

PM: U.S. Troops Have Moved to Russia's Borders

by Polly Mann

The Russian reply could have been predicted. Vladimir Putin's spokesman is reported to have said, "We perceive it [the deployment of troops] as a threat. These actions threaten our interests, our security. Especially as it concerns a third party building up its military presence near our borders. It's the U.S., not even a European state." (*The Guardian*, January 12, 2017). These plans were made under the Obama administration ahead of the next president and are part of EUCOM (U.S. European Command is one of the seven combatant commands that the entire globe has been divided into for U.S. military "responsibility"). During the presidential campaign Donald Trump said he would rather work with Putin than confront him. But his chosen Secretary of Defense, James Mattis, said that the West should recognize that Putin was trying to break NATO, which has been struggling to cope with Russia's use of hybrid, or many-faceted, warfare.

The U.S. sent Poland 87 tanks and 144 armored vehicles. And Britain is sending troops—1,000 of them. This is part of Atlantic Resolve, training events taking place with command over European troops along Russia's borders with 4,000 U.S. troops and 2,000 tanks arriving in Eastern Europe (The U.S. Marines have also arrived in Norway.) We are told that the U.S. military build-up on Russia's borders is to reassure NATO partners after the referendum of the Crimea area of Ukraine resulted in joining Russia in 2014—that, and the continued Russian involvement in Ukraine (no mention of U.S. involvement!)

Ewen MacAskill of *The Guardian* stated, "Few at NATO seriously believe war with Russia is likely, but there have been dangerous developments. Russia alarmed eastern European states by moving nuclear capable Iskander M missiles to its naval base at Kaliningrad in the autumn."

Is it any wonder that Russia acted thus with the tremendous build-up on its borders?

Major General Timothy McGuire, deputy commanding general of the U.S. Army Europe, says, "The best way to maintain peace is preparation." How about "The best way to maintain peace is not preparing for war but actually maintaining peace"?

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