

# Can We Have Some Real Talk About Ukraine?



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Excellent article, added a couple of notes near bottom. Original [here](#)

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Time to get real. Ukraine is an equal opportunity crisis because it provides politicians of both parties a chance to be wrong, although it allows the Democrats the opportunity to do what they do best and be much, much more wrong. For the Republicans, it lets them indulge the desire of some to return to a time when America could focus its moral firepower – if not its firepower firepower – upon a readily-identifiable baddie like it did during the Cold War or the War on Terror. For the left, it allows them to create a moral panic to replace COVID, which, naturally, requires that we Americans "[sacrifice](#)" even more of our freedom and money.

From the perspective of someone who actually trained Ukrainian troops in Ukraine, commanded US forces, and attended the US Army War College – though it's kind of the Chico State of war colleges – the whole way our elite is approaching the crisis is an epic clusterfark. Don't believe anything anyone tells you – and certainly, sanity check whatever I'm telling you, too – most of these insta-experts on intra-Slavic conflict know absolutely squat-ski. Moreover, their remarkably dumb observations and credulous acceptance of conventional wisdom, which has proven long on conventional and short on wisdom, are being presented without any kind of strategic context. They don't know where this crisis came from and certainly have no clear notion of where they want it to go beyond the vague and unhelpful idea that they want Putin (which they use interchangeably with Russia) to "lose" without knowing what that even means.

Biases are important, and here are mine. I sympathize with the Ukrainian people, partly because I worked with them and partly because I was an end-stage Cold Warrior who came up training to fight Russians. I understand that this mess is not merely the result of Putin being bad or Trump being insufficiently anti-Putin, like LTC Sausage and the rest of the failed foreign policy elite and regime media insist. Putin's badness plays a part, but he's merely exploiting thousands of years of bloody history, of ethnic hatred, and of Orthodox mysticism, as well as totally misguided and poorly-considered Western interference. The idea that we could just make Ukraine part of NATO and the Russians would just lump it is remarkable for its dumbness, but it is fully in

keeping with our foreign policy elite's unbroken track record of failure since the old-school military's victory in the Gulf War – something I discuss in-depth in my upcoming Regnery book "[We'll Be Back: The Fall and Rise of America](#)." My bottom line is that the Ukrainians are imperfect, and regardless of whether the Russians have some quasi-legit beefs in some cosmic sense, you don't solve them by sending in a couple hundred thousand mechanized soldiers.

The expectation was that the Russian forces would smash through, surround the Ukrainian forces pinned down facing the Russians in the occupied regions to the east, and isolate the main cities. I did not expect them to go into the cities immediately since Russians 1) generally bypass hard defenses; 2) they have bad experiences with city fighting (Stalingrad, Grozny); and 3) that would not necessarily be necessary. It would not be necessary if the idea was to neutralize the main Ukrainian combat formations and force the government in the cities to capitulate, then have the West pressure the Ukrainians to accept a ceasefire and "peace" that recognized Russian gains and ended the idea of Ukrainian allying with the West. In fact, that is pretty much what the Russian "peace plan" consists of. But that did not work for a couple of reasons.

First, the Russians did not fight as well as expected. You should always treat the enemy as if it is the best possible enemy. We did in the Gulf. We prepared to fight elite Republican Guard divisions of highly trained and motivated soldiers using top-shelf Soviet equipment and tactics. None of that was so; we crushed an entire national army in 100 hours.

The Russians are poorly-led, with very weak synchronization among maneuver forces and fires. Their plan is okay – in fact, you look at a map, and it's obvious what they would do. But their gear is badly-maintained, and their troops are unsuited to the task of supporting a rapid advance. Look at all the evidently intact gear simply abandoned by the side of the road. Lots of it looks like it broke down (note all the flat tires). Much of it seems to have run out of gas. And, of course, lots of stuff had been blasted apart.

That's the second part of the equation – the Ukrainians fought back hard. If you are a Lord of the Rings nerd, think of the Ukrainians as the dwarves. Not super-sophisticated but tough and ready to fight, and also often drunk.

If you want to see the future of this war, look at videos of Ukrainian infantry patrolling near the front. Every second guy has an anti-tank weapon, like a Javelin or some other system, and the rest are carrying spare missiles. Mechanized forces unprotected by infantry are vulnerable to ambush by anti-tank teams. The Russian armor outstripped its ground pounders and is getting pounded itself. Further, Ukrainians seem to have success with drones firing anti-tank weapons. The war is not going to be won by conventional battalions of Ukrainians operating with conventional aircraft. It will win with light infantry and drones armed with missiles.

This is why the whole Polish MiG thing is so silly and why Republicans are so wrong to get behind it. So, the Poles will (in return for F-16s and F-15s) give up their 30-year-old MiG-29s to the US, which will then give them to Ukraine, which will then fly them to victory. No. Let's leave the escalation part aside – and that's a pretty big consideration. Putin has nukes, and escalation is not in our interest. If America is using a base in Germany to assemble a bunch of fighters that will be attacking Russians, are they a target and thereby a trigger for WW3? Yeah, I know the argument that it's not an escalation, but guess what? We don't get a vote. Putin – who we have been told is an amalgam of crazy, stupid, and evil (the third is undeniable; the first two wishful thinking) gets to decide. He's the guy with the finger over a button, and it doesn't say "Reset."

Let's look at the practical part. Fighters are part of a conventional war, which Ukraine should not fight since Russian conventional forces are so much larger. A couple of dozen hand-me-downski fighters are going to turn the tide? If the Ukrainians' own jets flown by their top pilots got shot down already by Russia's formidable air defenses, which is probably true (don't buy the "Ghost of Kyiv" stuff), what's going to happen to a bunch of planes that – assuming they are even flyable – are being flown by the Ukrainian equivalent of [Randy Quaid in](#)

["Independence Day"](#)? It's the Bad News Bears squadron; they might as well plaster "Sponsored by Chico's Bail Bonds" on the tails.

This war gets won by cheap drones and little groups of [armed Ukrainians](#) packing AKs and plinking tanks and IFVs with portable missiles.

But what does "won" mean? Has anyone in the US government articulated what conditions we are seeking to achieve? Is it to "beat the Russians?" What's that mean? Our establishment is gung-ho to help, and I don't mind, but what are we helping to do? Ukraine's interests involve pushing Russia out of its territory. But time for some hard truth – continuing this economically disastrous war until every boot is off Ukrainian soil is not necessarily in America's interest, and America's interests need to come first. We could live with resolutions that the Ukrainians might not want to live with.

And if our elite can't articulate a short-term end-state, it sure can't articulate one for five years from now. It is in America's interest to wean Russia from China over the long term, but are we aiming at that? Do we want to do

The war in Ukraine is a perfect demonstration of why not one state in the world should couple with the United States and NATO on anything. America is proving that the advantages it gained over the years as a nation with a unique founding has degenerated into a corrupt, militant bully who will stop at nothing to destroy competing states, [attack its own people that object to policies as domestic terrorists](#), promote destructive lifestyles to innocent children [that promote eating human shit](#), injecting them [with poisons](#) for no solid reason I can figure out, all to satisfy a lust for power. To me it looks like an effort to subjugate the entire world to behavior that cannot take the human race to the next step of evolution, and it has to be stopped, even if it is at the end of someone, anyone's resistance.

Russia not only has nuclear weapons, it has a small but highly capable group of people developing software, sophisticated weapons, and has extensive space technology. Size is not the only criteria to evaluate nations' strength and abilities. If size and wealth alone were the only criteria Vietnam, Afghanistan and the many other countries America has attacked would all be vassal states. What America actually does is use its power to destroy competition by destroying resources and infrastructure, in effect putting balls and chains around competitors' legs in a track meet to slow them down or hobble them. Russia has the largest land area on earth and its total estimated natural resources are worth \$75 trillion. The country has the [biggest mining industry](#) in the world producing mineral fuels, industrial minerals, and metals. Russia is a leading producer of aluminum, arsenic, cement, copper, magnesium metal, and compounds such as nitrogen, palladium, silicon, and vanadium. The nation is the second-largest exporter of rare earth minerals. I have left out oil which is a separate topic, but Russia is a leading producer of oil and has vast arctic reserves. One of the most critical advantages Russia has is that it is friends with other nuclear states, principally China and India, that are not aligned with the west, other than when it serves their interests. The financial attacks on Russia are not a show of strength, they are a highly publicized reason to get completely free of any America influence in all sectors, and link to or vertically integrate equivalents as needed. And while some may think words like evil, repressive, and so on mean something, they do not. The majority of the world's population as markets are focused on money for their own plans, democratic or otherwise, and an alliance of non-western countries is completely justifiable to achieve their ends.

America seems incapable of controlling its military industrial complex, corrupt corporate practices, and negotiation by threat. There is little reason to want to partner with that behavior. In a fully developed world where all nations are moving closer to par, what is the reason for anyone to deal with the United States exclusively? Business school teaches having the availability of multiple suppliers of equivalent goods is a benefit.

Its hard to find a good reason for anyone to want to do deals at the point of an American gun.

such damage to Russia that we can never hope to recover it from China's orbit? After all, China is the big enemy. Russia is just a Shell station guarded by Paul Blart, except instead of a whistle, he's got H-bombs.

"Putin bad" is true, but it's insufficient. It's time for some real talk about America's interests, which may not be Ukraine's interests, and how we are pursuing them. Except no one wants to talk about that because that's not fun. Moral panics are, and stopping for a second to think strategically spoils the party for many in both parties.

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