

Nato's Screwing of Ukraine



by Samuel Hux

In the October 2021 issue of *New English Review* I published “The Desertion of Afghanistan.” The title says it all. I argued that President Joe Biden’s overriding motive was simply to get the American military out of a dangerous place, the conventional liberal that Biden is. Along the way I wrote the following:

“In Harm’s Way is the special place a professional military belongs: potential harm is its reason for being. It’s not an organization of guys and gals, the boys, kids. It is the professional home of the Warrior Class. For sentimentalists, especially of the liberal variety, the military is a training and employment endeavor for those not fortunate enough to make it in the private industries and institutions. . . so bring them home out of harm’s way—“home” not necessarily Home, but at least where there’s little danger. This amounts of course to a vulgarization and disrespect of the Profession

of Arms!

I have not the least doubt about the previous paragraph. Listen. This very afternoon as I wrote, President Biden hosted in photo op the president of Ukraine. The receptive mood was proper, as it should be. But concerning Ukraine's principal ambition—membership in NATO—Biden remains unconvinced that Ukraine is quite ready for that. Again, listen. Of all the nations in Europe there is none that needs NATO protection from Russia more than Ukraine. So why is Ukraine not "ready"? I have not the least doubt about the following:

The principal and strongest component of NATO is of course the American military. Nations in Western Europe, and so on, are in no danger now of military aggression from Russia. But if Ukraine were a NATO member we would be committed to render her protection. . . and that could put American "boys" in harm's way.

It's been decades now since I wore the uniform. But I remain offended at the vulgar disrespect—parading as solicitation—of the one sure honorable profession in the United States of America."

My words from October become even more relevant as I write in March 2022.

Not only is ex-KGB agent Vladimir Putin a Stalinist thug, and a fool (to think he can *successfully* occupy a resistant Ukraine), the decision-makers for the major NATO nations which call the shots (U.S. certainly included!) are equally foolish and furthermore are pussies with respect to Russia. There is no nation in Europe which has needed membership in NATO as much as Ukraine, a fact which was long obvious well before the Russian invasion. While it is true that Ukrainian citizens who desired membership did not become a clear majority until very late, a handsome majority have wished to join over the

last three or four years—and now they know they were foolish a decade or so ago. Given the fact that Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania (like Ukraine ex-members of the Soviet Union) easily gained NATO status—which could not have pleased Putin—why has it been so hard for NATO simply to invite Ukraine in?

Putin has said the greatest tragedy of the 20th century was the collapse of the USSR—which reveals for one thing that Putin is a stranger to anything like a moral vision, this man who does not think the Holocaust was the greatest tragedy! He clearly wants his legacy to be the reconstitution of something as close as possible to the Soviet Union, which would mean the three *Slavic* republics of the old USSR: Russia, Byelorussia (now Belarus), and Ukraine. If the fools in Belarus cannot read his desires they will deserve their fate. And if Putin cannot see that his legacy will be the 21st century Hitler he is as big a fool as they.

But what about “us”? While the European NATO leaders have followed Biden’s sanctions of Russia and outrage and promises of humanitarian aid short of military intervention, “all” agreed with him for months (and with US leaders for years) that Ukraine was “not yet ready” for NATO acceptance. *And you know damned well why!* And we should know as well that if Ukraine had become a NATO nation well before now Putin would not have dared to do what he is now doing. No one—no matter his mental deficiencies—*declares war against 31 nations at once!* At least nothing on that order of lunacy has occurred in history. . . yet. When judging what to do now, one must be guided to some degree by historical precedents.

And we should know this as well: when Biden and gang said to Ukraine “not ready yet,” *permission was implicitly and explicitly being asked of Vladimir Putin!* Some things are bloody well obvious. What a shame.

I do not speak clinically, but truly nonetheless: Vladimir

Putin is insane. What else can one say of a man who cannot imagine that he could be wrong, who, as I said earlier, thinks he can “invite” Ukraine back into a federation with Russia by militarily assaulting her, which necessitates occupying her because she resists, who is willing to commit war crimes along the way? Putin is not only functionally out of his mind; he is—or acts as if he is—abysmally ignorant of history. He is guilty of all four counts of the Nuremberg International Military Tribunal to which his beloved USSR was a signator: Crimes Against the Peace (Aggressive War), Conspiracy to Commit Crimes, War Crimes, Crimes Against Humanity. He justifies his actions against Ukraine by claiming that Ukraine is not and has never been a properly sovereign nation, evidently ignorant of the history of Ukrainian sovereignty: such as the fact among many facts that the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic held a seat in the United Nations even before the Russian Soviet Socialist Republic did, the reason that the USSR held two seats instead of one in the old U.N. If Ukraine has never been a sovereign nation neither has Russia been.

Of course Putin knows enough history to use it by distorting it. He claims to be motivated by Ukraine’s “Neo-Nazi” leadership. What is he talking about? Let me remind the reader of a possible source of the distortion.

Ukraine (like Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania) saw the recruitment of Waffen SS units while under occupation (partial or total) during World War II: the 14th Waffen Grenadier Division SS. The Ukrainian Waffen SS no more represented broad Ukrainian opinion than the “Charlemagne” Division SS represented broad French opinion! Those Ukrainians who volunteered for the Waffen SS were not necessarily pro-Nazi but were certainly anti-Stalinist—and for good reason. The *Holodomor* or Great Famine of the Ukraine in 1932-1933 killed through starvation estimates between 3.5 and 7 million and caused indirectly God knows how many million

other deaths. You have to be a Stalinist apologist not to know that the *Holodomor* was the result of Stalin's enforced theft of grain from Ukrainian peasants (*Kulaks*), which was—at least in part—punishment for Ukrainian opinion in favor of independence.

One consequence of the Russian invasion of eastern Ukraine in 2014 was a softening of memories of the 14th Waffen SS—also known, more innocently, as the 1st Galician. In April 2021 300 Ukrainians marched in celebration of the 14th. Much to the condemnation of Jewish President Volodymyr Zelenskyy and 47,000 other Ukrainian Jews and the disgust of most of the rest of well over 40 million souls in Ukraine. *That*, fundamentally, is *it*. To believe Putin's ridiculous lie Russians have to be as stupid as a few hundred Ukrainian morons. Now, back to where I left off:

In effect to ask permission of Russia for Ukrainian membership in NATO, which is what was done instead of NATO acting on its own prerogative, was to reward a gangster with power over 30 nations. Given the fact that American *Intelligence*, at least, was convinced that Putin would indeed invade, it was extremely *unintelligent* not to attempt an emergency trial membership for Ukraine in order possibly to discourage what we expected. The actions and inactions of Joe Biden and his allies were and are now nothing short of irresponsible to an extreme degree. And that we should remember as we are horrified by Putin's actions. Ukrainians probably will.

I wish to sum up and then put the matter in a particularly damning historical context. No nation in Europe needed NATO membership more than Ukraine since no other was threatened by Russia to the same degree. (Although given Putin's now-documented insanity the Balts' nervousness is understandable.)

Had Ukraine become a NATO nation she would have been "assured" protection since an assault on one NATO member means a suicidal assault on all NATO nations. The response that

Ukraine was “not yet ready” was absurd, given her need (as well as her ability to provide aid should another NATO nation be attacked, as the Ukrainin military has certainly proven). The only reason Ukraine was not accepted was the knowledge that if Ukraine were invaded “We” would be bound by membership to intervene against Russian assault. So the idea that Ukraine was not yet ready for NATO membership really means that NATO nation leaders—most dramatically Joe Biden—were not ready to honor NATO’s reason for existence. Which means that “We”—courage and intelligence absent—have been waiting for a mad man, Putin, to give his permission or not. This is disgusting. Just as much as, and no less than, the behavior of England and France yielding to Adolf Hitler at Munich in 1938 was disgusting. And that is the comparison History will observe.

No matter the outrage and sanctions and humanitarian efforts—although they do matter of course—NATO has the blood of innocents on its hands even while the blood is actively drawn by Vladimir Putin. If NATO—especially its American partner—is to be forgiven by History, so, I think, Neville Chamberlain should also be forgiven.

The reader should not assume that I think I know with certainty what should be done now—although in my amateur’s opinion I think NATO should risk the imposition of a no-fly zone at the least. But I am certain of what I think should have been done in the *Then* which preceded the *Now*. As I write in the middle of March I find myself despairing. Another way of saying that is praying for a Russian *coup d’état*.

Final Comments:

Biden and his European allies want to avoid a “Third World War.” Consider the following reflections.

What do we mean by *World War*? It never refers to a war that

is truly worldwide. WWI took place in Europe, the Near East, and Africa. WWII covered Europe, the Near East, Africa, Asia, and the Pacific. The Korean War involved Korea, China, and the UN Nations, but was never called a WW. Neither was the Viet Nam War. Neither have been the various wars between African nations. Nor the wars Israel has fought with Arab nations. Nor the war that took place in what had been Yugoslavia. Etc. and Etc. Let us face it. When we call a war a *World War* we mean a violent conflict that no matter what other regions it may involve it must involve The United States (actively or not—as the U.S. originally was not at the beginning of WWI and WWII) and take place primarily in Europe, involving at least two European nations.

The point I'm making is the the Russian invasion of Ukraine does not threaten to spill over into World War III. . . . which "We" should not precipitate by hasty actions. *It is already World War III*, taking place in Europe between Russia and Ukraine but already involving the United States and the European NATO nations to some real degree short of "boots on the ground," which does not *necessarily* mean infantry, could mean metaphorically "pilots in the air." But it is the damndest "WW" imaginable: only the invader and the invaded fighting, while the other "involvees" praise and encourage the invaded and toothlessly demand the invader to "stop it!"—while shaking in their boots, fearing that if the shaking boots are grounded "things might get even worse." Well, what could that "worse" be?

It could be (1) what we have to be afraid of, that the mad man would launch a nuclear attack, but that has to be judged unlikely since Putin does not strike one as a suicidal type who could forget the reality of "mutually assured self-destruction." It could *not* be (2) a victory by an army which bears any relation to the Red Army of WWII, for the present Russian army has proven itself to be an incompetent, no matter how murderous, bully, already an embarrassment for Putin.

What is the alternative to boots on the ground? Nothing good that I can imagine, only more senseless death for Ukrainians and physical destruction of the country. I don't hold my breath for a *coup*: the Russian political class does not deserve our "understanding" but our contempt.

Am I arguing for boots on the ground? Yes and no. My intellectual arrogance, and respect for the Profession of Arms, say Yes. My modesty says No. Why *modesty*? I'm safe, way too old to be called up. And I luckily escaped combat during "my war" when I was a teenage soldier-boy. It's up to the Warrior Class, who I have to think know best. Actually, however, it is up to Joe Biden and his foreign ilk. Here we go again.