

THIRTEEN REASONS WHY A “NEGOTIATED PEACE” IN UKRAINE WILL SHATTER OUR SECURITY, EXPLAINS VICTOR RUD

"As we assure Russia the very sanctuary, peace and tranquility that we deny Ukraine, Russia torches Ukraine into a smoldering graveyard with that very American technology, imbedded in its own, and in Iranian and North Korean weaponry."

by Victor Rud

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Western pressure on Ukraine to negotiate with Russia is increasing: for half of America’s political spectrum, the negotiation drumbeat has become histrionic, with Republicans asserting that “no vital American interest is at stake.”

Ukraine is elbowed aside, and Washington is called upon to “open direct negotiations with Moscow.” Otherwise, we’re told darkly, nuclear war is in the offing, “maybe even the end of the human species.”

The nuclear psychosis that Russia has implanted in our brain is shared by the administration, oblivious of Moscow’s tenet, “all war is based on deception.”

Small wonder that, for all of the aid that the US has provided Ukraine, a straitjacket is imposed on Ukraine’s use of certain American weaponry.

To the extent that weaponry provided by other countries incorporates American technology, its like use is vetoed as well.

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Concurrently, any reference by the administration to Ukraine “winning,” is fleeting and near embarrassed in tone. A “negotiated settlement” is variously openly pronounced and whispered.

We decompose Ukraine’s determination, poison its spirit and crush its morale. “The mood is pitch black. Ukraine feels betrayed,” wrote Tymofiy Mylovanov, head of the Kyiv School of Economics.

“Someone in London recently told me bluntly: ‘We have to force Zelensky to accept a deal, and we’ll withdraw support to make it happen.’”

With North Korean troops reported as recently dispatched to aid Russia’s invasion, French Foreign Minister Jean-Noël Barrot warned, “A Russian victory would be a consecration for the law of the strongest and would push the international order toward chaos.”

Why not avoid it and seek a “diplomatic solution?” Because that would multiply the chaos and ensure Russia’s victory.

First: What – exactly – would be negotiated?

Every issue has already been agreed to in a dozen multi-lateral and bi-lateral agreements, signed with all solemnity by the Kremlin to international applause.

These include responsibility for wars of aggression, for war crimes and crimes against humanity, and for genocide, the crime of crimes. It’s what we have championed since WWII.

“We have to stick to certain rules. Otherwise, international relations cannot be built,” Vladimir Putin purred in an interview with Oliver Stone in 2017.

But perhaps “land for peace?”

Territory, in any conventional sense, is not the issue. Russia — as we know (don’t we?) — is the largest country on the planet, 45,000 times larger than Gaza, and with a border that would encircle the globe 1.5 times. It needs more land? Roughly 20% of Ukraine would be an invisible 0.7 % of Russia’s empire.

Territory, national borders, however, are pivotal because they anchor (so we lecture) national sovereignty. They must remain inviolate, conceptually no different than defending “every square inch” of NATO territory. Otherwise, we can bid good-bye to global attempts in dealing with everything from climate change to pandemic control to arms control to terrorism to international trade.

Only those nations that have actually experienced Russia understand that we dare not cynically pervert the “rules-based international order” into pablum.

That “order” requires nothing less than the return of Ukraine to the status quo ante 2014. It includes full reparations and punishment.

It includes the right of the victim — and of the international community — to impose limitations on the aggressor’s ability to wage aggressive war again, including restrictions on its sovereignty (such as a security zone, buffer territory, on Russia’s side of the 2014 border).

The "world order" also includes – and this has escaped the attention of Ukraine's supporters — Russia's liability for the damages they suffer in the course of aiding the victim, Ukraine.

Dmitry Medvedev, deputy chairman of Russia's Security Council and Vladimir Putin's predecessor demanded, "Every day we should try to do maximum harm to those countries that have imposed these restrictions. Harm their economies, their institutions and their rulers.

"Harm the well-being of their citizens, their confidence in the future."

That included the targeting of critical Western infrastructure, such as energy, industry, transport, banking and social services, and stirring up social tensions. "Let's turn their lives into a crazy nightmare in which they can't distinguish wild fiction from the realities of the day."

Second: How could a "peaceful resolution" be damaging our global security?

At the signing of the Helsinki Accords more than 50 years ago, President Ford said: "History will judge this Conference not by what we say here today, but by what we do tomorrow — not by the promises we make, but by the promises we keep."

Is this only hypocritical virtue signalling? If we revisit the very issues that were put to rest generations ago, it will necessarily be our rejection – minimally, the dilution — of those issues and the declaration of the uselessness of that order.

It would openly kick the can of enforcement down the road, with all its consequences. Forget about any credibility, as hypocrisy, cowardice and duplicity become our call signs.

Before his election, Biden wrote: "The international system that the United States so carefully constructed is coming apart at the seams.

"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.

"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 . . . reclaim our credibility."

What will a "diplomatic solution" accomplish?

It will make us, the architect and foremost advocate of that "order," its wrecking ball. It will label us a moral aphasiac, a betrayer of not just of our friends and allies but of our own essence.

The wispy tendrils of America's remaining global deterrence credibility will further entice not just Russia but China et al. It will ensure the very nuclear afterglow that negotiation cheerleaders rail against.

Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov gets it. "This is not so much about Ukraine, but about the world order. The current crisis is a fateful moment, an epochal moment in modern history, because it reflects the battle in the broadest sense of the word for how the world order will look."

Deputy of the State Duma Vyacheslav Nikonov (a grandson of Stalin's foreign minister, Vyacheslav Molotov) struts: "In the modern world, we are the embodiment of the forces of good. This is a metaphysical clash between the forces of good and evil . . . This is truly a holy war we're waging, and we must win."

Third: We've already advanced that breakdown, making a burlesque of it all by endorsing the gun barrel arrangements, the infamous Minsk Protocols, in 2014 and 2015.

They would impose upon the victim, Ukraine, the very limitations on its sovereignty and other penalties that international law instead imposes on the aggressor, Russia.

Reflexive control and reality reversal became one as Russia annexed our brain. We celebrated it at the Geneva Summit in June 2021. Putin RSVP'd seven months later with the expanded invasion. The chorus, "there's no alternative to Minsk" is now morphing into "there's no alternative to a diplomatic solution."

Before Minsk we already had Georgia. Our demand — "Georgia's sovereignty and territorial integrity must be respected. Moscow must honour its commitment to withdraw its invading forces from all Georgian territory." — was meaningless.

Washington promptly descended into happy talk. It, not the Kremlin, became the supplicant months later with our execrable "reset" rewarding Russia's for its dismemberment of the victim. Little wonder Moscow was energized.

Before Georgia, Russia's levelled Chechnya. President Clinton covered for Russia, alluding to Russian President Yeltsin as "Abraham Lincoln" in keeping a country together.

Fourth: A “diplomatic solution” in Ukraine would be a group hug around a delusion, the only predictability being its breach.

How can we rely on yet another agreement when it was precisely “agreements” that have so miserably failed, consistently and predictably, Minsk included? A hundred years of dealing with the Kremlin has been littered by pen exchanges.

Moscow long ago perfected “the art of the deal.” It specifically rejects compromise or restraint. Its DNA is dynamic, outgoing, and predatory. “Stability” is not part of it.

Negotiation exists not to find a common middle ground, or to compromise, since agreements exist as simply another modality to divert attention, to placate, to confuse, to buy time. Thus, for instance, a “Peace Treaty” between the Russian Federation and Chechnya predictably provided Moscow the breathing spell to rebuild its forces for Chechnya’s ultimate demise.

At the end, the purpose of “agreeing” is to prevent the realisation of its very purpose, or to affirmatively ensure the very opposite.

Moscow has the world’s largest nuclear arsenal — and we’ve succumbed to its nuclear blackmail — not despite disarmament agreements but precisely because of them. (Consider that an impending Russian victory – NOT defeat — will make a nuclear strike more likely.)

Our febrile infatuation with agreements, sublimated into “resolution,” is self-anaesthetizing. It never wavers. It’s foreign policy malpractice. Remember Yalta? “Yalta, whatever the future may bring forth, will always stand out as a gigantic step forward toward the ultimate establishment of a peaceful and orderly world.”

George Kennan intoned in his memoirs, “The Russians don’t want to invade anyone. It’s not in their tradition.”

And British Foreign Secretary Michael Stewart was adamant: “The Russians will not invade Czechoslovakia. They have changed too much since Hungary in 1956.”

“It’s difficult to understand why the Soviets took this action,” President Carter told members of Congress in a White House briefing on Moscow’s invasion of Afghanistan. “I think they probably underestimated the adverse reaction from around the world.”

And about Georgia, Condoleezza Rice said: “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.”

Fifth: How would a negotiated settlement reflect on our allies' and enemies' assessment of our strategic acumen?

It consists of: (a) Hammering Ukraine into surrendering – to Russia – the world's third largest nuclear arsenal. Months before he invaded Ukraine in 2014, Putin conceded: "if you have the bomb, no one will touch you."

Russia simply barreled a tank through its "agreement" not to savage Ukraine.

(b) Washington prevailing on Ukraine to capitulate part of itself to a thoroughly genocidal Russia.

(c) Resulting in a global stampede by non-nuclear nations to acquire The Bomb, with all its implications for the still Free World. President Clinton's belated and useless mea culpa for denuding Ukraine means what, and particularly since Putin told him he would not comply with the governing document?

Sixth. What does a "deal" in Ukraine do to our mantra, "we don't negotiate with terrorists?"

Russia is the acme of the terrorist state. Who incubated, trained, funded and directed Islamic terrorism against the very countries today championing negotiation?

In the 1970's, Alexander Sakharovsky, head of the KGB's First Chief Directorate (foreign operations) to his Romanian counterpart, Ion Pacepa: "Terrorism has to become our main weapon. Airplane hijacking is my own invention."

So . . . forget 9/11? Who trained Hamas? Forget that Putin is an internationally indicted megalomaniacal war criminal, who has given his one-finger salute to it all?

Seventh: In any "settlement agreement" with Russia we would promote the defenestration of the "world order" in exchange for what?

What is Russia to "promise" that it already hasn't? Not to invade, murder, torture, rape, dismember, mutilate, kidnap, starve, wage war? Those are already pre-existing and recommitted obligations and add nothing.

Eighth: Vladislav Surkov, a former senior advisor to President Putin, proudly wrote that “Russia is playing with the West’s brains.”

In a high profile interview, Republican vice-presidential candidate Senator J.D. Vance openly sounded the position of a thoroughly suborned Republican Party: Ukraine was to surrender territory (and the humanity on it) illegally invaded by Russia, commit to neutrality, with a demilitarised zone on Ukraine’s side of the new border, the West that would pay for Russia’s devastation of Ukraine, and Ukraine would forego NATO membership.

(Forget that it was Russia that declared war against NATO and the West, generally, years ago. A month before the February invasion, the Russian military saw no external threats to “vital interests [...] NATO force groupings are not being built up, and there is no threatening activity.”)

It’s a heinous outsourcing of “reality control,” as George Orwell wrote, to Moscow.

It erases Russia’s predatory DNA and showcases our talent as the troubadour of the dezinform implanted in our cortex. It’s in line with decades of our somberly intoning a catechism of Russia’s “defensive needs,” “security concerns,” “hurt pride,” “fear of encirclement,” “backyard,” “legitimate interests,” “legitimate concerns,” “sphere of influence,” “historic claims,” “fears of NATO,” having a “buffer,” etc.

Our Russia experts make No. 2 Dzerzhinsky Square proud.

Ninth: Cutting a deal also means that we are to forget about “never again.”

Forget about never forgetting. Russia’s daily vitriol declares a “holy war” against “everything Ukrainian” while we debate the victims’ self-defence rights.

We’d be the hypocritical abettor of an unbridled extirpative passion. “Your task is to wipe the Ukrainian nation off the face of the earth,” is the commandment of Russia’s faux church.

Israel’s former Prime Minister, Golda Meir (coincidentally, born in Kyiv) knew the issue: “They say we must be dead. And we say we want to be alive. Between life and death, I don’t know of a compromise.”

Tenth. Even assuming a “negotiated settlement,” how would it be enforced?

It’s precisely enforcement of an existing blizzard of agreements that must be had. We would sidestep it with still another agreement that we know with certainty will be shattered? Do we plan to station 30,000 American troops in Ukraine, as we have in Korea, for three generations?

Eleventh: Our demanding that Ukrainians “make peace” compounds the infamy, and strategic insanity, of extending diplomatic recognition to Moscow in 1933 as it was starving Ukraine to finally break the spine of more than a decade of resistance to Moscow’s rule.

Europe was equally nonchalant about the horror of it all. The UK’s Foreign Office: “We do not want to make it[information about the Ukrainian genocide] public, however, because the Soviet Government would resent it and our relations with them would be prejudiced. We cannot give this explanation in public.” (After WWII, a joint U.S. and U.K. manhunt in Europe forcibly repatriated the famine survivors back to the Gulag.) Instead of seeking redemption, we would multiply the infamy.

Twelfth: Forcing a settlement agreement upon Ukraine would be epochal maliciousness.

It would deny that Ukraine paid the highest price for that very “rules-based international order” established after WWII, suffering the greatest loss of any nation in that war, some 8-9 million of its humanity. (So much for “Ukrainian nazis.”)

Thirteenth: Forget, also, that Ukraine’s recoument of its independence in 1991 ensured the collapse of the USSR, stopping America’s precipitous strategic slide and a gusher of an estimated \$13 trillion spent in the Cold War.

It also restored the U.S. to an uncontested global primacy that wasn’t seen since the end of WWII, making America “great again.” Time to throw Ukraine under the bus.

The West either defends itself and enforces the rules or it doesn’t. Hammering Ukraine to “make peace” is not only folly. It will be cataclysmic.

According to Samir Saran, the head of the Indian thinktank the Observer Research Foundation: “It tells countries like us that if something like this were to happen in the Indo-Pacific, you have no chance against China. If you cannot defeat a \$2tn nation [Saran previously reciting the West’s \$40tn economy], don’t think you are deterring China. China is taking hope from your abysmal and dismal performance against a much smaller adversary.”

Putin acts on his splenetic disdain of the democratic West, and America in particular. He has concluded that we are naïve, have a low frustration threshold, refuse to believe the experience and warnings of others who know infinitely more, lack political will, cheer appeasement, prostitute our values, are corrupt, don’t have the slightest conception of history and its lessons, and therefore are unable to anticipate and shape the future. In other words, we’re strategically illiterate.

Any agreement with Russia that we would, directly or indirectly, force upon Ukraine is a candy wrapper for hemlock, with ourselves joining the demise. It will be the realisation of what Putin summarised: “[T]his operation means the beginning of a radical breakdown of the U.S.-style world order.”

It’s more than intellectual lassitude to think otherwise. It’s hallucinatory.

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