

Trump's Pentagon and State Department Nominees Threaten to Wage War on Russia and China

Disturbing Tillerson and Mattis Rhetoric

By [Stephen Lendman](#)

Asia-Pacific Research, January 14, 2017

In his confirmation hearing, secretary of state designee Rex Tillerson provocatively told Senate Foreign Relations Committee members “(w)e are going to have to send China a clear signal that, first, the island-building stops and second, your access to those islands also is not going to be allowed.”

He accused China of “declaring control of territories ...not rightfully” its own. He called Russia “danger(ous),” saying “(o)ur allies are right to be alarmed at a resurgent Russia.”

Asked if he thinks Putin is a war criminal, he said “(t)hose are very very serious charges to make, and I would want to have much more information before reaching a conclusion.”

Commenting on NATO, he called its mandate to defend alliance members if attacked “inviolable.” He urged “open and frank dialogue” with Russia on issues of mutual concern. He stopped short of indicating what US foreign policy will be under Trump.

Secretary of Defense designee James (“mad dog”) Mattis told Senate Armed Services Committee members that Beijing’s activities in the South China Sea threaten the global order. “The bottom line is that international waters are international waters, and we have got to figure out how do we deal with holding on to the kind of rules that we have made over many years that led to the prosperity for many nations, not just for ours,” he said, adding:

I think (the world order)is under the biggest attack since world war two...and that is from Russia, from terrorist groups, and with what China is doing in the South China Sea.

Blocking Chinese access to its own territory, along with its right to develop it and operate there as it wishes is a prescription for direct confrontation – disturbing talk hopefully Trump won’t tolerate.

China’s reaction was muted in light of Obama’s tenure near ending, Trump’s yet to begin, waiting to assess his geopolitical agenda once it becomes apparent.

Beijing’s ambassador to America Cui Tiankai said his government looks forward to “more robust, stable and fruitful” ties with Washington. “I hope both sides will work together for...mutual respect and cooperation for win-win Sino-US relations. I also hope all people can work for it constructively.”

Hopefully Trump will abandon irresponsible claims about “Russia aggression.” None exists – not now or earlier. Accusations otherwise are Big Lies.

Washington has no right to meddle in a part of the world not its own. China’s Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Hua Chunying earlier said America should avoid “risky and provocative approaches to maintain regional peace and stability.”

She stressed China will defend its territorial sovereignty if threatened. Unauthorized intrusions will be challenged.

On January 13, China’s state-owned Global Times said “(u)nless Washington plans to wage a large-scale war in the South China Sea, any other approaches to prevent Chinese access to the islands will be foolish.”

The US has no absolute power to dominate the South China Sea. Tillerson (and Mattis) had better bone up on nuclear power strategies if (they want) to force a big nuclear power to withdraw from its own territories.

Trump is under enormous pressure to maintain adversarial relations with Russia along with advancing Obama’s Asia pivot confrontationally with China.

World peace depends on him going another way. Is he strong-willed enough to do it? We’ll begin learning his geopolitical policies once they begin to unfold.

Stephen Lendman lives in Chicago. He can be reached at lendmanstephen@sbcglobal.net.

His new book as editor and contributor is titled “Flashpoint in Ukraine: How the US Drive for Hegemony Risks WW III.”

<http://www.claritypress.com/LendmanIII.html>

Visit his blog site at sjlendman.blogspot.com.

Listen to cutting-edge discussions with distinguished guests on the Progressive Radio News Hour on the Progressive Radio Network.

The original source of this article is Asia-Pacific Research
Copyright © [Stephen Lendman](#), Asia-Pacific Research, 2017

[Comment on Global Research Articles on our Facebook page](#)

[Become a Member of Global Research](#)

Articles by: [Stephen Lendman](#)

About the author:

Stephen Lendman lives in Chicago. He can be reached at lendmanstephen@sbcglobal.net. His new book as editor and contributor is titled "Flashpoint in Ukraine: US Drive for Hegemony Risks WW III."

<http://www.claritypress.com/LendmanIII.html> Visit his blog site at sjlendman.blogspot.com. Listen to cutting-edge discussions with distinguished guests on the Progressive Radio News Hour on the Progressive Radio Network. It airs three times weekly: live on Sundays at 1PM Central time plus two prerecorded archived programs.

Disclaimer: The contents of this article are of sole responsibility of the author(s). Asia-Pacific Research will not be responsible for any inaccurate or incorrect statement in this article. Asia-Pacific Research grants permission to cross-post Asia-Pacific Research articles on community internet sites as long the source and copyright are acknowledged together with a hyperlink to the original Asia-Pacific Research article. For publication of Asia-Pacific Research articles in print or other forms including commercial internet sites, contact: editors@asia-pacificresearch.com

www.asia-pacificresearch.com contains copyrighted material the use of which has not always been specifically authorized by the copyright owner. We are making such material available to our readers under the provisions of "fair use" in an effort to advance a better understanding of political, economic and social issues. The material on this site is distributed without profit to those who have expressed a prior interest in receiving it for research and educational purposes. If you wish to use copyrighted material for purposes other than "fair use" you must request permission from the copyright owner.

For media inquiries: editors@asia-pacificresearch.com