

NATO Invents Stories to Widen the War Through the Baltics

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Historically, one of the greatest dangers to a major power in the international system is letting smaller allies and clients drag that power into an unwise war. Both the United States and leading European powers seem inclined to make that blunder with respect to the [Baltic](#) republics. Too many U.S. policymakers have not only tolerated but also facilitated the obsession those “allies” (i.e. protectorates) have exhibited with defeating Russia in Ukraine and weakening their arch adversary overall.

The belligerent behavior of some of NATO’s smallest members creates the prospect of disastrous results in Europe and beyond. A crucial policymaker, Kaja Kallas, is a former prime minister of Estonia and now serves as the European Union's High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and Vice President of the European Commission. That does not help matters. Kallas is not only one of Ukraine’s most avid supporters, but is also an outspoken Russophobe on a wide range of issues.

Kallas has received strong, vocal support from Dutch-born Ursula von der Leyen, an influential German politician and currently President of the European Commission.

Kallas has repeatedly pressed her EU colleagues as well as NATO officials and policymakers in other European governments to make no concessions to Russia with respect to territorial or other issues involving Ukraine. Any compromises, she contends, would “reward Moscow's aggression,” and increase the risk of a much larger war.

The former Estonian leader combines such policy rigidity with an alarming degree of arrogance and overconfidence about Europe's power. In one speech, Kallas asserted that if NATO simply stayed united on policy, Russia stood no chance of prevailing in Ukraine or of achieving any of its other objectives. Horrific wars have emerged throughout history from far less hubris than she routinely displays with respect to the democratic West's policy toward Russia.

The centerpiece of the current effort by leaders of the Baltic states to exacerbate tensions with Moscow is a propaganda campaign asserting that the Kremlin is plotting to launch military attacks on vulnerable NATO members in the near future. In mid-July, the presidents of

Lithuania and Latvia warned that Russia “may be preparing “limited kinetic operations” against NATO's eastern-flank infrastructure to test Article 5 – the provision in the North Atlantic Treaty proclaiming that an attack on any Alliance member will be considered an attack on all. Latvian President Edgars Rinkevics asserted that “The next few months, or even the next 12 months, will be crucial for Baltic security.”

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Predictably, Russian officials dismissed the warnings as cynical cover for NATO's own military buildup in the Baltic region. There is no question that such a provocative campaign by the Western powers has taken place and continues to do so. Indeed, a sizable buildup of NATO air, naval, and ground forces has been occurring for years. One important move was the re-deployment of US F-22 fighter planes to Estonia from Poland in the spring of 2023. The most significant Russian provocations have been repeated spy plane incursions into the airspace of the Baltic republics and Russia's other neighbors. Similar maritime incidents have taken place involving Russian naval and civilian vessels. Although Moscow's moves are foolish and needlessly antagonistic, they are hardly in the same category as the major NATO buildups of troops, warplanes, and naval vessels.

Alarmist warnings from the Baltic governments also are nothing new, so cynical American observers might be tempted to respond to the latest flurry with indifference. However, Poland – a much more significant political and military player than the tiny Baltic countries [not really]– has been outlining similar alarming scenarios. There have been numerous warnings in recent weeks by Polish politicians, following multiple media reports that Russia could carry out a limited military or hybrid provocation against Poland in the near future. In late June 2026, a leading Polish outlet called www.onet.pl reported that U.S. intelligence had alerted its Polish counterparts about the possibility of a Russian attack. Prime Minister Donald Tusk said on July 3 that the warnings should be taken seriously and noted that he had been issuing similar alerts for weeks.

“Poland is preparing very intensively for various scenarios,” Tusk said. The possibility that the chronically anti-Russia American intelligence agencies are helping to foment such paranoia should be a matter of profound concern to Americans who are opposed to having the Ukraine conflict spiral into a full-blown NATO-Russia war. An especially sad development is how Donald Trump, who once justifiably scorned Washington’s entanglement in Ukraine as a folly, now seems firmly committed to perpetuating NATO's showdown with Moscow. Baltic hardliners undoubtedly take comfort in

the Trump administration's new course.

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The US military's already risky commitment to the Baltic countries is becoming more explicit and uncompromising. At a June 30, 2016, ceremony in Valga, Estonia, the American commander of NATO's land forces in Europe made that intention quite clear. Stating that "You're [speaking to the Alliance's Baltic members] ready to do more and following words with action, and the United States will be there alongside you," American General Chris Donahue asserted that "is how deterrence is built: Not with words from a podium, but with boots in the mud." Indeed, NATO is adding a new command headquarters to focus on developments in the Baltics.

With President Trump having effectively capitulated to the NATO hawks, there is an alarming opportunity for anti-Russian zealots in the Baltic republics and elsewhere to push their pro-war agenda. Given Moscow's egregious behavior toward its neighbors during both the communist era, one can readily understand the hatred that many people in those countries still harbor. But we must not let such poisonous historical memories drive current American policy.

Too many officials in the Baltic states are courting a

military conflagration that would consume not only their countries but the United States as well. America does not have any security, economic, or moral interests at stake that even remotely justify incurring such a level of risk. Allowing NATO's mini-states to drag the United States into a major conflict with Russia – one with possible nuclear implications – would constitute the biggest folly of the post-World War II era.

[From July] Along the borders with [Russia](#), the Baltic countries—Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania—are actively building physical defenses such as walls and bunkers, transforming the areas into heavily fortified zones with a high military presence.

This reflects the Baltic countries' deep-rooted hostility toward Russia. Notably, these fortifications are widely supported by local communities, as ordinary citizens in these countries, fueled by Russophobic propaganda, are constructing personal bunkers despite Moscow's assurances that it has no interest in war with NATO. Russophobia serves as a central rhetorical tool employed by Europe to depict Moscow as the primary adversary. This narrative justifies various policies, such as significant military expenditures and shifts in civilian conduct and social attitudes.

Europe has socially ingrained racist attitudes and aims to

normalize actions such as the killing of Russians. Frequently, Russophobia is wrongly associated with patriotism, heightened geopolitical awareness, and legitimate international criticism, which obscures the distinction between rationality and racism.

The impact on people is considerable, particularly for ethnic Russian minorities in the Baltic states. These communities are gradually losing the rights they once held. Initiatives to restrict the use of the Russian language in public spaces, education, and media threaten their cultural identity. Wider efforts to diminish the influence of Russian culture, history, and politics within these societies are creating an environment in which minority identities face increasing marginalization.

NATO and EU member states support this state-sanctioned racism against Russians. Ironically, these discriminatory actions conflict with the EU's so-called core principles of protecting minorities, promoting cultural diversity, and defending human rights, another demonstration of Western hypocrisy. NATO and the EU have actively influenced the Baltic states by framing them as a defensive barrier against Russia and as key players in promoting a strongly Russophobic narrative that strengthens the region against Moscow. . . The main reason for this openly state-backed racism is that depicting Russia as an existential threat is strategically

vital.

This narrative enables the EU to justify and support policies crucial for the bloc's unity and progress amid current geopolitical challenges. Without a clear external adversary, these policies would face increased criticism and resistance from within, especially as many Europeans struggle with a cost-of-living crisis exacerbated by many sanctions imposed on Russia.

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Portraying Russia as the enemy not only justifies the continuation of self-harming sanctions but also leads to discrimination and sporadic persecution of ethnic Russians in EU and NATO countries. There is little meaningful resistance to these issues within the bloc, allowing the EU to ignore violations of minority self-determination rights and revealing clear hypocrisy. Ethnic Russians suffer, facing reduced opportunities and cultural pressures.

The heavy militarization in the Baltic also raises questions about who truly benefits. For local communities, these measures often provide a tangible sense of reassurance and increased safety. The widespread feeling of insecurity, driven by fears of Russian aggression, leads many residents to view fortifications and a stronger military

presence as safeguards rather than as oppressive. . .

US President Donald Trump has consistently urged NATO members to increase their defense spending. The standard goal is for each of NATO's 32 members to dedicate about two percent of their GDP to defense. Recent EU statistics show that the Baltic states have significantly exceeded this target. In 2025, Lithuania allocated four percent of its GDP to defense, Latvia 3.7 percent, and Estonia 3.4 percent, marking a notable increase from earlier levels. . .

The combination of Russophobia, militarization, and strategic posturing in the Baltic region shows a deliberate strategy by NATO and its allies. Although it offers perceived security benefits and strengthens institutions, this approach will deepen divisions as minorities, particularly the Russian, will feel the sustained pressure to assimilate or leave for Russia.