



Hybrid warfare can justify free pass for “collective defense action”



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In the press conference from December 1st, 2015, NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg informed about the results of the meeting of the NATO member countries. In the context of the Ukraine conflict they have adopted a strategy which is targeting “hybrid warfare”, among others, by Russia. By “Hybrid warfare” or a “hybrid war”, a completely new type of warfare is meant which has only been described in the 21st century. “Hybrid warfare” contains the following elements:

First: Deployment of concealed troops, respectively soldiers with military equipment without any identification, operating on foreign territory.

Second: Extensive usage of weapons, including possibly also atomic, biological, chemical and self-made bombs;

Third: Propaganda- and disinformation campaigns

Fourth: Cyber-attacks, which are possible based on an extensive computerization, electronics-dependency and networking of almost all military branches and interests. Cyber-attacks target, for example computer-aided connections, in order to foil the communication of the opponent and to obtain access to the opponent's computer system. This said concerning “hybrid warfare”. What was remarkable though, was the following statement by Stoltenberg, I quote: “Finally it must be made clear, that also hybrid threats may lead to the implementation of Article 5 of the NATO Treaty - a collective defense action.” Now, what exactly does “implementing Article 5” mean? A collective defense action goes into effect when an “armed attack from outside” against one or various NATO-members is carried out. The 28 current member-countries are then obliged to commonly defend the attacked member. In April 1999 – just in time before 9/11 – at a NATO-summit in Washington, a new strategic concept was worked out which includes, as a new task, the “protection against terror attacks”. Also in such attacks the “collective defense action” would be applicable. Since the attacks on September 11, 2001 until today there are still NATO-troops in war zones such as Afghanistan, Iraq, Libya and Syria – partially justified with the “Article 5”. In none of these cases a war against NATO was aggressively started. In spite of this the NATO-states involved these countries in bloody wars. So what does the NATO Secretary General's statement mean when he says that also hybrid threats through Russia can lead to “implementing collective defense”? That would mean nothing other than that a NATO implementation of Article 5 could be proclaimed already under the following conditions: in response to a covert military operation, - on the basis of disinformation campaigns, - or due to cyber-attacks of unknown origin. But how then will NATO know, who is the real initiator is and who to go against? For it is characteristic of “hybrid warfare” that all warring parties are fighting covertly and the origins cannot be determined due to missing identification. Well, then it is possible to accuse a party of warmongering any time without being able to prove it

or being compelled to prove it. At the same time one need not reveal oneself as attacker. This would leave the door wide open for manipulation - for any group of warmongers. So the source of "hybrid warfare" could just as easily be a third party, who would benefit in the case of a "collective defense action" and military intervention. It is crucial at this point that over months, Russia was repeatedly accused by the NATO of conducting a covert war in Ukraine. Above all the European NATO top commander, General Philip Breedlove has claimed this repeatedly. Even the German Federal Government often did not share Breedlove's assessment, as "Spiegel-Online" reported on March 7, 2015. A top officer of the Federal intelligence service warned in addition to this that with partially false assertions or overblown depictions, people would lose their confidence in NATO. We have to sit up and take notice when NATO decides that, based on hybrid threats, a collective defense action according to Article 5 can be proclaimed. So the NATO can blame Russia anytime for an attack, without proving it and without being compelled to prove it. This is equal to a free license for the NATO. In this manner the European people are gradually taught that they have to prepare themselves for an open conflict with Russia.

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