



## News and Current Events :: Top Russia Expert: Ukraine Joining Nato Would Provoke Nuclear War

### Top Russia Expert: Ukraine Joining Nato Would Provoke Nuclear War, on: 2014/9/8 20:55

Stephen Cohen is one of America's top experts on Russia. Cohen is professor emeritus of Russian studies and politics at New York University and Princeton University, and the author of a number of books on Russia and the Soviet Union.

Cohen says that the West is mainly to blame for the crisis in Ukraine:

This is a horrific, tragic, completely unnecessary war in eastern Ukraine. In my own judgment, we have contributed mightily to this tragedy. I would say that historians one day will look back and say that America has blood on its hands. Three thousand people have died, most of them civilians who couldn't move quickly. That's women with small children, older women. A million refugees.

Cohen joins other American experts on Russia such as former U.S. ambassador to the Soviet Union, Jack Matlock in this assessment.

Cohen also says that if Ukraine joins NATO, it will lead to nuclear war:

The possibility of Ukraine in NATO and what that means and what

STEPHEN COHEN: Nuclear war.

Explain.

STEPHEN COHEN: Next question. I mean, it's clear. It's clear. First of all, by NATO's own rules, Ukraine cannot join NATO, a country that does not control its own territory. In this case, Kiev controls less and less by the day. It's lost Crimea. It's losing the Donbas. I just described why to the war. A country that does not control its own territory cannot join Ukraine. Those are the rules.

Cannot join

STEPHEN COHEN: I mean, NATO. Secondly, you have to meet certain economic, political and military criteria to join NATO.

Ukraine meets none of them. Thirdly, and most importantly, Ukraine is linked to Russia not only in terms of being Russia's essential security zone, but it's linked conjugally, so to speak, intermarriage. There are millions, if not tens of millions, of Russian and Ukrainians married together. Put it in NATO, and you're going to put a barricade through millions of families. Russia will react militarily.

In fact, Russia is already reacting militarily, because look what they're doing in Wales today. They're going to cr

create a so-called rapid deployment force of 4,000 fighters.

What is 4,000 fighters? Fifteen thousand or less rebels in Ukraine are crushing a 50,000-member Ukrainian army. Four thousand against a million-man Russian army, it's nonsense.

The real reason for creating the so-called rapid deployment force is they say it needs infrastructure. And the infrastructure that is, in plain language is military bases need to be on Russia's borders. And they've said where they're going to put them: in the Baltic republic, Poland and Romania.

Now, why is this important? Because NATO has expanded for 20 years, but it's been primarily a political expansion, bringing these countries of eastern Europe into our sphere of political influence; now it's becoming a military expansion. So, within a short period of time, we will have a new Cold War, but here's the difference. The last Cold War, the military confrontation was in Berlin, far from Russia. Now it will be, if they go ahead with this NATO decision, right plunk on Russia's borders.

Russia will then leave the historic nuclear agreement that Reagan and Gorbachev signed in 1987 to abolish short-range nuclear missiles. It was the first time nuclear a category of nuclear weapons had ever been abolished. Where are, by the way, the nuclear abolitionists today? Where is the grassroots movement, you know, FREEZE, SANE? Where have these people gone to? Because we're looking at a new nuclear arms race. Russia moves these intermediate missiles now to protect its own borders, as the West comes toward Russia. And the tripwire for using these weapons is enormous.

One other thing. Russia has about, I think, 10,000 tactical nuclear weapons, sometimes called battlefield nuclear weapons. You use these for short distances. They can be fired; you don't need an airplane or a missile to fly them. They can be fired from artillery. But they're nuclear. They're radioactive. They've never been used. Russia has about 10,000. We have about 500.

Russia's military doctrine clearly says that if Russia is threatened by overwhelming conventional forces, we will use tactical nuclear weapons. So when Obama boasts, as he has on two occasions, that our conventional weapons are vastly superior to Russia, he's feeding into this argument by the Russian hawks that we have to get our tactical nuclear weapons ready.

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