



# 1993: THE BARRY R. POSEN PLAN FOR WAR ON RUSSIA VIA ZOMBIE STATE UKRAINE

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*"We are fighting a war against Russia and not against each other,"* German Foreign Minister Annalena Baerbock, Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, Strasbourg, January 24, 2023.

(For an unauthorised biography of Baerbock, [see here](#)).

On July 27, 1993, the US Department of Defense (DoD) and the Ukrainian Ministry of Defense (MoD) signed a Memorandum of Understanding and Cooperation on Defense and Military Relations, establishing a programme of defence cooperation at the Department-Ministry-level, with "substantive activities" between those offices being launched in July 1994 (Cf. Lt. Col. Frank Morgese, [US-Ukraine Security Cooperation 1993-2001: A Case History](#)). Since that date, the Ukraine has teemed with US military advisors of every stripe.

The Morgese case study is a blow-by-blow review of the US military activity in the Ukraine between 1993 and 2001, designed to set up the Ukraine for her destruction. So detailed a review, that it would swamp the layman. Accordingly, we propose [another document dating from 1994](#), readable by the laymen amongst us, and which spells out thirty years in advance, the full-blown War Plan for a zombie Ukraine.

Its author, Barry R. Posen (Rand, CFR, MIT, Woodrow Wilson Foundation), belongs to the leather-armchair school of strategy the US so excels in: arranging for others to die for the US living standard.

For obvious reasons, only Posen's assessment of Russian military strength is dated. The remainder of his study predicts with such ghastly exactitude both events in the Ukraine over the last 20 years and the expected, indeed hoped for, Russian response, that one readily perceives that this is no prediction, but rather a fully-formed proposal for War—complete with Posen's dismay, very faintly-veiled, at Operation Barbarossa's failure, and his pleasure at the "high cost" Barbarossa exacted on Russia.

To give our readers the flavour of Posen's text, we have selected a few, notable paragraphs from this Must-Read, one which Russia surely cannot have missed. All quotations are so marked and in italics.

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## **Manoeuvring the Ukraine into Demanding the US Armed Forces Intervene**

The problem here is that if Russia were to attack Ukraine, or threaten it conventionally, the US is not obliged to do anything. Ukrainian diplomats could, however, try to argue that any act of war or threat of war by a nuclear superpower involves an implicit nuclear threat sufficient to warrant US action. Even if this argument were accepted, however, Security Council action would be thwarted by the Russian veto. Nevertheless, it should be part of Ukraine's diplomatic strategy in the event of trouble.

## **Partnership for Peace Designed to "impose considerable costs on Russia"**

Even if Partnership for Peace (PFP) does not come through for Ukraine, it still holds the potential to impose considerable costs on Russia, which adds to Ukraine's overall deterrent power. Paragraph 8 of NATO's 'Framework' document for PFP states "NATO will consult with any active participant in the Partnership if that partner perceives a direct threat to its territorial integrity, political independence, or security. The precise action that would follow such consultation is unspecified. Nevertheless, NATO would look pretty sorry if it either failed to consult, or failed to take any action after consultation. Some politicians and pundits will trumpet the credibility costs of a failure to act. NATO might, of course, compensate for a failure to act on Ukraine's behalf by stronger measures elsewhere, though this would be cold comfort to Ukraine. Fear of these stronger measures elsewhere are, however, another element of Ukraine's dissuasive power.

## **If the Russian Government Reject further Western "Reforms," NATO Must Act**

The Partnership for Peace can be viewed as 'NATO's Waiting Room.' The tacit bargain with Russia is that many central European states remain in that waiting room so long as Russia remains a good neighbor. If-and-as Russia begins to try to expand its power, the din in the waiting room will become disturbingly loud. The elements are in place for the rapid extension of NATO to Poland, Hungary, the Czech Republic, and Slovakia, even if a threatened Ukraine is tossed to the wolves. Russia can, by its own acts, bring NATO to its doorstep. Stephen Oxman, Assistant Secretary of State for European and Canadian Affairs virtually stated this rationale.

...should reform experience a reversal of fortune in Russia, we can re-evaluate NATO's needs and those of the Central and Eastern Europeans. At the same time, active participation in the Partnership will go a long way toward enhancing their military preparedness and allow partners to consult with NATO in the event of a threat.

### **Confrontation with Russia "Probable" and She can be Provoked into the Ukraine**

Moreover, as noted above, complete inaction would damage NATO's credibility for a probable future confrontation with Russia. If, as some now argue, NATO expands eastward more-or-less as a matter of course, this useful sanction will have been lost. Nevertheless, it seems that any near term NATO expansion will be accompanied by only limited military redeployments, so long as Russia-US relations remain moderately amicable. Russian policy makers might still calculate that aggression against Ukraine can leave them worse off because of the countervailing actions it would precipitate.

Moreover, near term candidates for NATO membership are only a subset of the PFP participants. Again, Russian action can precipitate more energetic alliance expansion. A word of caution is in order, here, however. If near term NATO expansion is accompanied by energetic military preparations that Russian policy makers view as unprovoked, they may be stimulated to try to reabsorb Ukraine out of their own defensive impulses.

### **The Ukraine Must be Shifted towards "Ethnic Nationalism"**

...Ukraine has one other diplomatic asset. Thus far, the "state ideology" is organized largely around the idea of "civic" rather than "ethnic" nationalism. Anybody can be a citizen of Ukraine, and a good "Ukrainian." Russians are not a persecuted minority. There are small ethnically Ukrainian elements who might wish to change this orientation. But "civic nationalism" is congenial to the West. Insofar as any future struggle can be portrayed as the "ethnic" Russians against the "civic" Ukrainians, the path of western intervention is eased. Moreover, it is not inconceivable that other states will draw a tragic lesson from an unopposed Russian "liberation" of its brethren in Ukraine. One is better off expelling such potential irredenta.

## **“Diplomacy Profits from Ghastly Television Footage”—Bucha, Anyone?**

Ukraine must organize its military power to ensure the greatest probability of outside intervention. Russian fear of outside intervention could add greatly to Ukraine's dissuasive power. Diplomacy needs time to work; it also profits from ghastly television footage. This means Ukraine must, as a matter of priority, organize its military forces to avoid the kind of catastrophic defensive collapse often associated with armored warfare.

The West could assist Ukraine in many important ways short of direct military intervention. But all assistance will have to move through Poland, Slovakia, or Hungary. It is improbable that these countries will be willing to cooperate without full fledged membership in NATO, so membership would have to be extended during the crisis. Ukraine will require outside sources of oil and gas if it is to hold out very long. Replacements for weapons lost in the initial battles would be very helpful. Given that many eastern European countries will, for the foreseeable future, have similar equipment to the Ukrainians, they are a ready source of easily usable replacements and munitions.

## **Give the Ukraine “Many More Opportunities to Inflict Disproportionate Casualties on the Russians”**

One of the most useful forms of assistance that could be provided to Ukraine is intelligence. If Ukraine regularly knows where large Russian ground formations are, its forces will be much less vulnerable to catastrophe, and have many more opportunities to inflict disproportionate casualties on the Russians. (Similar assistance may be possible against enemy air forces.). Direct military intervention from the West will be very problematical. One suspects that some secret planning has been done for this contingency, but the task must seem daunting. NATO ground and air forces would have to cross vast distances to reach even central Ukraine.

The distance from the old inter-German border to Kiev is roughly 1500 km. NATO's relatively few divisions would be swallowed up in the vast spaces of the East, even if they could get there. The optimum direct military assistance would probably be in the form of air strikes. Effective, sustained, tactical air strikes cannot efficiently be flown from existing NATO air bases in western Europe; 2000 km range sorties could just reach central Ukraine, but would be hard on pilots and would require high levels of aerial tanker support.<sup>12</sup> (These sorties

would also require Polish permission.) Another option would be to fly from bases in Turkey, a NATO ally. Sorties could be flown directly across the Black Sea to Ukraine. Ranges would vary depending on bases and targets, but it is unlikely that any sortie would need to go further than 1500 km. The problem here, of course, would be whether Turkey believed its vital interests were engaged, since the NATO treaty does not oblige them to come to the assistance of a non-NATO country, even if other NATO countries wish it.

### **Move NATO Ground and Air Forces into Poland**

NATO ground and air forces might move into Poland and NATO aircraft could fly from Polish bases. (This would have to be negotiated, of course, and the cost would certainly be immediate full membership in NATO for Poland.) Unfortunately, most Polish bases were built to be close to the old "inner-German" border, the expected zone of east-west conflict. There are only about a half-dozen military airfields in the southeastern quadrant of the country that would meaningfully reduce sortie ranges, and thus the need for tankers. Even these would require sorties of over 1000 km, which is still demanding for sustained tactical air attacks.

...It seems unlikely that NATO commanders would want to put their very valuable aircraft and support equipment onto Ukrainian bases, without the benefit of a large scale NATO ground force shield. A more arcane, but nevertheless extremely important problem would be the coordination of NATO fighters with Ukraine's own air defenses to ensure that Ukrainians do not shoot at NATO aircraft. This should prove very difficult to improvise.

### **The West will Need to Repudiate its High Minded Principles Publicly in a Series of Venues, All Ostensibly Designed for the very Purpose of Protecting these Principles**

Because NATO countries lived for nearly a half century with Soviet control over Ukraine, Ukrainians ought not to have confidence that NATO will come to its aid out of narrow strategic interest. Nevertheless, this assistance becomes more plausible, the longer Ukraine can resist, and the longer Ukrainian diplomacy can work. Ukraine should thus try, through its military strategy, to maximize Russian fear of this outcome. Ukraine has available to it a series of for a where it can present its case. Thus, the West will need to repudiate its high minded principles publicly in a series of venues, all ostensibly designed for the very purpose of protecting these principles. Since Munich already happened, this policy has a name and a

historical meaning that will provide some additional leverage for Ukrainian diplomats.

### **The Ukrainian Defence will be a "Catastrophic Failure" and the Army, Destroyed**

Even if the Russians start out with a limited aims strategy--with the intent of conquering Crimea, and the three or four easternmost oblasts of dense Russian settlement, the likely catastrophic failure of these forward defense or mobile defense strategies would incur the destruction of most if not all of the Ukrainian army.

### **A Divided Ukraine Would then Assume the Role in a New Cold War that Divided Germany Assumed in the Last One**

Western Ukraine, though weak industrially, is agriculturally rich and ought to be able to feed itself. It does have considerable light industry which could be turned to military uses. Most importantly, it borders Poland, Slovakia, and Hungary, all potential sources of supply if NATO admits these countries, applies diplomatic pressure, and provides resources. These are big "ifs," but for the diplomatic reasons outlined above, there are reasons for hope. If Ukraine makes its western reaches strong enough to resist for a lengthy period, at least several months, and employs its mobile forces effectively to generate serious combat from the outset of the war, Ukrainian diplomacy will have a chance. If the Ukrainian bastion can garner enough western European logistical assistance to survive, Russia will face the prospect of having to employ large active forces to contain it. It will go even worse for them if western Ukraine can get into NATO. A divided Ukraine would then assume the role in a new Cold War that divided Germany assumed in the last one. But the "inner-Ukrainian border" would be much closer to the centers of Russian power than was the "inner-German" border.

### **Encourage the Ukrainians to Blow Up their Own Cities and Infrastructure**

Extensive demolitions would supplement more conventional military operations to slow the attackers' progress, and complicate their subsequent logistics. Much of this could be organized well in advance; critical facilities can be "pre-chambered" to speed the placement of explosives. Necessary explosives can be cached close to the designated targets, under the control of local police forces or reserve military formations, as is done in Switzerland,

Finland, Sweden, and even Germany. As the Ukrainians retreat into geographical areas where Ukrainians constitute a greater ethnic majority, it may prove possible to organize "stay-behind" forces to collect intelligence on the Russians and engage in partisan warfare. This too should be planned in advance.

### **The Ukraine Must "Convince its Neighbours that It has a Million Men Willing to Die"**

A word of candor is in order on the nature of the combat that would be necessary to make this military concept work. The essence of the combat power of the organization I propose is the willingness of the Ukrainian soldier to fight and die for his or her country, in a war that may seem a hopeless cause. This is not a US or even an Israeli military system that strives to beat its adversary mainly through technological superiority, highly trained people, enormously competent leadership, and brilliant tactics. As noted elsewhere, the Ukrainian Army has no chance of achieving this, and they will be substantially outweighed in major items of combat equipment. Historically, the kind of fighting proposed here has taken a terrific toll in casualties--thousands, perhaps tens of thousands, would die. This organization can only inflict casualties on a mechanized adversary if it is willing to accept casualties itself. The mind of the individual Ukrainian soldier is the key. What is the commitment to an independent Ukraine? How intense is Ukrainian patriotism, or nationalism? The answers to these questions are already in doubt in many parts of Ukraine. If Ukraine cannot devise a host of ways to convince its neighbors that it can find a million soldiers willing to die on any day for the sovereignty of the country, then the deterrent power of this military system will be weak.

### **The Ukraine Must Learn to Love Poland, and Become A Dumping-Ground for Old Weapons**

To increase the Russian perception that Ukraine might actually get western assistance to execute this strategy, there are a range of requests the Ukrainians might make of NATO in the context of the Partnership for Peace. Ukraine should seek joint air defense exercises that would familiarize western and Ukrainian air force officers and air defense officers with the coordination problems they would face in a real war. Ukraine should suggest that the Polish air bases closest to it are seen as assets, not threats, and should encourage the Polish air force and NATO to practice forward movement of NATO aircraft into these bases, again in the guise of joint "peacekeeping" exercises. They should also note their interest that these

bases remain in good shape. Ukrainian Army personnel should seek joint training opportunities with NATO that would familiarize them with NATO anti-armor weapons. And Ukraine should suggest that anti-armor weapons that NATO armies might intend to retire could still find a useful life in Ukraine.

Alternatively, they could simply ask that such weapons be stockpiled, rather than sold or destroyed. The railroad gauge change yards that transshipped cargo from Russian to European trains should be well maintained so that supplies could be moved East expeditiously. Some might object that these kinds of exercises go beyond what is implied in the Partnership for Peace. But it does not seem beyond the creative powers of diplomats to rationalize them. Ukrainian diplomats are in a position to argue quite strenuously for these measures.

### **"Inherent Irrationality" of a "Violent Struggle of the Magnitude Envisioned Here" No Obstacle!**

The third argument is implicit in the peculiar character of post-Cold War discourse on international politics. Violent struggles of the magnitude envisioned here among great and middle sized advanced industrial powers have come to be viewed as "inconceivable." There is a widespread inclination to view them as beyond the organizational, economic, social, and political capabilities of these countries. The inherent irrationality of such struggles against the backdrop of modern societies that prize rationality has come to be viewed as a barrier to such conflicts. Many believe that the spread of democracy also makes such wars unlikely among democracies, since "median voters" will demand alternative solutions from their leaders on both sides. In short, while limited uses of military force remain possible, deliberate large-scale aggression of the type discussed here is simply not something Russia could or would do.

### **And if all else Fail, Nuke 'em**

A useful next analytic step would be a systematic consideration of the strengths and weaknesses of this conventional strategy vs a nuclear one.... The strategy I have developed gives the Ukrainians almost no ability to stop a determined Russian attempt to conquer territories populated by ethnic Russians. It is moderately good at raising the costs of an attempt to conquer the entire country, but without outside assistance, it will ultimately fail.

Presuming that Ukraine could generate a small, secure second strike capability against Russia, what problems might nuclear deterrence solve?

Ukraine would think of itself as trying to deter attacks on its territory. Russia might think of itself as trying to protect its countrymen--accidentally marooned on territory that has historically been Russian, but which is now incidentally Ukrainian.

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