

Pippa Passes: The Case of the Missing Chessboard, the Sonoran Desert and the Entrepreneurs in the Galapagos.

By Dr. Pippa Malmgren

[Matthias Chang's comments: Many “learned analysts” etc. across the political divide / Intelligence Community (IC) when embarking on research (for purposes of national Security), would invariably and frequently “visit” Wikipedia, being too lazy to read actual papers and or articles submitted to prestigious journals - financial, scientific, engineering, medical etc. They would assert that those of us who delved deep and painstakingly verified the sources are “conspiracy theorists” and cannot be trusted. These brainwashed analysts (indulging in short-cuts) find it so hard that **there could be an alternative or verified analysis.** And what they have submitted to the highest political authorities (especially political leaders in governments) must be accepted as Gospel truth and any contrary advice, opinions etc. would inevitably draw a host of accusations and allegations that the truth-tellers are foreign agents, indulging in fake news, misinformation and or propaganda and even incarcerated for exposing the lies. The Russian Dossier, a hoax prepared by the US Democratic Part led by Hillary Clinton, their lawyers and UK MI6 comes to mind. **So, read CAREFULLYy and DILIGENTLY the article written by a close friend who was invited to Malaysia to participate and advise the Powers-That-Be in a Closed Door Dialogue. The Point which I am making is to CONSIDER a DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVE. You may agree or disagree. But, what is critical is to APPRECIATE and UNDERSTAND what “THE OTHER SIDE” is thinking, planning and doing!**

The article begins below:

I did a Twitter space this week with @ShaykhSulaiman, just to get a feel for the tenor of the public conversation on geopolitics. [Tina Fordham](#) is right. She wrote a great piece in the FT called [Beware Wikipedia-Surfing Kissinger Wannabes](#).

She was horrified to find herself on a client call for BofA where experts were basically taking the Russian side of the story. The problem she said was, “thanks to the misbegotten notion that political analysis is little more than formulating an opinion after a bit of Wikipedia-surfing, amplified by the rich-dude phenomenon that being good at one thing (making money) makes your opinion valuable on everything.”

Basically, as she says, the market is **“conflating risk analysis with picking sides.”** Yes, a bunch of amateurs are jumping in with gusto. That makes sense. We had a peace dividend for 30+ years (which I discussed in detail on the [Jay Martin Show](#) this week).

For many, that’s been their entire life. The return of geopolitics is a shock. Now humans have to catch up. **The big problem is that the people in charge are also behaving like amateurs. They talk about making all kinds of dramatic**

moves but without any sense of where the chessboard actually is (Thanks to Robbin Laird of the Second Line of Defence for this idea). Worse, even if they could identify where it is, there is no sense of strategy. What is the end game? Where do we want to end up with the superpowers? What is the definition of “winning” in this situation?



What do I mean by “where is the chessboard”? You can speak of sanctions or moving nuclear capability onto mobile platforms ([Russian](#) and [American](#) nuclear submarines in the Pacific and the [Atlantic](#)) or even of building [trenches WWI style](#) around Crimea. But to what end?

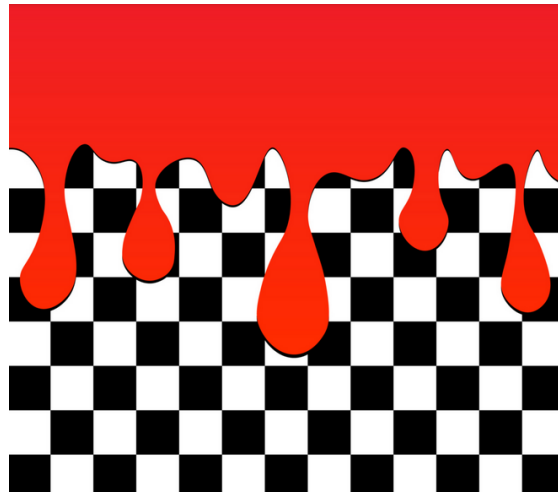
These are tactical considerations that will have no impact, or adverse impact, without a grand strategy. **Russia and China have a clear and grand strategy. They are aligning with nations around the world to do lucrative deals. Ironically, the former communist nations have become highly commercial. They understand that influence is more easily accomplished through financial gain than ideology.**

The Economist captured the problem well in “[Can the West Win Over the Rest](#)” saying, “In a more transactional world, the price of influence is going up.” Put another way, QE raised the price of influence as well as everything else.

The non-Aligned countries don’t want to choose sides. They want to make money. Who is offering better money-making deals these days? It’s not the US. Why? Because Americans are not that interested in the rest of the world. Because American companies find it hard to do business abroad and not trip up over the Foreign Corrupt Practices Act.

Because Americans cannot deal with organized crime that increasingly dominates mainstream business in many parts of the world. I am not saying that America needs to get darker about its approach to negotiating. I am saying that dark forces in the world economy are on the rise, and the US, for now, has no alternative game to offer, even though nobody like being engulfed by what the other side is offering. When you ask about this, you just get shoulder shrugs. There’s nothing we can do about this, say the non-aligned. We have to create jobs. If Russia and China are buying, we have to be selling.

The Economist writes, “Their (the non-aligned) economic clout is rising. Consider the 25 largest non-aligned economies, or the “transactional-25” (defined as those which have not imposed sanctions on Russia, or have said they wish to be neutral in the Sino-American contest). Together they account for 45% of the world’s population, and their share of global GDP has risen from 11% when the Berlin Wall fell to 18% today, more than the EU.”



So where is the chessboard? It seems to be on a checkered landscape of backroom deals being done under organized crime threats. Will moving nuclear weapons around fix this? No. I hear people in the military world talking of tactics that won’t make any difference. You can place naval assets in the Baltic and soldiers in the Baltic states, but you may wake up to find that the opponent already owns everybody hundreds of miles beyond your position. You think you control the territory because you have tanks. But they control the territory because they have [terrorized the locals](#) into accepting [cash](#) to save themselves. You are already surrounded by “[merchant adventurers](#)” who work for the other side, and all their victims are bound to them, perhaps even exhibiting signs of [Stockholm Syndrome](#).

This is how Estonia’s capital, Tallin, in a nation with almost no non-ferrous metals, became the world’s 6th largest metal exporting location on earth, earning it the nickname “[Metalinn](#).” Like the American mafia, these crime gangs used to be bullying thugs, but they got smarter and suited up. Now they are extremely sophisticated businesspeople who glide fluidly through life in beautiful cars accompanied by the best lawyers in town and usually working closely with [enforcement officials](#) who are on the take.

Lest anyone think this is a rare phenomenon, look at the recent findings by [Lady Case’s investigation into the British Met Police](#), where so many officers (hundreds, if not thousands) have been found to be involved in corruption that there will be at least 2-3 court cases a week for years to come. London used to jokingly be called Londonistan because so many Russians were based there. But the true implications of this were not acknowledged. Even Britain, which is America’s leading defense partner, has been compromised by organized crime and graft at the highest levels. **Nuclear weapons won’t solve this.**

The non-aligned world, particularly the poorer and Southern hemisphere nations, are closer to their indigenous roots. Such people still believe that angering mother earth will bring terrible troubles. Their superstitious and pagan ways have long been dismissed and suppressed by those who colonized these parts of the world. Yet, now these non-aligned and bio-diverse locations, such as Ecuador and The Galapagos, which I visited this week, are entirely at the mercy of those who control nuclear weapons and organized crime, neither of whom have much regard for mother earth and her fragile splendors.

In Ecuador, the cartels recently killed [Eduardo Mendúa](#), an A'i Cofán Indigenous leader, right outside his front door because he was leading the effort to protect the Amazon from oil drilling. He led the Confederation of Indigenous Nations of Ecuador (Confederación de Nacionalidades Indígenas del Ecuador, CONAIE), bringing together the representatives from all Indigenous nations. The government had approved the drilling. But, this was not so much a fight between citizens and government as a fight between organized crime cartels and citizens. **So, politicians and forest guardians alike have no voice in stopping the nuclear threat from the industrialized world nor the infiltration of organized crime. The two are related.**

Ecuador has emerged as the new “[nerve center](#)” of global drug trafficking. All the cartels are present and increasingly powerful: [Mexican](#), Chinese, Russian, [Albanian](#), Columbian, and even the Italian 'Ndrangheta. Europe, too is finding that ports are increasingly controlled by Chinese owners who view organized crime as a normal way of doing business. [Europol](#) writes, “The Security Steering Committee of the ports of Antwerp, Hamburg/Bremerhaven and Rotterdam, together with Europol, agreed to draft a joint analysis report assessing the threat of infiltration of port infrastructure by organized crime in the EU.” The world economy and geopolitics are increasingly at the mercy of these dark forces. They are not playing on the chess board that The White House wants to exist. The White House may make moves, but they don't impact on any of these hard truths. After Russia's term ends, Ecuador will take over the UN Security Council management. Can they be a voice that stops the superpowers from stumbling into a nuclear exchange? Yes, but will they? They seem to intuitively understand that we are in a multidimensional chess game with either multiple boards or perhaps no boards at all, making moves that may only add up in the minds of policymakers but not in reality.

The Russian influence in Latin America, like its influence in Africa is on the rise. This reality doesn't fit the current “Russia is broke and isolated” narrative we see in the press or coming from Washington. Jack the Dripper's trove of classified documents reveals that [Washington is aware of this](#) but unable to do anything about it. The Wagner Group and Russian operatives are not only deeply embedded in Africa, but [also in Latin America](#). Russian Foreign Minister Lavrov has just begun his [first tour of Latin America](#) since the war in Ukraine began. He has more friends than enemies on this continent. Jobs beat morals here.

In Africa, the Russian presence is ever more apparent in places like [Sudan](#). The contest for control of the state is between various groups, from the official

military to the rebel forces, who are [all backed by Russia](#). It does not matter which one wins. Russia will win with any of them. It may be that Russia isn't even interested in political control. The goal is simply to [plunder the valuable assets like gold](#) and make use of the valuable locations like the [Sudanese ports on The Red Sea](#). That's the way to play chess. Make all the pieces work in your favoUr.

In the West, those in the markets talk about the de-dollarization of the world economy but not understanding that something more profound is in play. This isn't about which fiat currency you use. It's about whether the fiat is a government or an entity that controls everything through violence. This is not about de-dollarization.