of strategic atrophy is not entirely accurate for the power that has waged wars non-stop, direct and surrogate, from Asia to the Middle East to covert regime change operations around the world since it invaded Afghanistan in October 2001. Honest is the statement that the US strategic competitive military advantage has been eroding. This erosion, however is a direct consequence of the erosion of the US economy and the increasingly desperate efforts of Washington to dictate to the world according to their wishes and not respecting sovereignty of nations or peoples.

The key phrase is “Inter-state strategic competition, not terrorism, is now the primary concern in U.S. national security.” What is this “inter-state strategic competition” that relegates the so-called war on terrorism to the back seat in priority? It is, simply said, the emergence of significant economic, technological and military powers and alliances that feel strong enough to assert their own national interest. For the Pentagon, which operates under the 1992 Wolfowitz Doctrine, strategic rivals to US sole superpower dominance, is not to be.

In 1992, Pentagon policy unofficially became what is called the Wolfowitz Doctrine. During the administration of **President G.H.W. Bush** as Washington was engaged in the looting and destruction of the former Soviet Union, using a CIA-asset named **Boris Yeltsin** as the vehicle, when **Dick Cheney** was Defense Secretary, Undersecretary of Defense **Paul Wolfowitz**, authored the Defense Strategy for the 1990s. One of the original statements of that read:

“Our first objective is to prevent the re-emergence of a new rival, either on the territory of the former Soviet Union or elsewhere... to prevent any hostile power from dominating a region whose resources would, under consolidated control, be sufficient to generate global power. **These regions include Western Europe, East Asia, the territory of the former Soviet Union, and Southwest Asia.**”

Undercutting the ‘Rules of the Road’

The new Mattis strategy document continues,

“China and Russia are now undermining the international order from within the system by exploiting its benefits while simultaneously undercutting its principles and ‘rules of the road.’”

This suggests that in the eyes of Washington for other nations to abide by the rules of the present system, including of the UN, to “exploit” its benefits for their gain, is a heinous or criminal act. The terminology suggests that Washington feels China and Russia are driving their role in the world today at a speed that is not to the liking of the Sole Superpower.

It gets even more interesting, as the US strategy paper calls China, “a strategic competitor using predatory economics to intimidate its neighbors while militarizing features in the South China Sea.” And for its part, it states,

“Russia has violated the borders of nearby nations and pursues veto power over the economic, diplomatic, and security decisions of its neighbors.”

Mattis goes on to accuse China and Russia of wanting to, “shape a world consistent with their authoritarian model — gaining veto authority over other nations’ economic, diplomatic, and security decisions.” The veto authority is clear reference to repeated China and Russia UN Security Council vetoes of US resolutions that would have long ago utterly destroyed Syria for purposes of a Washington re-carving the Middle East to its advantage. Mattis goes on to declare that,

“China is leveraging military modernization, influence operations, and **predatory economics** to coerce neighboring countries to reorder the Indo-Pacific region to their [advantage](#).”

Predatory economics ? The choice of adjective creates the emotional image without explanation. The Pentagon document omits the history of decades of Washington “predatory” economics in which the US wrote the international trade “rules of the road” for WTO, for finance, for competition to the unique advantage of US-based multinational corporations. **That they call “free market.”**

Then, in what is a clear reference to China’s major Belt, Road Initiative, its new Economic Silk Road, the Pentagon policy document attacks China as that country “continues its economic and military ascendance, asserting power through an all-of-nation long-term strategy.” It would be a major positive development were Washington itself to pursue a comparable infrastructure investment and an “all-of-nation long-term strategy.” That kind of national infrastructure investment to rebuild the huge deficit of lack of domestic USA investment does not seem to be on Washington’s agenda beyond the level of vague campaign promises about “making America great again.”

For its part, the Pentagon accuses Russia of seeking, “veto authority over nations on its periphery in terms of their governmental, economic, and diplomatic decisions, to shatter the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, and change European and Middle East security and economic structures to its favor.” The Pentagon insists, “The use of emerging technologies to discredit and subvert democratic processes in Georgia, Crimea, and eastern Ukraine is concern enough, but when coupled with its expanding and modernizing nuclear arsenal the challenge is [clear](#).”

Conveniently omitted is the fact that it was Washington in 2014 that created what has been accurately called “the most blatant coup in US history” to install an anti-Russian regime of oligarchs and neo-Nazis in Ukraine and in Georgia, or that a citizen referendum in Crimea saw a vote of 93% to ask to become part of the Russian Federation, not of Ukraine. The idea Russia is out to “shatter” NATO conveniently omits the reality that Washington in 2003 broke solemn promises made in 1990 to the Russians that NATO would never expand eastwards towards Russia as a precondition for Moscow allowing German unification.

And it was Washington that in 2007 announced the destabilizing placement of US missiles in Poland and other NATO states aimed at Russia in what was euphemistically termed US “missile defense,” in reality preparation for a US nuclear First Strike potential aimed at Russia. Moreover the CIA and State Department created color revolutions in Georgia and Ukraine in 2004 in a vain effort to bring NATO to the doorstep of Moscow.

In sum the 2018 National Defense Strategy of the Pentagon is a de facto declaration that the US superpower, bankrupt and ailing as it is, will do everything imaginable militarily to block the upbuilding of Eurasia around the peaceful emergence of the Russia-China economic cooperation in terms of energy, financial cooperation, infrastructure as well as defense cooperation and anti-terror activities.

The Mattis paper is honest in naming China and Russia by name as the central threat to a continued USA sole superpower hegemony. The consequences in terms of growing US military confrontation against both China and Russia, however, may present an economically-declining USA with the similar dilemma which the British Empire faced on the eve of World War I. US debt levels, deteriorated economic base and eroding support internationally for a President who acts like a petulant school brat, are not the most favorable backdrop to “make America great again.”

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The Nuclear Posture Review: The World Will Not Survive the American Neoconservatives’ Doctrine of US World Hegemony

By [Dr. Paul Craig Roberts](#)

Global Research, February 03, 2018



The government of the United States is clearly in demonic hands. We are overflowing with proof. Take today (2-2-18) for example. A report from the House Intelligence Committee was released that is proof that the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the Department of Justice (sic), and the Democratic National Committee are engaged in a conspiracy against American democracy and the President of the United States with the full support of the prostitute media.

As if that is not enough, also released today is the Pentagon’s new Nuclear Posture Review. A nuclear posture review specifies a country’s attitude toward nuclear weapons and their use. In past posture reviews, nuclear weapons were regarded as unusable except in retaliation for a nuclear attack. The assumption was that no one would use them. There was always the possibility that false warnings of incoming ICBMs would result

in the nuclear button being pushed, thus setting off Armageddon. There were many false warnings during the Cold War. **President Ronald Reagan** was very concerned about a false warning resulting in mass death and destruction. This is why his principal goal was to end the Cold War, which he succeeded in doing.

The new US nuclear posture is a reckless, irresponsible, and destabilizing departure from the previous attitude toward nuclear weapons. The use of even a small part of the existing arsenal of the United States would be sufficient to destroy life on earth. Yet, the posture review calls for more weapons, speaks of nuclear weapons as “usable,” and justifies their use in First Strikes even against countries that do not have nuclear weapons.

This is an insane escalation. It tells every country that the US government believes in the first use of nuclear weapons against any and every country. Nuclear powers such as Russia and China must see this to be a massive increase in the threat level from the United States. **Those responsible for this document should be committed to insane asylums, not left in policy positions where they can put it into action.**

President Trump is being blamed for the aggressive US nuclear posture announced today. **However, the document is a neoconservative product.** Trump, perhaps, could have prevented the document’s release, but under pressure as he is by the accusation that he conspired with Putin to steal the US presidential election from Hillary, Trump cannot afford to antagonize the neoconized Pentagon.

The neoconservatives are a small group of conspirators. Most are Zionist Jews allied with Israel. Some are dual-citizens. They created an ideology of American world hegemony, specifying that the chief goal of US foreign policy is to prevent the rise of any other power that could serve as a constraint on US unilateralism. As neoconservatives control US foreign policy, this explains US hostility toward Russia and China and also the neoconservatives’ use of the US military to remove governments in the Middle East regarded by Israel as obstacles to Israeli expansion. For two decades the US has been fighting wars for Israel in the Middle East. **This fact proves the power and influence of the insane neoconservatives.** It is certain that people as insane as the neoconservatives would launch a nuclear attack on Russia and China. The Russian and Chinese governments seem to be completely unaware of the threat that the neoconservatives pose to them. I have never experienced in my interviews with Russians and Chinese any awareness of the neoconservative ideology. Possibly, it is too insane for them to grasp.

Ideologues such as the neoconservatives are not fact-based. They are chasing their dream of world hegemony. Russia and China are in the way of this hegemony. Having learned the limits of US conventional military power, or lack thereof — after 16 years the US “superpower” has been unable to defeat a few thousand lightly armed Taliban in Afghanistan — the neoconservatives know that conventional invasions of Russia or China would lead to the total defeat of US forces. Therefore, the neoconservatives have elevated nuclear weapons to a First Strike, usable, arsenal that in the

neoconservative dream of world hegemony can be used to destroy Russia and China.

Ideologues who divorce themselves from the facts create a virtual world for themselves. Their belief in their ideology blinds them to the risks for themselves and others that they impose on the world.

It is clear enough that without the utterly corrupt Obama Department of Justice (sic) and FBI, the utterly corrupt Clinton-controlled Democratic National Committee, and the utterly corrupt American and European prostitute media working to destroy Trump's presidency by framing him up as "a Russian agent," President Trump, understanding that the Pentagon's posture review would worsen, not normalize, relations with Russia, would have deep-sixed the demonic document that threatens all life on earth.

Thanks to the American liberal/progressive/left, the entirety of the world is faced with a far more likely nuclear demise than ever threatened us during the Cold War with the Soviet Union.

By its collaboration with the military/security complex and the corrupt Hillary DNC, the liberal/progressive/left has forever discredited itself. It is now seen by every thinking person worldwide as an insane propaganda ministry for the neoconservatives' plan to use nuclear weapons to eliminate constraints on US unilateralism. **The liberal/progressive/left has endorsed "hegemony or death."**

They will get death. For all of us.

Washington's Quad Alliance Targets China

The four "Quad" countries – Japan, Australia, India and the US – that Washington is bringing together to counter China's Belt and Road Project

By [F. William Engdahl](#)

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The pressure is escalating against the development of China as a global factor. At the same time the Pentagon released its 2018 US National Security Strategy paper explicitly targeting Russia and China as prime USA strategic threat overshadowing that from international terrorism, India, a member of a new alliance fostered recently by Washington to target China, hosted the third international Raisina Dialogue conference. The primary theme was China as “disruptor” power in the world and what to do about that.

The true nature of the three-day meeting in New Delhi was obscured in press accounts but research revealed an extraordinary coming together of forces and interests opposed to China’s game-altering Belt, Road Initiative — the new Economic Silk Road Initiative. Most notable was the fact that Indian **Prime Minister Narendra Modi**, keynote speaker at the Raisina Dialogue in 2017 this year gave the center stage to his “good friend” Israeli **Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu**. It was not to foster peaceful development across Asia.

The theme of the Raisina Dialogue, sponsored by the Indian Ministry of External Affairs and Observer Research Foundation (ORF), a leading Indian geopolitical think tank, was ‘Managing Disruptive Transitions.’ The number one “disruptive transition” they discussed was China and China’s Belt, Road Initiative (BRI), sometimes called the new [Economic Silk Road](#).

Admiral Sunil Lanba, the Indian Navy’s chief of staff, warned the gathering of expanding China [naval bases](#) in Africa and in Sri Lanka. Speakers expressed the view that the China massive infrastructure project across Asia and Eurasia was “trampling on countries’ economies, institutions and security.”

Most notable is who was attending the major New Delhi talks. Among others in addition to Netanyahu was **Carl Bildt**, former Swedish Foreign Minister and adviser to Ukraine oligarch president Poroshenko who also sits on the board of George Soros’ European Council on Foreign Relations. **Hamad Karzai**, Washington’s choice as President of Afghanistan was present as was former Canada **PM Stephen Harper**, who has been called a Canadian neo-conservative, close to Netanyahu policies and openly Russia-phobic.

The Quad Takes Aim at China

NATO was there at a very high level with **Admiral Harry Harris**, Commander, US Pacific Command, and UK **General Chris Deverell**, the Joint Forces Commander. Indicating the underlying nature of the Raisina gathering, the navy chiefs from the four “Quad” countries – Japan, Australia, India and the US – the four countries that Washington is bringing together to counter China’s Belt, Road, were in full force. As well there was retired US general **David Petraeus**, the former CIA Director, and architect of the Iraq US military operations that gave rise to Al Qaeda in Iraq as well as the US military debacle in Afghanistan.

Alarming were the remarks of Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu who called for an alliance of Israel, India and what he called an “alliance of democracies” (sic) to “strengthen our relationships as our way of life is being challenged by radical Islam.” The focus on “radical Islam” was code for the India concern that Islamic Pakistan is a cooperation partner with China in the China-India Economic Corridor of the BRI.

The real substance of the New Delhi gathering was to congeal a strategy of containment of China using a new coalition of four states—Japan, India, Australia and the United States. In November, 2017 during the visit of the US President in a Manila summit, the four agreed to closely coordinate measures to contain China. These four announced they had formed a coalition to patrol the disputed East and South China Seas where China is making territorial claims. The US has even changed the designation of the region from Asia-Pacific to Indo-Pacific to focus on the role of India. The New Delhi talks were a direct consequence of the new Quad strategy as is the new Pentagon Defense Strategy 2018 which explicitly targets China along with Russia as guilty of disturbing Washington’s “rules based order” with what the Pentagon calls China’s “predatory economics” along its Belt, Road Initiative.

Admiral Harry Harris Jr, Commander of US Pacific Command, spoke during the Raisina talks in clear words about China:

“The reality is that China is a disruptive transitional force in the Indo-Pacific, they are the owner of the trust deficit in the region.”

Vice Admiral Tim Barrett, Chief of Navy, Australia called for concrete actions against the Chinese naval presence in the South China Sea while **Admiral Sunil Lanba**, India’s Chief of Naval Staff, said

“The Chinese already have a naval base in Djibouti and we’re aware of their base in Hambantota. So this is going to be the pattern for the near future in the Indian Ocean.”

Former US Ambassador to Iraq and to Afghanistan, neo-con ideologue **Zalmay Khalilzad** attacked China’s Belt, Road Initiative claiming that by connecting all of Eurasia it would “change the international order.” **Admiral Katsutoshi Kawano**, Chief of Staff of the Japan Joint Staff, said Beijing is changing the status quo in the Pacific and the Indian Ocean, and it is important for countries in the area to close ranks against it, claiming that China’s Belt and Road initiative aims at military expansion.

As the New Delhi conference was ongoing tensions between India and Pakistan over China’s China-Pakistan Economic Corridor, a \$50 billion infrastructure corridor of the China BRI, which passes through Pakistan’s section of Jammu and Kashmir, Pakistan’s only land link to China, escalated. China is offering to meet with India to discuss

differences, while India accuses Pakistan of illegal border violations along the un-demarcated Line of Control across the mountains of Jammu and Kashmir. Indian chief of Army, **Bipin Rawat** has announced that Indian troops have begun targeting Pakistani border posts, and refused Pakistani requests for negotiations over the escalation.

Washington can quietly stay in the background, encouraging escalation of tensions between its Quad allies and China's Silk Road or BRI. The escalation of tensions in Pakistan, in Afghanistan and in Myanmar **all beat the pawprints of Washington dirty tricks**. The losers in such an escalation will be all of Asia, not merely China.

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Mit Vernunft gegen eine «Eiszeit» in den Ost-West-Beziehungen

Gabriele Krone-Schmalz skizziert Lösungswege

von Carola und Johannes Irrsiegler



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Zf, 30.01.2018 – Mit Blick auf einen von allen Seiten sehr blutig geführten Bürger- und Kolonialkrieg verpflichtet der französische Humanist Albert Camus in seinem Vorwort zur «Algerischen Chronik» die Intellektuellen dazu, «nach besten Kräften in jedem Lager die Grenzen der Gewalt und der Gerechtigkeit abzustecken, das heißt, selbst gegen den Strom schwimmend die Begriffe klarzustellen, um die Gemüter zu entgiften und den Fanatismus zu mildern».

Dieser Verpflichtung kommt die ehemalige Russlandkorrespondentin der ARD und profunde Russlandkennerin Gabriele Krone-Schmalz mit ihrem neuen Buch «Eiszeit – wie Russland dämonisiert wird und warum das so gefährlich ist» nach.

Sie stellt Begriffe klar, sie versucht, die Gemüter durch die Darstellung von Fakten zu entgiften und damit dem Fanatismus unserer heutigen intellektuellen und politischen Hardliner in Bezug auf Russland den Boden zu entziehen.

Frau Krone-Schmalz konstatiert eine «vergiftete Grundstimmung» in den deutschsprachigen Medien, wenn es um die Frage geht, wie man das Verhältnis von Russland zu Deutschland und dem Westen einschätzen soll und wie man diesem wichtigen Land gegenüber treten will. Einpeitscher in Medien und Politik schießen immer schärfer gegen Russland und dessen politische Führung und drehen, wie es scheint, bedenkenlos an der Spirale der Gewalt.

Der Westen und Russland – Wie soll es weitergehen ?

In dieser Situation stellt Frau Krone-Schmalz sich und dem Leser verschiedene Fragen: «Wie soll es weitergehen ? Immer mehr Nato-Soldaten und schweres Militärgerät näher an die Grenzen Russlands rücken, um Moskau ein deutliches Signal zu senden und dem Sicherheitsbedürfnis Polens und der baltischen Staaten Rechnung zu tragen ? Eine Wiederauflage des Kalten Krieges ? Was ist mit der Angst von Menschen im Westen und in Russland vor einem heißen Krieg ? Will den jemand ? Kann der einfach so passieren ? Weil Missverständnisse in einer Atmosphäre des Säbelrasselns eine Eigendynamik entwickeln, die sich nicht mehr einfangen lässt ? Die «Kriegsgeneration» stirbt langsam aus, und ich habe den Eindruck, das Bewusstsein für die Zerbrechlichkeit von Frieden auch.»

Die Autorin will einen Beitrag leisten, zu «deeskalieren, vermitteln, sich in die Lage anderer zu versetzen, um deren Handeln besser begreifen und die Folgen des eigenen Handelns besser einschätzen zu können». Mahnend hält sie fest, dass dies nichts mit Schwäche zu tun hat, «sondern mit politischer Weitsicht, menschlicher Größe und mit genau den christlichen Werten, die so viele im Munde führen».

Nach diesen einleitenden Worten, die ihr Anliegen für Frieden und Verständigung zum Ausdruck bringen, tut Frau Krone-Schmalz bei dieser Ausgangslage das Beste: Sie baut auf die Vernunft der Bürger und liefert dem Leser detailliertes Faktenwissen, das sie an jeder Stelle belegen kann, um es damit «den «Hardlinern», die keine andere Position als die eigene zulassen, so schwer wie möglich zu machen».

Kein Schwarz-Weiss-Denken

An keiner Stelle verfällt Frau Krone-Schmalz dabei in ein dichotomes Schwarz-Weiss-Denken, sondern sie weiß, dass es bei der Analyse der Fakten immer auch darum geht, die Grautöne sichtbar zu machen. Schritt für Schritt zeigt sie die Entwicklung der Beziehungen zwischen Russland und dem Westen in den letzten beiden Jahrzehnten seit dem Zusammenbruch des Sowjetimperiums auf. Viele Ereignisse haben wir in den Medien verfolgt, oft blieben Fragen offen. Frau Krone-Schmalz gelingt es, diese Ereignisse historisch und politisch in ein Ganzes einzubetten.

Georgien, Ukraine und Syrien

Die militärische Auseinandersetzung mit Georgien zum Beispiel, die undurchsichtigen Vorgänge auf dem Kiewer Maidan, der Ablauf der Syrien-Krise, mit dem voreiligen Diktum des Westens, dass Assad gehen müsse, trotz eines doch beachtlichen Sukkurses, den er von der syrischen Bevölkerung immer noch erhält – dem gängigen Narrativ eines expansiv aggressiv agierenden Russlands unter Führung seines Präsidenten Wladimir Putin hält sie eine andere, eine deeskalierende und entdämonisierende Sicht, entgegen – und belegt sie Stück für Stück.

Keine Belege für die Wahrnehmung, Russland sei aggressiv

Frau Krone-Schmalz stellt dabei zunächst die Frage, worauf sich die Wahrnehmung der Nato, Russland sei aggressiv und bedrohe ganz konkret die baltischen Staaten und Polen, stützt. Hier greift sie auf Quellen aus transatlantischen Netzwerken zurück, die ein anderes Bild zeichnen: «Ein Papier der Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik (SWP) analysierte unmittelbar vor dem Warschauer Nato-Gipfel genau diese Frage und kam zu dem Schluss, dass es keine konkreten Hinweise gebe. [...] Die Bedrohungsszenarien entspringen demnach militärstrategischen Planspielen [...]. Das SWP-Papier hält einen russischen Angriff auf die baltischen Staaten [...] für wenig realistisch.» Das Papier halte zudem fest, dass Beobachtungsflüge und Inspektionen unter dem Dach der OSZE keinerlei Hinweise für eine russische Truppenkonzentration an den Grenzen der Nato-Staaten ergeben hätten.

Wer bedroht hier also wen ? Diese Frage stellt sich auch angesichts der massiv höheren Rüstungsausgaben der Nato-Länder im Vergleich zu Russland. Frau Krone-Schmalz belegt, dass allein die europäischen Nato-Mitglieder 2016 für ihr Militär fast viermal so viel wie Russland ausgaben – von den USA ganz zu schweigen ! Alle Zahlen, die sie nennt, sprechen für sich.

Das Problem des Nato-Raketenschirms

Genauer geht Frau Krone-Schmalz auch auf den Ablauf um den sogenannten Raketenabwehrschirm ein, dessen Stationierung die Nato seit Jahren in Osteuropa an der Grenze zu Russland plant – dies mit dem Argument einer vermeintlichen Bedrohung durch Iran. Über Jahre stellte dieser Vorgang einen Streitpunkt zwischen der Nato und Russland dar. Letzteres sah seine nukleare Zweitschlagkapazität durch den Aufbau des westlichen Raketenschirms gefährdet und begann mit der Entwicklung einer eigenen Raketenabwehr und der Aufstellung von Raketen in Kaliningrad. Doch dann wurde im Sommer 2015 unerwartet das Atomabkommen mit Iran geschlossen. Damit reduzierte sich die Gefahr, die von iranischen Raketen ausgegangen wäre, beachtlich. Eigentlich ein Grund zur Entspannung.

Doch was tat der Westen ? Im Dezember 2015 wurde «die Basis in Rumänien in Betrieb genommen, und im Mai 2016 begannen die Arbeiten an der Basis in Polen. Wie mussten diese Schritte wohl auf Moskau gewirkt haben ? Die Bedrohung aus Iran fällt praktisch weg, aber der Raketenabwehrschirm ist dennoch nötig. Gegen Russland richtet er sich natürlich nicht, aber gegen wen denn dann eigentlich ?»

Besorgter Blick auf das Jahr 2018

Diese Entwicklungen lassen besorgt auf das Jahr 2018 blicken, denn dann soll das Raketenabwehrsystem in Polen in Betrieb gehen: «In jedem Fall steuert die Welt im Jahr 2018 auf einen hochgefährlichen Konflikt zu, der sehr schnell außer Kontrolle geraten kann. Und das alles wegen Langstreckenraketen und Atomsprengköpfen, die Iran gar nicht besitzt. Ist das wirklich unvermeidlich ?» Diese Frage stellt sich klar. Zudem wäre zu überlegen, wer eigentlich ein Interesse daran hat, den Konflikt immer weiter anzuheizen. Cui bono ? Die Menschen in

Deutschland und in Russland wollen es offensichtlich nicht. Frau Krone-Schmalz führt das Ergebnis einer Umfrage aus dem Jahre 2016 aus, nach welcher 64 % der Bundesbürger dem damaligen Außenminister Steinmeier beipflichteten, als er vor dem zunehmenden «Säbelrasseln» in der Politik warnte und ein Umsteuern anmahnte.

Die Mehrheit der Deutschen ist gegen den Kriegskurs der Hardliner

Dieses Ergebnis stimmt zuversichtlich, zeigt es doch, dass sich eine Mehrheit der deutschen Bevölkerung trotz der medialen Einseitigkeiten nicht für den Kriegskurs der Hardliner einspannen lässt. Die Autorin gibt aber gleichzeitig zu Recht zu bedenken, wie es kommt, dass sich die Mehrheiten in unserer Demokratie medial so wenig Gehör verschaffen können.

Viele weitere Beispiele werden im Buch angeführt. Sie zeigen, dass die Vorstellung, Russland verfolge eine aggressive Expansionspolitik, eine drastische Fehleinschätzung ist. Russland handelt aus einer strategischen Defensive heraus.

Plädoyer für eine neue Entspannungspolitik ...

Deshalb plädiert Frau Krone-Schmalz dringend und zu Recht für eine Politik der Entspannung und der Vertrauensbildung. Hier knüpft die Autorin an die erfolgreiche Ostpolitik der Ära Brandt in Deutschland an. Was bräuchte es aber dazu? Frau Krone-Schmalz hält fest, dass eine Politik der Entspannung und der Vertrauensbildung grundsätzlich der Fähigkeit bedürfe, andere Perspektiven als die eigene noch als legitim anzuerkennen. Das sollte doch für das aufgeklärte Europa möglich sein, sagt sich der Leser.

...aber die Fähigkeit des Westens zum Kompromiss schwindet

Frau Krone-Schmalz sieht aber gerade diese Fähigkeit im Westen schwinden: «Der Westen ist zu echten Kompromissen nicht mehr in der Lage, weil er die eigene Weltsicht für alternativlos hält. Das hat etwas von missionarischem Eifer, der schon immer das beste Rezept war, um große Katastrophen herbeizuführen.»

Dabei könnte es auch anders gehen. Frau Krone-Schmalz stellt dieses «anders» ganz konkret dar und zeigt, dass es immer Spielraum für eine friedliche Lösung gibt, wenn nur der Wille dazu vorhanden ist. Hier sollen nur zwei Punkte Erwähnung finden. So schlägt die Autorin vor, im Rahmen einer Entspannungspolitik die Nato-Beitrittsperspektive für die Ukraine und Georgien zurückzunehmen – etwas, was der französische Präsident Emanuel Macron zumindest angedacht zu haben scheint. Deutschland könnte eine friedensstiftende Rolle einnehmen und sich einem solchen Vorhaben anschließen.

Vorschlag für die Krim

Frau Krone-Schmalz skizziert zudem einen interessanten Lösungsversuch für die Krim-Frage. «Was wäre denn, wenn die Krim zum Mandatsgebiet der UN erklärt würde, sie völkerrechtlich bei der Ukraine bliebe, Russland aber mit der Verwaltung betraut wäre [...]» und dann später die UN einen Volksentscheid durchführen könnte ? Warum nicht solche Ideen andenken, aufgreifen, in den Gremien einbringen und so die verbissene Situation wieder entwirren helfen ?

Das letzte Kapitel des Buches trägt den Titel «Selber denken»: «Mir ist es wichtig, dass sich <die mündigen Bürger> ihre Skepsis vor allzu platten Wahrheiten und allzu glatten Trennungslinien zwischen Gut und Böse erhalten. **Selber denken eben. Dabei darf man sich von Begriffen wie Verschwörungstheorie, Populismus und Propaganda nicht ins Bockshorn jagen lassen.»** Hierfür brauche es neben der äußeren Freiheit die innere Freiheit, «sich so frei zu fühlen, dass man sich des eigenen Verstandes bedient, ohne kanalisierte Anleitung durch andere und auch ohne Absegnung, ob man das so denken darf [...]» Was liegt bei einem solchen Gedanken näher, als das lesenswerte und informative Buch mit dem Wahlspruch der Aufklärung von Immanuel Kant zu schließen: «Sapere aude ! Habe Mut, dich deines eigenen Verstands zu bedienen !»

Frau Krone-Schmalz macht es uns beispielhaft vor.