

More Aggressive 03/19/2018

BERLIN/LONDON/MOSCOW (Own report) - NATO is envisaging a new arms buildup against Russia, as NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg announced yesterday in an interview. Stoltenberg expects that the heads of states and governments of NATO's member countries will "face new decisions" at the NATO summit in July in Brussels to "improve" the "defensive capabilities" and military "preparedness" of the member nations. Officially, this was triggered by the double assassination attempt in Salisbury, Great Britain, which until now has not been solved. Police predict that the investigation may take months. A former British Ambassador explains that employees of Britain's foreign office compare the pressure they are now under for this case, with the pressure in 2003, when the government claimed that Iraq was in possession of weapons of mass destruction. Germany's Federal Intelligence Service (BND) is also introducing new measures against Moscow, whereas the majority of the German population favors rapprochement with Russia.

"Hybrid Warfare"

NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg announced new measures for upgrading the war alliance against Russia. In an interview published yesterday in a German journal's Sunday edition, Stoltenberg said he believes "that Chancellor Merkel and her colleagues will face new decisions at the NATO summit in July in Brussels," to "improve" the member nations' "defensive capabilities" and military "preparedness." [1] The accusation of Russian state officials being behind the double assassination attempt in Salisbury UK serves as his justification. The attempt on the life of former double agent, Sergei Skripal and his daughter Yulia follows, "by all appearances, a pattern we've observed for some years" the Secretary General explained. "Russia is becoming more unpredictable and more aggressive." In his answer to the question, whether the poison attack is part of "hybrid warfare," characterized by the blending of military and non-military measures, he agreed and added, "hybrid warfare ... also shows how blurred the lines sometimes can be between peace, crisis and conflict."

"Extremely Complex"

NATO, as well as the governments of Germany, France and the United States - who have explicitly aligned themselves with the British Prime Minister's allegations last week, that the perpetrators can only be official Russian sources - have still not presented any evidence supporting their allegation. British police speak of an "extremely complex investigation," with hundreds of experienced police officers participating. It will take "weeks, if not months" to investigate this case. For example,

how the poison was administered remains a mystery. Media reports speculate that Yulia Skripal's clothing or cosmetics could have been impregnated with the poison before her departure to the United Kingdom. Others guess the poison may have been disseminated by the car's ventilator. Craig Murray, a former British ambassador in Uzbekistan, who lost his job because of his massive criticism of the CIA and British service's torture interrogation methods in that country in the aftermath of the events of September 11, 2001, reports, quoting employees of Britain's foreign ministry, that they compare the pressure they and the British chemical weapons experts in Porton Down are submitted to in this Salisbury poison assassination attempt, to that in 2003, when London and Washington were alleging that Baghdad possessed considerable quantities of weapons of mass destruction.[2] At that time, it was a lie, to justify going to war with Iraq.

The BND against Moscow

Parallel to those of NATO, the activities of the Federal Intelligence Service (BND) are also being revved up against Russia. It was reported that the BND has recently initiated the creation of a new unit with more than 50 employees to spy on foreign intelligence services,[3] focusing on developing lines of action against Russian espionage, but also targeting the Chinese, Iranian and the North Korean intelligence services. The creation of this new counterintelligence unit had to overcome considerable resistance from Germany's domestic (Federal Office for the Protection of the Constitution (VS)) and the Military Counterintelligence Service (MAD), whose jobs, in fact, are counterintelligence. It is reported that the BND will now enter close cooperation with the VS. The BND has obviously also intensified its influence on the media. Already back in December, it was revealed that BND President Bruno Kahl had leaked information - putting Russia in a bad light - to several journalists before he made it public in a speech in November 2017. [4] This method is not at all unusual. The intelligence services, as well as other sectors of Berlin's government repeatedly make their standpoint public - without the source of the information being given, thereby lending the impression that the information is not influenced by government interests. This, in turn, helps create the desired public opinion and increases the credibility of similar statements that government officials later make.

Berlin against the Majority

The BND's current media activities may have been triggered by the fact that, in spite of massive propagation of anti-Russian media reporting, there is apparently still no majority approval for further intensification of the West's anti-Russian measures. This was shown in a recent survey of more than 5,000 people from March 9 - 16 - in other words, after news of the double assassination attempt in Salisbury. According to this survey, 14 percent of the population is satisfied with the German government's current

course towards Moscow, while 26 percent call for a clear dissociation from Russia. By contrast, 58 percent favor a tangible rapprochement between the two countries. In terms of party affiliation, the approval for rapprochement among AfD supporters is highest (81 percent), followed by partisans of the Left Party, 72 percent, and those of the FDP 62 percent. Even with 49 percent of the Christian Democrats and 47 percent of the SPD's followers, sympathizers favoring closer cooperation are in the majority. Only among the partisans of the Greens, a majority of 44 percent favor "dissociation" from Russia.[5]

The “Delegitimization” Campaign

The media's anti-Russia campaign continues - currently, not only around the Salisbury assassination attempts but also in light of yesterday's election results. There was never any doubt that Vladimir Putin would win a very large election victory. Recently, the specialized periodical, "Internationale Politik" concluded that "Putin's approval ratings," according to the survey by the prestigious Levada Center had reached their lowest point of 60.7 percent in November 2013, but by the spring of 2014, had sharply rebounded and "despite the stagnating economy and falling salaries has not fallen below 80 percent." [6] This corresponds to yesterday's election results. Commenting on the election results, two long-time top politicians of the Green Party, Marieluise Beck and Ralf Fücks allege that Russia has "an authoritarian ruling system," which "aims at absolute control." Presidential elections in that country are, therefore, "merely a confirmation of the supreme ruler." Their results are no evidence of the democratic legitimacy of the winner of the elections.[7] The already long-since widespread delegitimization of Russia's head of state is continuing parallel to the military's arms buildup.

[1] "Wir wollen keinen Krieg". Welt am Sonntag 18.03.2018.

[2] Craig Murray: Of A Type Developed By Liars. craigmurray.org.uk 16.03.2018.

[3] BND baut Gegenspionage-Einheit auf. spiegel. de 16.03.2018.

[4] Jost Moller-Neuhof: Bundesnachrichtendienst streute heimlich Russland-Kritik unter Medien. tagesspiegel.de 16.12.2017.

[5] Cornelia Karin Hendrich: Mehrheit der Deutschen wünscht politische Annäherung an Russland. welt.de 17.03.2018.

[6] Vladislav Inosemtsev: Der russische Kreisel. In: Internationale Politik März/ April 2018. S. 50- 57.

[7] Marieluise Beck, Ralf Fücks: Nachgiebigkeit vergrößert Putins Appetit. Welt am

Sonntag 18.03.2018>.

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