

### **UKRAINIAN REALITY AND HOW IT AFFECTS OTHER COUNTRIES**

Duke University Law School

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5-Mb-Tyi\\_II](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5-Mb-Tyi_II)

### **TOWARD A UNIFIED WESTERN GRAND STRATEGY VIS A VIS RUSSIA**

Appreciated the opportunity to speak as a guest lecturer in the American University Kyiv's Global Ukrainian Executive Security series assessing Western dealings with Moscow. Many thanks to Mark Voyager, Associate Professor and Director of the Master's Program in Global Management.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4Kmvec1egVQ>

### **ІНТЕРВ'Ю З УКРАЇНИ**

<https://rozmova.wordpress.com/2020/02/01/viktor-rud-2/>

### **MASS STARVATION AS A WEAPON—talk at the UN**

<https://media.un.org/en/asset/k11/k11q314666> beginning at approx. 8:45

<https://www.ukrinform.ua/rubric-politics/3616922-do-rokovin-golodomoru-v-oon-rozpovili-pro-golod-ak-zbrou-v-rukah-kremla.html>

### **YESTERDAY'S HOLODOMOR AND TODAY'S GLOBAL SECURITY**

<https://vimeo.com/778239903/3ce2941aa5>

### **IS AMERICA TEACHABLE? LESSONS NEVER LEARNED IN OUR DEALINGS WITH "RUSSIA"**

Institute for World Politics, Washington

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5-Mb-Tyi\\_II](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5-Mb-Tyi_II)

### **CAN THE WEST GROW UP?**

A century ago, Ukraine's integration with the West was refused. Brushing off Ukraine's warning about Russia's impending assault against the West, Woodrow Wilson's "Fourteen Points" of freedom and self-determination were myopically denied for the largest country in Europe. The U.S. reneged on contracted aid to Ukraine, and its participation at the Paris Peace talks was forbidden. Western pusillanimity and greed facilitated Moscow's slaughter of millions. And not just in Ukraine. In a generation's time, the West scarcely dared to breath lest an air current waft over The Button.

[https://www.centrumbalticum.org/en/publications/baltic\\_rim\\_economies/baltic\\_rim\\_economies\\_1\\_2024/victor\\_rud\\_can\\_the\\_west\\_grow\\_up](https://www.centrumbalticum.org/en/publications/baltic_rim_economies/baltic_rim_economies_1_2024/victor_rud_can_the_west_grow_up)

### **TURN YOUR BACK ON UKRAINE AND SET THE WORLD ON FIRE**

Western weakness and vacillation over Ukraine are encouraging expansionist despots. They will ensure a cascade of warfare around the world if the US abandons Kyiv.

<https://cepa.org/article/turn-your-back-on-ukraine-and-set-the-world-on-fire/>

### **WHY GIVE RUSSIA TERRITORY IN UKRAINE? AND OTHER QUESTIONS FOR JD VANCE.**

On a recent appearance on CNN's "State of the Union," Sen. J.D. Vance (R-Ohio) posited that "What's in America's best interest is to accept Ukraine is going to have to cede some territory to

the Russians.” So, I would ask the senator to answer several questions on the topic of Ukraine, a sovereign country, fighting an invader for its very survival.

<https://themessenger.com/opinion/russia-territory-ukraine-war-jd-vance-international-agreements>  
<https://www.msn.com/en-US/news/world/why-give-russia-territory-in-ukraine-and-other-questions-for-jd-vance/ar-AA11B646?ocid=sapphireappshare>

### **DOES ANYONE REMEMBER NOVEMBER 16, 1933? OF COURSE NOT.**

In the 1980s, Fred [Coleman](#), Moscow correspondent for Newsweek, walked into the Soviet embassy in [Washington](#) to ask if Soviet Ambassador Dobrynin was ready to meet with the new American president. Dobrynin had already served through several Presidencies. Dobrynin’s secretary’s reply: “The Ambassador is looking forward to working with the new president the way a kindergarten teacher looks forward to the first day of school.”

Forget arrogance. The episode illustrates a glaring constant in [America](#)’s relations with [Moscow](#): our inability to extrapolate lessons from our own experience. We’re a nation that’s hardwired for instant gratification, with a low frustration threshold that doesn’t even begin to compare with the patience of our enemies.

<https://www.kyivpost.com/opinion/24286>

### **CREDIBILITY OF U.S. FOREIGN POLICY AT STAKE**

How do China and other foes (and friends) assess our US strategic sagacity in Ukraine? Commentary on the issue has exploded. But it scarcely addresses the several factors unique to Ukraine that have a massive multiplier effect, good or bad, on perceptions of our deterrence credibility, political will and reliability of national commitment.

<https://www.kyivpost.com/opinion/22565>

### **WHY IS NATO SCARED OF RUSSIA?**

Why did the most powerful military alliance in world history fail to prevent Russia’s 2014 invasion of Ukraine, and the expansion of the war last year? NATO comprises 31 (soon to be 32) countries representing more than half the world’s economy, including three nuclear powers. Russia’s population is less than half of America’s, and its economy is the size of New York City’s.

<https://thehill.com/opinion/international/4122981-why-is-nato-scared-of-russia/>

### **A DEAL WITH RUSSIA? IT CAN ONLY BRING DISASTER.**

The United States cannot be faulted for trying. For decades after World War II it made pacts, treaties, and agreements with its primary nuclear-armed enemy. It held summits at the very highest level and arranged innumerable meetings between foreign ministers, officials, and military staff. Whole new academic disciplines were created and devoted to understanding and — insofar as was possible — communicating with Russia.

<https://cepa.org/article/a-deal-with-russia-it-can-only-bring-disaster/>

<https://www.kyivpost.com/opinion/16155>

<https://glavcom.ua/columns/viktorrud/uhoda-z-rosijeju-vona-mozhe-prinesti-lishe-katastrofu-921809.html>

Victor Rud writes: Ever-forgiving and hopeful, the US championed post-Soviet Russia’s membership of the World Bank, IMF, the G7, and — disastrously — the UN Security Council (sidestepping its obligatory admission procedures.) The agreements were for naught. Russia remains implacable, aggressive, and

undeterred. Let's make a deal? Never again. –Center for European Policy Analysis  
[https://www.fdd.org/overnight-brief/april-20-2023/- Russia & Ukraine](https://www.fdd.org/overnight-brief/april-20-2023/-Russia-Ukraine)

### **UKRAINE AID WORKS BOTH WAYS**

President Biden recently declared in Warsaw that Russia's war against Ukraine is a test for America and the world. But waning public support for Ukraine aid means that a war that Russia openly, proudly, repeatedly declares as genocidal; the resulting global hunger, energy security, economic angst and societal unrest; and a jackbooted "international order" are not enough to move the mind. That last year's military aid to Ukraine is comparable to our spending on video games, or is but 10 percent of stolen COVID funding (some by Russia and China), apparently means little.  
<https://thehill.com/opinion/national-security/3874235-ukraine-aid-works-both-ways/>  
[https://www.realclearpolitics.com/2023/03/01/ukraine\\_aid\\_works\\_both\\_ways\\_592733.html](https://www.realclearpolitics.com/2023/03/01/ukraine_aid_works_both_ways_592733.html)

### **VETO RUSSIA'S UN VETO**

Two years after Russia's invasion of Ukraine in 2014, in a televised ceremony honoring young geographers, Vladimir Putin quizzed a boy about where Russia's borders end. "At the Bering Strait with the United States," the 9-year-old ventured hesitantly. "The borders of Russia," Putin declared, "never end." (Thunderous applause.) "It was a joke," Putin then added.  
<https://thehill.com/opinion/international/3832998-veto-russias-un-veto/>

### **THE "LITTLE RUSSIA" MALWARE IN OUR BRAINS**

With the collapse of the Russian Empire in 1918, Ukraine declared independence and was promptly invaded by both the Russian monarchist White Army and Vladimir Lenin's Red Army. Desperate to make itself known to the West, Ukraine sent its national chorus abroad as a cultural ambassador. After dozens of performances in Europe, it arrived in New York in 1922. It introduced to the American public what would become known as "Carol of the Bells" at Carnegie Hall. By that time, Ukraine had been overrun by Russian forces, a bloodbath being repeated today. The composer, Mykola Leontovych, was murdered and the extermination of Ukraine's cultural, political, religious and intellectual strata accelerated.  
<https://thehill.com/opinion/international/3796550-the-little-russia-malware-in-our-brains/>  
<https://ukrainainc.org/2023/01/08/малоросійський-вірус-у-наших-мізках/>

### **WHY KISSINGER IS WRONG ABOUT UKRAINE**

Only days ago, Henry Kissinger argued in his article in The Spectator, "How to Avoid Another World War," that Ukraine surrender "territory" (no mention of the fate of the attendant humanity) in favor of "peace through negotiation." His mechanism is not to preserve and protect the territorial integrity and sovereignty of the victim and the "rules-based international order" that we champion, but the opposite—to preserve and protect the invading, terrorist state. How would this prevent another world war? It would catalyze it.  
<https://www.kyivpost.com/post/5961>

### **REGARDING UKRAINE, A GROUP HUG ASTRIDE A MEMORY HOLE**

Following reports that Biden administration officials have privately urged Ukraine to show willingness to negotiate with Russia, Ukrainian presidential adviser Mykhailo Podolyak recently told Italy's La Repubblica, "Russia has invaded us with mobile crematoria and half a million body bags. If we stop defending ourselves, we will cease to exist. Literally. Physically. We will continue to fight even if we are stabbed in the back."

<https://thehill.com/opinion/international/3728537-regarding-ukraine-a-group-hug-astride-a-memory-hole/>

### **WHY WARNING PUTIN OF “CATASTROPHIC CONSEQUENCES” ISN’T ENOUGH**

Strategic sagacity in dealing with Russia is not our strong suit. After the dissolution of the USSR in 1991, we sprinted toward a Belle Epoque with Russia. A young Navy lieutenant in 1993 was more grounded in his report: “Regenerating Russia as the superpower successor to the Soviet Union will be a threat to the security of Ukraine and Europe. . . . The willingness to allow Russia to become the sole nuclear and economic power to emerge from the Soviet Union is a dangerous prospect for Western security. . . . The United States will have assisted in creating a regime that is a serious threat to the democratic community of states. Were Russia to embark on a campaign to reconstitute, what options would the West have?”

<https://thehill.com/opinion/international/3683435-why-warning-putin-of-catastrophic-consequences-isnt-enough/>

#### **Foreign desk: Mere Threats Won’t Sway Putin**

“Strategic sagacity in dealing with Russia is not our strong point,” [sighs Victor Rud at The Hill](#).

Letting it become the sole nuclear and economic power to emerge from the Soviet Union threatened Western security. Now, Washington tells Vladimir Putin we’ll “respond decisively” to the use of nuclear weapons, yet “words don’t sway tyrants,” especially since “our credibility” is “manifestly” in question. Instead, “we must demonstrate . . . resolve by removing the handcuffs on the type and number of weapons and munitions that Ukraine needs” and leading “an international effort to provide Ukraine with the capacity to stern” the “terror from the sky” and “enforce freedom of navigation in the Black Sea.” Yes, “deterrence carries risk. But no deterrence is all risk.”

<https://nypost.com/2022/10/14/mere-threats-wont-sway-putin-tulsi-gabbard-was-too-good-for-dems/>

### **WHY ARE AMERICAN CONSERVATIVES GARROTING THE NATION THAT HELPED “MAKE AMERICA GREAT AGAIN?”**

No event secured President Reagan’s legacy more than his epochal redirection of American policy -- rejecting “containment” and “détente,” and implementing an affirmative policy of bringing an end to the “Evil Empire.” Small wonder that, under KGB head Yuriy Andropov, operatives in the U.S. were alerted that they may be asked “to get rid of Reagan;” this, from KGB defector, **Boris Yuzhin**. North Korea’s Kum Il-Sung was equally incensed at the upstart Republican president, and contemplated having Reagan **assassinated** during his visit to South Korea in 1983.

<https://eutoday.net/why-are-american-conservatives-garroting-the-nation-that-helped-make-america-great-again/>

<https://webcache.googleusercontent.com/search?q=cache:k5OK9o5C4SUJ:https://eutoday.net/why-are-american-conservatives-garroting-the-nation-that-helped-make-america-great-again/&cd=1&hl=en&ct=clnk&gl=us>

### **SCARY LINKS: RUSSIA, AL-ZAWAHIRI AND UKRAINE’S DESTRUCTION**

For those who dismiss aid to Ukraine as pivotal to our security, at home and abroad, perhaps 9/11 will resonate. Here’s the backstory to the backstory of our July 31 drone strike that killed [Ayman al-Zawahiri](#), head of al Qaeda, and the apparent connection.

<https://thehill.com/opinion/international/3593498-scary-links-russia-al-zawahiri-and-ukraines-destruction/>

<https://eutoday.net/scary-links-russia-al-zawahiri-and-ukraines-destruction-by-victor-rud/>

### **PUSHING FOR A “NEGOTIATED SETTLEMENT” IN UKRAINE GUTS OUR DETERRENCE CREDIBILITY**

NATO’s soon-to-be 32 countries comprise three nuclear powers, half the world’s economy and a billion people. Then add the rest of the West: 43 countries if we count participants in the Ramstein meeting on April 26. Nations sanctioning Russia account for 64.9 percent of global economic production. Solitary Russia has less than half the population of the U.S., and its economy equals the market capitalization of a single America company — Apple Computer. NATO’s annual defense spend is \$1.2 trillion; Russia’s is \$66 billion.

<https://thehill.com/opinion/national-security/3582628-pushing-for-a-negotiated-settlement-in-ukraine-guts-our-deterrence-credibility/>

<https://www.ar25.org/article/viktor-rud-ne-mozhna-prymushuvaty-ukrayinu-do-yakogos-vregulyuvannya.html>

### **THE WEST CANNOT ALLOW ‘UKRAINE FATIGUE’ TO OVERCOME US**

Genocide is the crime of crimes. It’s not just the homicide of innocents, but also the destruction of their ethos, their identity as a nation. It’s the ultimate extinction.

The Washington-based New Lines Institute for Strategy and Policy and the Montreal-based Raoul Wallenberg Centre for Human Rights recently issued an investigatory report confirming that Russian horrors in Ukraine show a pattern of genocide and “intent to destroy” Ukrainians, and that all states under the United Nations Genocide Convention have a legal obligation to prevent genocide. It’s in full swing, as Russia not only targets civilians en masse but methodically destroys museums, schools, churches, libraries, theaters, cultural centers and concert halls, implements murderous Russification, and deports untold numbers of Ukrainians into the depths of Russia, including 232,000 children.

<https://thehill.com/opinion/international/3511525-the-west-cannot-allow-ukraine-fatigue-to-overcome-us/>

### **NO, RUSSIA’S WAR AGAINST UKRAINE IS NOT “COMPLICATED”**

Western support for Ukraine is fraying. A “diplomatic solution,” a “negotiated settlement,” Putin has “no way out,” he needs an “off ramp” — all are becoming *de rigueur*. French President Macron warned that there be no “humiliation” of Russia, and that Ukraine should cede its sovereignty so Putin can “save face.” True to form, Germany and Italy are bending the knee, and too many countries choke when it comes to clearly supporting Ukraine’s recovery of its sovereignty.

<https://www.kyivpost.com/article/opinion/op-ed/no-russias-war-against-ukraine-is-not-complicated.html>

### **SKITTISH WEST EMBOLDENS PUTIN**

Russia must be stopped. That cannot be done by the US slow-walking the military aid that Ukrainians have been pleading for — self-propelled artillery, aircraft, armor, mobile air defense, and multiple-launch rockets. Without this equipment, Russia wins. Then what?

<https://cepa.org/article/skittish-west-emboldens-putin/>

<https://argumentua.com/stati/legkovazhnii-zakh-d-lishe-p-dbadoryu-ta-nadikha-put-na>

### **DENIAL OF A NO-FLY ZONE DESTROYS AMERICA’S GLOBAL DETERRENCE CREDIBILITY**

In 2014, Putin crashed a tank through the “rules-based international order,” annexing Crimea and occupying Ukraine’s eastern territory. We cleared our throat, shuffled our feet, and bravely confronted him with furrowed brow. And then took his 30 pieces. The tank is now spinning on a locked tread, grinding women and children into nothingness.

<https://eutoday.net/denial-of-a-no-fly-zone-destroys-americas-global-deterrence-credibility-writes-victor-rud/>

### **UKRAINE SAVED THE WEST – WHY THE OPPOSITION FROM AMERICA’S CONSERVATIVE RIGHT?**

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky was met with a standing ovation at last week’s Munich Security Conference (pictured). The U.S. delegation was manifestly bi-partisan.

Although bi-partisan support for American support of Ukraine remains strong, bizarrely there is a growing resistance to it by the Republican Party’s far right. An influential national conservative television news outlet and adhering politicians have turned their back on the historic tenet of their own party -- opposing Russian predation. <https://defencereport.com/ukraine-saved-the-west-what-everyone-should-know-about-ukraine/>  
<https://eutoday.net/ukraine-saved-the-west-why-the-opposition-from-americas-conservative-right-asks-victor-rud/>

### **UKRAINE AND US SECURITY**

At the G7 meeting in Italy on April 11, Rex Tillerson asked: “Why should U.S. taxpayers be interested in Ukraine?” Predictably, he monetized the issue—“taxpayers,” not simply “Americans.” Regardless, none of the ensuing commentary got to the heart of the matter. The overarching answer is that Ukraine’s independence in 1991 ensured the dissolution of the “Union of Soviet Socialist Republics,” saving the West from an apocalyptic trajectory.

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/realspin/2017/05/19/ukraines-independence-is-still-essential-to-u-s-security-and-stability/?sh=9a2a699f7388>

### **HELP UKRAINE OR RISK AN AMERICAN WATERLOO**

America’s inglorious departure from Afghanistan is a coup for Russia and China. Their *schadenfreude* is almost tangible, as their propaganda outlets trumpet the implosion of America’s resolve and the global “failure of democracy.” Each has a target in mind where it feels the conditions are ripe to exploit U.S. weakness: Ukraine and Taiwan are now in the crosshairs.

<https://cepa.org/help-ukraine-or-risk-an-american-waterloo/>  
<https://www.eurasiareview.com/12102021-help-ukraine-or-risk-an-american-waterloo-oped/>  
<https://www.kyivpost.com/article/opinion/op-ed/victor-rud-help-ukraine-or-risk-an-american-waterloo.html>

### **UKRAINE INVADES RUSSIA, RECOVERS LOST LANDS**

*In 1721, Tsar Peter I visited France, and in the Cathedral of Reims was shown the Gospel written, strangely, in a Slavic language. His hosts explained.*

Nothing subverts Western response to Russia’s invasion of Ukraine as the oldest of all reality reversals – a “1000 year history of Russia” beginning in Kyiv, and “Ukraine is a historic part of Russia.” Had Russia invaded Poland or the Baltic states, Western reaction would not have been as feckless--and not because of their NATO status. Ukraine is “different.” During the 2012 U.S. presidential campaign, although candidate Mitt Romney identified Russia as America’s greatest

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geopolitical foe, even he then wrote in the Wall Street Journal of the legitimacy of “Russia’s influence in Kyiv.” This breeds Western ambivalence that emboldens Putin’s war against the West.  
<https://sites.utu.fi/bre/ukraine-invades-russia-recovers-lost-lands/>  
<https://eutoday.net/news/politics/2021/ukraine-invades-russia-recovers-lost-lands>  
<https://sites.utu.fi/bre/>

### **WHAT IS UKRAINE AND WHY DIDN'T I KNOW THAT?**

Which of the following are statements by Vladimir Putin, his Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov or other Kremlin spokesmen, and which are by Western media, academics, politicians and commentators: “Ukraine and Russia share deep historical and cultural roots,” “Russia traces its 1,000 year history to its beginnings in Kiev,” “Ukraine is really ‘Little Russia,’” “the Russian Orthodox Church originated in Kiev,” “thousand years of Russian Christianity,” “Ukraine is a part of Russia,” “Russia and Ukraine are not separate countries,” “Russia is a thousand-year-old state,” “Kievan Russia was the beginning of the modern Russia,” and “Ukrainians and Russians are brotherly nations?”

There is no distinction between who said any of the above. Each statement has been repeated, for a century in the United States and longer by the Kremlin. Such remarkable unanimity reflects either recognition of the same historical record, or the recognition of the same historical mythology. If the latter, how and why in American academe and politics is that mythology declared with such certitude by those who should know better, thereby facilitating a historical hologram?

The question, and answer, are central to conceptualizing not just an informed American “response,” but a policy, addressing Russia’s drive to completely suborn—and possibly annex—Ukraine, thereby directly and materially affecting American security and foreign policy interests.  
<https://www.aim.org/special-report/russias-war-on-ukraine/>  
<http://www.conservativetruth.org/archive.php?authorid=214>

### **WHY PUTIN LIKES THE WEST**

“Why Putin Likes the West” may seem to be an anomalous title for my remarks. After all, what we incessantly hear is that Putin is blaming the West for everything. We hear about Russia’s “lost pride,” that it is “humiliated,” “embittered,” “insulted,” “lost,” “confused.” One of the advisors to Vermont Senator Bernie Sanders in the last presidential campaign said, “Putin has been trying hard to find love, appreciation and recognition.”

<https://foreignpolicyblogs.com/2018/02/20/putin-likes-west/>  
<https://radiolemborg.com/ua-articles/ua-allarticles/why-putin-likes-the-west-useful-idiots-proxies-and-agents>  
[https://zaxid.net/redaktor\\_the\\_economist\\_vidznachiv\\_dopovid\\_uchasnika\\_bezpekovogo\\_forumu\\_u\\_lvovi\\_n1446355](https://zaxid.net/redaktor_the_economist_vidznachiv_dopovid_uchasnika_bezpekovogo_forumu_u_lvovi_n1446355)

### **LESSONS TO LEARN FROM FOREIGN POLICY MALPRACTICE**

The backstory to Russia’s possible deeper assault into Ukraine is that we still haven’t given a thought to how thirty years ago we empowered Russia and elevated its international stature. Concurrently, NATO all but disarmed itself. It bares the lie that “Western aggression” birthed Putin’s ultimatum that America and Europe outsource their security to the Kremlin. Add to that our self-dealt guilt card about Putin suffering “trauma”, “humiliation” and “lost pride.”

<https://eutoday.net/lessons-to-learn-from-foreign-policy-malpractice/>

### **IS PUTIN A FASCIST? WHAT HE DOESN'T WANT US TO KNOW ABOUT THE "GREAT PATRIOTIC" WAR**

Avoidance, lies and accusations—somersaulting history—have undergirded Moscow's aggression for centuries. Western ignorance, naivete and credulity have multiplied that asset, allowing Russia to enrich the former to weapons grade. In [Nezavisimaya](#) newspaper earlier this year, Putin advisor Vladislav Surkov wrote expansively of Russia's success in invading our brain and molding an "altered consciousness."

More than ever before, Putin has retooled the history of Moscow's role in WWII, the "Great Patriotic War," into a memorial without a memory . . . or rather, hyperlinked to *faux* memories. They are the domestic behavioral stimuli for Russia's accelerating assault against the US and the rest of Western democracies, contempt for which Putin shares with Hitler. They also have become the stimuli for us, subverting our ability to discern and counteract that assault.

<https://foreignpolicyblogs.com/2019/06/20/is-putin-a-fascist/>

<https://eutoday.net/news/politics/2020/is-putin-a-fascist>

### **PUTIN'S WWII "VICTORY PARADE": Western Attendance Would Not Mean What You Think It Would**

Commemoration of the "*Great Patriotic War*" is a Pavlovian bell for Putin's domestic audience. In light of COVID-19, the conundrum of maintaining the image of situational control and the immutable sanctity of the Victory Parade was deftly solved--Putin suddenly received requests from multiple veteran organizations to postpone the parade. Perfect. The Kremlin is a master of acting upon seemingly independent requests to mask its own initiatives. Invitations transmute invasions into genteel RSVP's.

<https://eutoday.net/news/politics/2020/putin-victory-parade>

<https://www.eureporter.co/frontpage/2020/04/24/putin-wwii-victory-parade-western-attendance-would-not-mean-what-you-think-it-would/>

### **OUR BUSINESS MINDSET IS FATAL IN DEALING WITH RUSSIA**

Rex Tillerson's business background for the office of Secretary of State reinforces a massive, overarching handicap in America's dealing with the keystone issue of international affairs – matters affecting our national security and sovereignty. Nowhere will this be so immediately and dangerously played out as in the articulated approach of the incoming Administration's desire to "deal" with Russia.

<https://www.kyivpost.com/article/opinion/op-ed/victor-rud-art-whose-deal.html>

### **PUTIN HAS INVADED OUR CORTEX**

These are not times for politesse. US dealings with Russia have been disastrous for many years and the Biden administration's mantra of stable and predictable relations has made it worse. The developing crisis in Ukraine seems headed to a point where we must choose between a yet bloodier Russian invasion of Europe's largest country by geography, and the resulting conflagration, or a further capitulation by the West.

<https://cepa.org/putin-has-invaded-our-cortex/>



### **FIONA HILL AND AMERICA'S REFUSAL TO BELIEVE**

In the 1980s, Fred Coleman, Moscow correspondent for (among others) Newsweek, walked into the Soviet embassy in Washington to ask about Ambassador Dobrynin's upcoming meeting with the new American president. Dobrynin had already served through several Presidencies. Dobrynin's secretary's reply: "The Ambassador is looking forward to working with the new president the way a kindergarten teacher looks forward to the first day of school."

<http://defencereport.com/fiona-hill-and-americas-refusal-to-believe/>

### **IT'S NOT "INTERNATIONAL LAW" THAT HAS FAILED UKRAINE**

Washington's Atlantic Council recently posted, "International law may yet contain Putin in Ukraine," by Michel Waelbroeck and Willem Aldershoff. Michel Waelbroeck is emeritus professor in European Law at the Free University Brussels. Willem Aldershoff held various positions in the Departments for International Relations and Justice and Home Affairs at the European Commission and is now an independent analyst on international issues. Given particularly the authors' credentials, the **article** unfortunately disappoints.

<https://eutoday.net/news/politics/2020/its-not-international-law-that-has-failed-ukraine>

### **RUSSIA AND TERRORISM**

The proposal that America engage Russia to fight Islamic terrorism is beyond folly. Russia's recent intrusion into America's electoral process may flag caution. But that is woefully insufficient. The proposal is either willed ignorance or studied reality reversal.

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/realspin/2017/02/14/isis-doesnt-stand-a-chance-unless-america-engages-russia/#2cce3aa21899>

### **REPURPOSING THE HUMAN BRAIN**

At the "Valdai Discussion Club" in February 2012, Putin accused the West of employing "*a matrix of tools and methods to reach foreign policy goals without the use of arms but by exerting information and other levers of influence . . . to develop and provoke extremist, separatist and nationalistic attitudes, to manipulate the public.*" He was inventorying his own toolbox, summarizing his work product last year in The World Order-2018: "*The American system is demonstrating its inefficiency and cannibalizing itself.*"

What does any of this have to do with the arrest of a Ukrainian villager on November 7, 1937?

<https://foreignpolicyblogs.com/2019/03/06/repurposing-the-human-brain-lessons-in-russian-and-our-own-reality-reversal/>

### **DENUCLEARIZATION AND "ENGAGING RUSSIA"**

In a recent Wall Street Journal article, George Schultz, William Perry and Sam Nunn argued for "a world without nuclear weapons, [as] dangers continue to mount." Lamenting "a dangerous policy paralysis" among the US, its allies and Russia, they write that the road to denuclearization is through "re-engagement" with Russia, a "joint declaration," and "dialogue," all with a goal of reaching "stability".

The authors' respective positions as former Secretary of State, Secretary of Defense and Senator and Chair of the Armed Services Committee lend an implicit *gravitas* to their writing. But their writing does them no credit. They remain damningly silent about what happened to the largest country in Europe that also took their advice.

<https://foreignpolicyblogs.com/2019/04/23/op-ed-unreality-in-thinking-about-the-unthinkable/>

### **IS AMERICA PREPARED TO DEAL WITH RUSSIA OR CHINA?**

At the June 16, 2021, Geneva Summit with Vladimir Putin, President Joe Biden distilled his approach to dealing with Russia as “managing” relations to ensure “predictability and stability.” (Even Putin embraced “stability,” to be sure in his signature Orwellian manner.) And further: “I told President Putin that we need to have some basic rules of the road that we can all abide by.” With post-Summit commentary subsiding, it is time to ask why the irreducible precondition to that approach was so sedulously ignored at the Summit, and afterward

<https://www.kyivpost.com/article/opinion/op-ed/victor-rud-is-america-prepared-to-deal-with-russia-or-china.html>

<https://gregolear.substack.com/p/a-month-after-geneva-what-has-changed>

(If you do not have a subscription the below link may not open the article in its totality, in which case please see below.)

### **THE GENEVA SUMMIT—WHISTLING PAST THE GRAVEYARD Is America Prepared to Deal with Russia . . . or China?**

At the Geneva Summit with Putin, President Biden distilled his approach to dealing with Russia as “*managing*” relations to ensure “*predictability and stability*.” (Even Putin embraced “*stability*,” to be sure in his signature Orwellian manner.) And further: “*I told President Putin that we need to have some basic rules of the road that we can all abide by.*”

With post-Summit commentary subsiding, it is time to ask why the irreducible precondition to that approach was so sedulously ignored at the Summit, and afterwards.

The “*rules of the road*” were legislated by two global wars. They are the predicate for international relations in all respects, including cooperation on climate change, arms control, Covid, and cyber as sought by Biden. Rule #1 is territorial integrity and inviolability of borders. It requires that Russia reverse its invasion of the largest country in Europe, the wellspring of one of Europe’s oldest democratic traditions, and the country that set the tombstone for the USSR. Russia’s tossing the STOP sign and the ensuing handwringing by the West was the launch code for Russia’s global mayhem. It was also the liberating dog whistle for China, North Korea, and Iran. Even Putin said more than intended, “*Now take the situation in and around Ukraine, the Crimea, this was where it all started, right. . . . With regard to Ukraine, indeed, this issue was touched upon. I cannot say that it was done in great detail.*”

Russia’s de-occupation of Ukraine should have been the *sine quo non* at the Summit. Yet at Biden’s post-summit press conference, “Ukraine” sounded a total of . . . once. If America seeks “*strategic stability*,” then without specifically territorial stability we are back to the Stone Age. (Indeed, observations here apply to Georgia and Moldova, as well.) In 1939, the League of Nations expelled the USSR for its invasion of Finland six weeks prior. Iraq’s invasion and annexation of Kuwait failed. Of Russia’s invasion of Ukraine, France said at the UN Security Council--“*Russia vetoed the Charter of the United Nations.*” Yet Putin remains in the UN, with Western democracies insulating his veto on the Security Council, secured for it by Washington.

Biden did not place Russia's de-occupation front and center . . . or anywhere. Instead of requiring reinstatement of the Rule, Biden simply repeated "unwavering commitment" to Ukraine. The acceptance of the status quo was also clear in his statement at the NATO press conference: "*we will do all that we can to put Ukraine in the position to be able to continue to resist Russian physical aggression,*" "*we're going to put Ukraine in a position to be able to maintain their physical security.*" To "resist," not reverse. To "maintain," not recover, its security and territorial sovereignty.

Not only did we, the G7 and NATO sidestep the need and opportunity to act to ensure the re-establishment of the "rules based international order." Everyone gravely intoned Putin's lecture that the resolution of "*the conflict*" must be in accord with "Minsk." The 2014 and 2015 temporary, gun barrel arrangements (manifestly not "agreements) have failed. Catastrophically. Yet America (and Europe) is in lockstep with Russia's *ukaz* that Ukraine must surrender key aspects of its national sovereignty under the coercive fraud of "Minsk." It is beyond bizarre. Russia has outlawed itself and is a rogue state uses "Minsk" to displace the UN Charter, Helsinki Accords and all else that constitutes the "rules based international order." We then place our foot on the crowbar, (a) paying homage to the latter, (b) while simultaneously embracing the pre-emptive sanctity of Minsk, yet (c) seeking "stability" that can only be secured under "(a)" that we interred under "(b)." Reflexive control and reality reversal become one as Russia annexes our brain with the same facility as it annexes foreign territory. Taiwan looms next.

Sanctions? It was not Russia's annexation of Crimea or further invasion and occupation, but its downing of Malaysia Flight 17 in July 2014 that stirred the West from its torpor and caused it to impose sanctions of any note. Their purpose should have been to cause Putin to put his horse in reverse. It was not. Instead, sanctions have remained forward looking, only. Placing a choke collar on sanctions means we "sanction" (read, "accept") conquest to date. There can be no reversion to the status quo ante. Body parts cannot be reattached. Add green lighting Nord Stream 2, cancelling a U.S. Navy deployment into the Black Sea, walking back support for Ukraine's (and Georgia's) prospects for NATO membership, and a freeze on an installment of military aid to Ukraine, release contingent on **further** aggression. (And it is bipartisan. Former U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice in 2014: "*The immediate concern must be to show Russia that **further** moves will not be tolerated.*")

But neither the U.S. nor most of the world "recognizes" Russia's annexation of Crimea. Words.

Biden's failure in Geneva to require Russia's de-occupation of Ukraine also gutted the key points of his "Biden Doctrine" that he articulated in May 2020:

*"The international system that the United States so carefully constructed is coming apart at the seams." "Put strengthening democracy back on the global agenda." "The world does not organize itself. For 70 years, the United States . . . played a leading role in writing the rules, forging the agreements, and animating the institutions that guide relations among nations and advance collective security and prosperity." "Diplomacy also requires credibility...a nation's word is its most valuable asset." "We must impose real costs on Russia for its violations of international norms." "In order to regain the confidence of the world we are going to have to prove that the*

*United States says what it means and means what it says.” “We have to champion liberty and democracy, reclaim our credibility.”*

If that was not enough, Geneva hosted an even more ethereal hologram. To be sure, not of the same genus as President Trump’s *sui generis* view of Russia, but an illusion nevertheless. The “international order” aside, “managing for stability” with the Kremlin is a self-delusion that, moreover, is “predictable.” It has always worked to the contrary, feeding oxygen into Moscow’s certitude by emphasizing a bi-partisan *naivete* that has prompted virtually every incoming American Administration’s prayerful overture to the Kremlin.

Washington’s recognition of the USSR in 1933 (as Stalin was starving Ukraine into submission), was based on the *genocidaire’s* commitment “to refrain from . . . any act overt or covert liable in any way whatsoever to injure the tranquility, prosperity, order, or security of the whole or any part of the United States, in particular any agitation or propaganda.”

How did that work out?

In WWII, as the U.S. stopped its prenatal intelligence operations regarding the USSR, Moscow increased, hyperbolically, its penetration of America. Under Yeltsin, espionage operations against the U.S. increased dramatically at the very time that Washington was working to integrate Russia into a multitude of international structures, not the least of which was Russia’s succession to the Soviet Union’s seat on the UN Security Council.

And have we even begun to absorb the implications of Ukraine’s surrender in 1994 of the world’s third largest nuclear arsenal in exchange for Russia’s, and also America’s and Great Britain’s, “security assurances” under the Budapest Memorandum? A year before invading Ukraine, Putin wrote in a New York Times op-ed: “[I]f you cannot count on international law, then you must find other ways to ensure your security. Thus, a growing number of countries seek to acquire weapons of mass destruction. This is logical: if you have the bomb, no one will touch you.”

Three years later, in 1997, and as President Clinton toasted his lobbying for G7 inclusion of Russia, Russia had other plans:

*“It is particularly important to introduce geopolitical disorder into America’s internal activity, and to promote all kinds of separatist and ethnic, social and racial conflicts, actively supporting all opposition movements – extremist, racist, and sectarian groups, thereby disrupting internal political processes in the U.S. It would also make sense simultaneously to support isolationist tendencies in American politics....”*

There was more to the manifesto. Russia should also work toward isolating Britain from Europe, introduce discord both within the EU and between the EU and US, and destabilize Turkey. Ukraine is to be extinguished, and Iran is to be a key player in a Russian-Islamic alliance against America. Familiar?

No secret why our obliviousness. America’s psyche both reflects and feeds a mercantile environment of stability and predictability that makes business possible in the first place. We put

our faith in reason and negotiation, and worship compromise. We approach international relations similarly, as a relationship among nations to be “managed” for the sake of “stability.”

Our DNA is so tightly wound we cannot contemplate that Russia’s is the opposite. President Carter: *“It’s difficult to understand why the Soviets took this action [invade Afghanistan]. I think they probably underestimated the adverse reaction from around the world.”* Condoleezza Rice in 2008 after Russia’s invasion of Georgia: *“Everybody is now questioning Russia’s worthiness as a partner. They’ve come out of this badly. And I think it could help deter them from trying something like that again.”*

Russia did not become the colossus that it is, enveloping an entire one-third of Asia, by defaulting to bourgeois rules. Its imperial DNA denies the compromise we worship. In the 1890’s, the Russian General Staff conducted a study of Russia’s military campaigns, concluding that between 1700 and 1870, Russia fought 38 wars. Only two were defensive. Yet Former U.S. Ambassador to the UN Samantha Power lauds *“Russia’s proud history of standing up to imperialist powers.”*

What do last year’s Russian constitutional amendments, and its earlier withdrawal from the 1949 Geneva Convention, portend? One commentator summarized: *“The Russian Federation has shown the entire international political community that law is not something written for it.”* Russia is aggressive and targets stability. Russia acts, America reacts. Russia disrupts, America seeks to stabilize. Russia has a goal. America has . . . ?

The U.S. contributes 25%, and with the rest of NATO and other democracies accounts for more than half of the world’s economy. Russia comes in at 3%. Do we understand how a solitary country, held together with duct tape, can induce a mortal arrhythmia among thirty countries of NATO and the rest of the “Free World?” No, we do not.

Putin is not just a killer. He short-circuits our synapses with the same aplomb as he short-circuits our infrastructure. On our end, seven years of *bon mots* are an ode to a failure of will. To be sure, it is Europe’s as well. No surprise, then, that the “international system is coming apart at the seams.” It’s vertiginous.

Welcome, China et al, to the Hôtel du Parc des Eaux-Vives.

#### **Victor Rud**

Past Chairman, Board of Governors,  
Ukrainian American Bar Association  
*currently*, Chairman, Committee on Foreign Affairs

#### **TURN PUTIN INWARD**

Seeking to merely “contain” Putin is not enough. We have been outplayed, outsmarted and outmaneuvered in Europe, the Middle East, Venezuela, Africa and the Arctic. And at home. Point by point “cost imposing” measures against Russia have not worked. And simply repeating the pattern of reacting, deterring, responding, defending will not work. Moscow—minimally as a beneficiary and perhaps more—emerges in seemingly Iran’s recent provocations in the Persian

Gulf. And now the possibility of a Presidential impeachment looms. We have anchored ourselves squarely at the confluence of dual domestic and international storms.

<https://foreignpolicyblogs.com/2019/09/30/op-ed-turn-putin-inward/>  
<https://eutoday.net/news/politics/2020/turn-putin-inward>  
<https://www.ceedweb.ca/2022/03/07/op-ed-turn-putin-inward/>

<http://universum.lviv.ua/magazines/universum/2019/5/put-naz.html>

### **“CHICKEN KYIV” AND THE GENEVA SOIREE**

On February 18, 1919, the Ukrainian delegation’s warning to Georges Clemenceau, President of the Paris Peace Conference, was stark:

*“[T]he bolshevik Government of Russia has sent its troops against Ukraine and broken the Ukrainian front near the frontier of the Ukrainian Republic. Now they are advancing into the heart of our country and the bolshevik Government has not only no intention of fulfilling the conditions laid down by the Peace Conference at Paris to establish a truce, to retire its forces and to cease all military action; on the contrary, it has just developed its military offensive to destroy the independence of the Ukrainian Republic.*

*“One knows that the traditional history of Russia was always, and through the present, an imperial policy, and now she wishes to pass over the body of independent Ukraine to put one hand on the Dardanelles and Suez and the other on the Persian Gulf.”*

<https://eutoday.net/news/politics/2021/chicken-kyiv-and-the-geneva-soiree-by-victor-rud>

### **THE LETTER FROM HELL**

Russia’s most recent military build-up at the borders of Europe’s largest country may be preparatory to a possible expansion of its invasion and ongoing occupation since 2014, and it’s weaponizing of human suffering is not new, this time with the engineered refugee crisis at the Belorussian/Polish border. (Lukashenka, let’s openly state, is Putin’s proxy.)

The two are integrated moves on the chessboard and, minimally, the final test of Western resolve. Seemingly long ago, immediate post WWII Europe speaks to the West’s ossified, self-defeating mindset that has led to the tinder box in Europe’s East today. . . . but not at all the way Western foreign policy gurus, and certainly its politicians, deign to discuss.

<https://eutoday.net/the-letter-from-hell-by-victor-rud/>

### **WHY PERPETUALLY SURPRISED ABOUT RUSSIA?**

Why are we so unceasingly apoplectic? Putin follows in the footsteps of the “efficient manager”, and poisons Sergei Skrypal and his daughter, having probably also earlier dispatched his wife and son. . . and others, on both sides of the pond. Nothing novel here. Stalin wasn’t coy: “We shall annihilate every one of these enemies . . . We shall annihilate him and his relatives, his family. Anyone who in deed or in thought, yes, in thought, attacks the unity of the socialist state will be mercilessly crushed by us. We shall exterminate all enemies to the very last man, and also their families and relatives!” It’s a vertiginous multiplier. Kill all the family members and friends and acquaintances. And along the way, don’t forget a dozen or so others. Just in case.

<https://defencereport.com/recap-where-exactly-is-the-surprise-about-russia/>

### **A TRACK RECORD WE HAVE TO COMPREHEND**

As Americans sit down to their Thanksgiving meals on the last Thursday in November, Ukrainians will be commemorating the memory of millions who were murdered in 1932-33. The last Saturday in November is Holodomor Remembrance Day in Ukraine, a time to mark the anniversary of Joseph Stalin's engineered starvation of the nation. In the West, the date should also be remembered as a pivotal event that ensured the viability of the Soviet Union, with its consequent implications for hundreds of millions in the free world.

<https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/blogs/ukrainealert/holodomor-remembrance-day-why-the-past-matters-for-the-future>

<https://archive.kyivpost.com/article/opinion/op-ed/victor-rud-holodomor-remembrance-day-past-matters-future.html>

### **EXPANDING THE G7?**

Public focus on President Trump's comments earlier this month about readmitting Russia to the G7 group of the most advanced democracies has somewhat dissipated in light of the ensuing North Korea summit. Now, even that has been overtaken by the controversy over immigration. But these were no off-the-cuff comments; they were made *before*, *during* and *again* after the G7 summit in Canada. Make no mistake, however. "Sanctioning"—as in rewarding, not punishing—Russia would propel Putin ever more. It would be another entry in a catalog of Western fecklessness and would both materially and predictably degrade America's global security posture.

<https://defencereport.com/the-provocation-of-sanctioning-russia/>

### **WE'VE CONNED OURSELVES**

How can Russia, a single country, so easily pin Western democracy against the ropes? We could do worse than to ponder the lessons from our diplomatic recognition of the USSR, on November 16, 1933. It was affected by an exchange of *letters* between President Franklin Roosevelt and Soviet Foreign Affairs Commissar Maxim Litvinov. Among other matters, Moscow committed "to refrain from . . . any act overt or covert liable in any way whatsoever to injure the tranquility, prosperity, order, or security of the whole or any part of the United States, in particular any agitation or propaganda." But the reset of the century was materially tied to a covert bargain between the Kremlin and The New York Times, a massive genocide, and the ensuing manipulation of the American electorate. Today, the repercussions loom globally and domestically.

<https://defencereport.com/weve-been-conned-before-by-ourselves/>

### **IMPEACHMENT, AMERICA'S LEGACY IN UKRAINE, AND WHY IT MATTERS**

President Trump's alleged impeachable offense is trading \$400 million of established, bi-partisan security assistance to Ukraine and an Oval Office visit for the new Ukrainian president in exchange for personal political gain. Assessment of the *gravitas* of the offense—whether it merits impeachment—cannot be made in a vacuum. This, after all, is not a case of abuse of Presidential power by withholding a propane heater for a Ukrainian weather station in the Antarctic in exchange for a fawning letter from Kyiv to the editor of a community newspaper in Big Sky, Montana. The issue therefore is the consequence to our foreign and national security policy interests if the allegation is true. That cannot be established without understanding (a) the pivotal importance of Ukraine for our own national security, and (b) the results of our failure to comprehend that very.

fact—for generations. That the Trump Administration earlier provided more military assistance than did the Obama Administration is not determinative of the issue, and paradoxically makes the matter even more acute.

<http://defencereport.com/impeachment-americas-orwellian-legacy-in-ukraine-and-why-it-matters/>

<http://zgazette.com/victor-rud/>

### **MASKS AND MASKIROVKA--DON'T INHALE PUTIN'S VIRUS**

There is more to Russia's shipments of medical supplies (mostly useless) to purportedly fight COVID-19 than meets the eye. In **Italy**, NATO's gates are opened by one of its own members to **Russian intelligence operatives** as part of the shipments, with General Sergey Kikot, deputy commanding officer of Russia's radiation, chemical and biological defense troops, riding the Trojan Horse. He's the gentleman who sniffed indignantly at international alarm over the use by Russia's paladin, Syria's Assad, of chemical weapons in Douma province in 2018, weapons and training provided by Russia.

<https://eutoday.net/news/politics/2020/maskirovka>

### **LIFT SANCTIONS SO RUSSIA WITHDRAWS FROM UKRAINE? NO, INCREASE THEM!**

Not long ago, America's National Public Radio's website published an **Op-ed** by three former U.S. ambassadors to Ukraine, William B. Taylor, Steven Pifer and John E. Herbst. *"The COVID-19 crisis could present an unexpected opportunity both to resolve the only hot war in Europe and to address...Putin's assault on international norms of behaviour."*

The authors argue that (a) Western sanctions have depressed Russia's annual economic growth by 1%, and that (b) the drop in the price of oil and the pandemic mean that *"now more than ever Russia needs a break from sanctions."* Add that *"the looming global recession will deliver another blow to the Russian economy."* They propose removing sanctions for Russia's invasion of Ukraine's Donbas region if Putin withdraws, and see the essentials of the deal as having already been set in the so-called Minsk negotiations.

<https://eutoday.net/news/politics/2020/russia-sanctions>

[https://www.realcleardefense.com/2020/06/13/lift\\_sanctions\\_so\\_russia\\_withdraws\\_from\\_ukraine\\_313966.html](https://www.realcleardefense.com/2020/06/13/lift_sanctions_so_russia_withdraws_from_ukraine_313966.html)

### **THE STRATEGIC APHASIA OF ANOTHER AMERICAN "RESET" WITH RUSSIA**

#### ***Part one.***

The Russian "Federation" is the largest country on the planet but offers nothing (other than oil and gas) to the world, whether in terms of goods, services, human capital or innovation. Its economy is smaller than the market capitalization of only one of America's companies, Apple. Yet single handedly, with half the population of the United States, Putin has pushed the entirety of "Western democracy" over the precipice.

<https://eutoday.net/news/politics/2020/strategic-aphasia-of-another-american-reset-with-russia-2>

#### ***Part two.***

Seeking to merely "contain" Putin is not enough. We have been outplayed, outsmarted and outmaneuvered in Europe, the Middle East, Venezuela, Africa and the Arctic. And at home. Point by point "cost imposing" measures against Russia have not worked. And simply repeating the



pattern of reacting, deterring, responding, defending will not work. Moscow—minimally as a beneficiary and perhaps more—emerges in seemingly Iran’s recent provocations in the Persian Gulf. And now the possibility of a Presidential impeachment looms. We have anchored ourselves squarely at the confluence of dual domestic and international storms.

<https://eutoday.net/news/politics/2020/turn-putin-inward>

**SANCTIONS MUST BE SECONDARY-- Rebuttal to Roger Altman's Feb. 10, 2015 article in *The Wall Street Journal* "Stopping Putin Without Firing a Shot"**

Mr. Altman argues that economic sanctions should trump military defensive assistance to Ukraine. ("Stopping Putin Without Firing A Shot", WSJ February 10, 2015.) While it’s encouraging that a prominent player in the US financial market generally understands the gravity of the matter, his argument is untenable. Sanctions are an adjunct to military assistance but cannot be in substitution for it. Standing alone, they are a siren song for digression and compounding of the inevitable.

<https://euromaidanpress.com/2015/02/14/rebuttal-wall-street-journal-article-stopping-putin-without-firing-shot/>

**EAT ME WHEN I DIE**

It’s bland--like calamari, but without the garlic. However, boiling the human trachea, if you chance upon any fuel, helps soften the gristle. And then of course there are the other body parts, the shriveled organs, and the even more desiccated muscle. Not much of that on the bones of walking cadavers, though. But that is what a mother, driven insane by starvation, was reduced to eating; often, one of her own children.

<http://www.homin.ca/news.php/news/12842/group/27>

Путін промазав...

[Віктор РУДЬ](#)

<https://zbruc.eu/node/82208>

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**UKRAINIAN AMERICAN BAR ASSOCIATION**

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**SANCTIONS MUST BE SECONDARY**

Victor Rud: Rebuttal to Roger Altman's Feb. 10, 2015 article in [The Wall Street Journal](#) "Stopping Putin Without Firing a Shot"

[WSJ article reprinted at bottom]

Mr. Altman argues that economic sanctions should trump military defensive assistance to Ukraine. ("Stopping Putin Without Firing A Shot", WSJ February 10, 2015.) While it’s encouraging that a prominent player in the US financial market generally understands the gravity of the matter, his argument is untenable. Sanctions are an adjunct to military assistance, but cannot be in substitution for it. Standing alone, they are a siren song for digression and compounding of the inevitable.

Preliminarily, Mr. Altman posits that providing defensive arms to Ukraine "might give Moscow a further basis for its historical grievance." This unwittingly endorses a pivotal component of Putin's long-standing dezinformatsia. Rafael Lemkin, author of the UN Genocide Convention, saw Russia as the apex predator state, the ultimate killer of nations. How else did it bloat out to become the largest country in the world, occupying fully one third of Asia? Kolyma, one of several a sub-regions of one of its regions (Siberia), is larger than France, Spain, Japan, Germany, Italy, United Kingdom, Greece, Sweden and North Korea, combined; and Kolyma was only one of several concentration camp regions. It is Ukraine, the Baltic nations, Byelorussia, the nations of the Caucasus and Central Asia that have a "historical grievance" against Russia for centuries of conquest, mass murder, slave ships, death marches, atrocities, war crimes, homicidal russification, recreational torture, assassinations, genocide of all stripes, plunder, predation, experimental executions, gang rape, stupefying terror, thought crime and forced starvation. Russia's "historical grievances" reverses that history, condemns the victim as the perpetrator and sanctifies the perpetrator as victim. The prime exemplar of virtual reality, a hologram floating on air.

The springboard for the sanctions argument is that for Putin the consequences of Western sanctions are or can be made greater than the consequences of Ukraine existing as a democratic, sovereign state. That assumption is wrong, and to the very opposite effect. Ukraine is the largest country in Europe, and anchors one of Europe's oldest democratic traditions. More than seventy years before Philadelphia, Ukraine produced a constitution incorporating the very essentials of democratic governance that were later repeated in the US constitution. Moscow's conquest and rule over Ukraine was pivotal to the formation and viability of the Soviet Union. The bookend is that Ukraine's renewal of its independence in 1991 (stunningly, in opposition to Washington's wishes), catalyzed the dissolution of the USSR. Ukraine saved the West. The existence of a free and democratic Ukraine thus expands the prospects for liberty in Russia itself. Putin would then become an unperson with greater alacrity than in the face of the "pressures" that sanctions presumably would cause.

Second, Western profit imperative fueled its embrace of the Russian economy and financial system. The resulting dependency of Russia, Mr. Altman says in essence, allows for the very leverage of Western sanctions. And what of the opposite dependency? Western democracies will abandon their petty parochialisms in the interest of stronger, longer lasting and more consequential sanctions? At the expense of their own economies and opinion polls? Even with the modest sanctions thus far, we have seen the centrifugal forces at work and growing in Europe; and not only on the economic side, but the political as well. As of this writing, France's delivery to Russia of its Mistral attack ships is evidently back on track.

Moreover, there is nothing in the historical experience of Western/Soviet/Russian relations that supports Mr. Altman's argument. Historically, it was Western technology and capital, with the US in the lead, that laid the economic and financial bases for the Soviet Union, and thereafter periodically supplied it with a life support system of technology and other assistance. In the 1920's and 30's it was the American engineer who, after the Great Sun, was god in the Soviet Union. Ford's River Rouge Plant became the Gorki Auto Works, manufacturing cars for the NKVD. U.S. Steel's Fairless Plant became the Magnitogorsk Iron & Steel Works, and the TVA's Appalachian Electrification Project became the Dnipro Hydroelectric Complex. Calvin Coolidge

said "the business of American is business," and sooner than later the business and financial lobby will hold sway.

Third, as to the efficacy of Western sanctions thus far, Mr. Altman asserts that the sanctions "are working" and recites their impact on the Russian economy. The statistics may scroll impressively across a financial news screen. But where is the nexus between the sanctions and their effect on the Russian invasion, occupation, annexation, atrocities and terror? We are offered none. Is the point perhaps that without the sanctions already in effect the situation on the ground would have been even more egregious? No, that is surmise, speculation and conjecture. The facts are that in the face of sanctions, the horrors not only continue but have accelerated. How, exactly, will sanctions stop the Kremlin, and then compel Putin to--somehow--undergo an epiphany and go home? The "somehow" is merely an assumption, a hope, that sanctions will lead to consequential pressure (whatever that means) on Putin. If so, then what of the very same "pressure" if Putin simply puts on his shirt and puts his horse in reverse? That pressure was 80% positive when he had it in drive.

Fourth, what if sanctions don't work? Never mind defining what that means, at a certain point reality intrudes. Then what? At that point . . . finally . . . provide Ukraine with defensive weapons? Too late.

Fifth, although once in his article Mr. Altman mentions a Russian "pull back", as thus far implemented and as further articulated by Mr. Altman, sanctions address only the sustainability of aggression. With such a limited formulation, sanctions sanction (read, accept) aggression up to date. The title, after all, of Mr. Altman's piece is "Stopping Putin", not reversing his conquest. If, as Mr. Altman writes, sanctions will lead to the epiphany that "further aggression isn't sustainable," what about the aggression and atrocities up to date? How, exactly, will sanctions reattach the body parts from Malaysia Flt. MH-17?

We shuffle our feet, clear our throats, and with furrowed brow profess concern over renewed Russian treachery and aggression. But after WWI, the US and Europe ignored Ukraine's call for assistance as it was invaded by Russia, international treaties be damned. Thereafter, on November 16, 1933, the US extended diplomatic recognition to the USSR, at the very time that Stalin was forcibly starving millions of Ukrainians death in order, as wrote Oxford's Norman Davies, to forever inter any notion of statehood. After WWII, survivors of that horror who had fled to the West were forcibly "repatriated" to the rodina and death. With the dissolution of the USSR having been triggered by Ukrainian independence, Washington stripped Ukraine of virtually its entire weaponry, destroying it or turning it over to Ukraine's historic persecutor. Karl Marx had it right: "The ignorance, the laziness, the pusillanimity, the perpetual fickleness and the credulousness of Western governments enabled Russia to achieve successively every one of her aims." If we don't get it straight this time, if the West yet again condemns Ukraine to the coffin air of Lubyanka, then the West will ricochet back to the past, to M(utual)A(ssured)D(estruction) (remember that?), with all its implications. This time, however, add ISIS, China and North Korea to the brew.

**Victor Rud, Esq.**  
**Chairman, Committee on International Affairs & Foreign Policy**  
**Ukrainian American Bar Association.**

<http://euromaidanpress.com/2015/02/14/rebuttal-wall-street-journal-article-stopping-putin-without-firing-shot/>

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**OPINION**

Stopping Putin Without Firing a Shot  
 There is a point at which a currency or banking collapse will prevent any major nation from functioning.

By **ROGER C. ALTMAN**  
 Feb. 10, 2015 7:12 p.m. ET

The intensified fighting in Ukraine has discouraged and angered the West. Many are concluding that neither economic sanctions nor diplomacy—including last Friday’s emergency visit to Moscow by Germany’s Angela Merkel and France’s François Hollande —can deter Russia’s advance there. So there is now a movement toward supplying defensive arms, such as antitank weapons, to Kiev. Even if this might give Moscow a further basis for its historical grievance and trigger a wider conflict.

But there is a better and more powerful strategy available. One which could halt the Ukrainian conflict and prevent further Russian adventurism in the Baltics or elsewhere. That is to recognize Russia’s deepening economic and financial crisis, tighten the financial sanctions further and then let the combination of sanctions and the global capital markets force Moscow to pull back.

These markets have turned sharply against Russia already, damaging its economic, financial and banking system—and the scale of that harm is just beginning to come into view. Many think that Mr. Putin can ignore these pressures indefinitely. I doubt it.

I doubt it because these financial markets are now the most powerful force on earth. Far stronger than any army or store of weapons—and capable of inducing changes that diplomacy or arms could never achieve. Remember the collapse of Mexico in 1994 and Thailand 1997. In this age, if the currency of a major nation collapses or its access to borrowing ends, it just can’t function.

Look at the damage in Russia over just the past three months. According to Bloomberg, the ruble has fallen 50% against the dollar over the past year. Private capital is fleeing the country at a \$150 billion annual rate. Local interest rates have soared to 15%. Russian gross domestic product is now projected by the International Monetary Fund to fall 3% this year. The central bank has already infused \$33 billion to keep the shaky banking sector afloat.

In addition, net new direct foreign investment has been zero for a year and new Western financing has evaporated. Oil prices have fallen more than 50%, and this has weakened Russia’s one strong industry and the state budget that depends on it. The oligarch and state-controlled corporate sector is wobbling under heavy, foreign-currency-denominated debt burdens. Standard & Poor’s downgraded Russia’s credit to junk status on Jan. 26.

Clearly, the current sanctions, which prevent Russia's state-owned banks and corporations from borrowing in Europe or America, are working. Both explicitly, in forbidding such borrowing, and implicitly, in further turning the capital markets against Russia.

This was a profoundly weak country to begin with. Russia's GDP equals that of Italy. Its population is small (140 million) and declining: More than 500,000 citizens have fled over the past three years, and life expectancy is falling. The level of corruption is staggering. Russia's oil fields are mature and require capital and Western technology even to keep production flat. Neither of these inputs is available now. The liquid portion of Moscow's foreign-exchange reserves, which the Peterson Institute has estimated at roughly \$200 billion, is not large relative to the \$33 billion that was spent in December to defend the ruble.

Many Russia experts note the deep and sad capacity of the Russian people for suffering. They point out that Mr. Putin's popularity, boosted by the annexation of Crimea and the Ukraine conflict, is nearly 80%. They therefore conclude that he is not sensitive to economic and financial pressures.

But Russia is not North Korea. It is a full participant in global financial markets. Its currency is traded globally, as is its stock market, and its corporate sector borrows externally in large amounts. There is a point at which a currency or banking collapse will prevent any major nation from functioning.

That is why the U.S. and the EU should tighten the sanctions further before moving to supply arms. Russia has no method of countering sanctions, unlike its military-response potential. Preventing American and European investors from holding its sovereign debt is a logical next step. If it becomes necessary, barring Russian banks from the Swift system of international payments, for example, would be crippling.

More broadly, the more Mr. Putin extends the fighting in eastern Ukraine, the more the financial markets will ratchet up their own pressure on Russia. This may squeeze Russia to the point where its entities cannot borrow abroad, all private capital is leaving, the banking system becomes insolvent and no one wants the currency. At that point foreign aggression isn't sustainable. Not even for Mr. Putin.

*Mr. Altman is the founder and executive chairman of Evercore, and was deputy U.S. Treasury secretary in the Clinton administration, 1993-94.*