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## *The Americans Started the US War with Russia*



Photograph Source: The White House – Public Domain

The ongoing US war against Russia has elevated American-allied Nazis to the international stage as ‘freedom fighters,’ resulted in the deaths of tens of thousands of Ukrainian civilians, raised the risk of nuclear war, ended any effective international cooperation on environmental issues through rekindling energy geopolitics, assured Europe of one or more Great Depression type winters with limited heating fuel, and more probably than not will soon produce the total annihilation of Ukraine as a modern state by the Russians.

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The ‘American view’ towards the war, informed domestically by an absence of the political violence that the US so regularly visits upon innocents around the globe, rank ideology, state propaganda, ignorance of world history, and the narrow economic interests of American oligarchs, imagines that it is fighting Frankenstein’s monster when it is that monster. What is the strategic interest of Ukraine to the US? More importantly, is it worth a potentially world-ending war?

In recent history, the US could have abided by the 1991 promise made by the George H.W. Bush administration to keep NATO away from Russia’s border. The US could have negotiated a security agreement with the Russians— as they have regularly requested over the last three decades. The US could have made Ukraine abide by the Minsk Accord(s) to which the Ukrainians and Russians had in principle agreed. There have been so many requests from the Russians to negotiate a lasting peace with the US that there is no convincing argument that the US didn’t want this war.

And yet the American anti-war left continues to insist, with decades of evidence to the contrary, that German and French guardians of the oligarchs (Scholz, Macron) would / could have overridden the (Joe) Biden administration’s drive to war when, as I predicted here in 2019, Biden was brought to power by the national security state to launch a war against Russia. Biden was up to his eyeballs in the US-led coup in Ukraine in 2014, was subsequently appointed to be the American prefect in Ukraine; and began preparing for war the day he entered office.

The reason why the US wants a war with Russia is first and foremost that the poor policy choices of the US political leadership over the last five decades ended American economic and political dominance somewhere around 2008. Starting in the 1970s, market fundamentalist ideology became the American tool of choice for extracting wealth from poor and working people and nations around the globe. The political class, acting at the behest of industrialists and Wall Street, believed its own fantasy that ‘nature,’ and not imperialist looting, had made rich Americans rich.

The result since the 1970s has been a shift from political leaders governing to the ideological use of government to serve business interests. The logic is that business makes ‘us’ rich, despite the fact that most of ‘us’ aren’t rich. The insight that emerged from the Great Depression— that unhindered capitalism was both unstable and destabilizing, was flipped to the disproven logic that it is government that destabilizes capitalism. In economic terms, this shift placed American liberals well to the political right of the historical American political right.

The response from power was to redefine left and right in terms that flattered power. Capitalism could be made ‘just’ by making it fairer, went the new political project of the liberal – left. This, despite half-a-millennium of capitalism causing the very illiberalism that it is now expected to ameliorate. This imagined flat society, where one ‘equal’ earns a few billion dollars a year scamming widows and orphans while another ‘equal’ begs for money on a highway off-ramp, defines the political project of this new left.

To the social democracy that young liberals eternally call for, the US had that in the 1970s, just before it was abandoned by liberals. The (Ronald) Reaganite effort to shift resources, and with it, power, from the public sphere to the private was matched by liberals using an ideological market fundamentalism to accomplish similarly motivated outcomes from a better-hidden position. Wall Street and the largely privatized US military were re-elevated to be the economic bludgeon / capital allocation device of militarized capitalist-imperialism.

More to the point, social-democratic governments have been the vanguard of neoliberalism since the 1970s. Recall, the Biden administration was going to broaden economic distribution through raising the minimum wage, govern on the side of labor, enact environmental programs that might actually stabilize, or even reverse, environmental decline, and it was going to keep the US out of forever wars. While Democrats may need another twenty or thirty years to acquaint themselves with their actual policies, the other 80% of the country has already come to different conclusions.

In the meantime, the US has two political parties to represent the interests of capital and the radical right, but none to support the interests of ‘the people’ more broadly considered. Quickly, what are the metrics by which quasi-privatized public schools (Charter Schools) are measured? Well, most have been exempted from having to demonstrate that they are successfully educating students for a decade or more. How about healthcare? Since the ACA was implemented in 2010, 3 – 5 million Americans have died who wouldn’t have if the US had a functioning healthcare system.

The point is that, as these metrics suggest, raising profits for ‘American’ corporations has been the singular goal of social-democratic policies in the US, and similarly in Europe. The easiest way to sell ruling class interests as those of ‘the people’ is to claim that they are for the people— while setting them up to benefit only executives and oligarchs. Question: if Americans understood that the American war against Ukraine was provoked by the Americans, would they still support it? If so, why are the Biden administration and the state-affiliated press (NYT, WP) continuing to lie about the causes of the war?

With Ukraine being supplied with weapons by the US; being central to American oil geopolitics in Europe; and key to the neo-colonial wealth extraction from Ukraine that the US imagines it will exert after the conflict ends, US arms and materiel makers started shopping for larger houses the day that Joe Biden was elected president. But again, the cost is being paid by others. Russians and Ukrainians (and Poles, etc.) are dying to raise profits for ‘American’ corporations. And the Ukrainians that manage to survive the war will rue the day that they handed control of Ukraine to the Americans.

An historical analogy: during WWII the OUN-B (Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists-Bandera) had Ukrainian nationalists join with the German Nazis to commit racist / antisemitic atrocities across Eastern Europe and ultimately, to attack the Soviets. These Banderites—followers of Ukrainian nationalist and enthusiastic Nazi Stepan Bandera, imagined that Adolf Hitler would want like-minded Nazis to rule Ukraine as a racialized Nazi state. Surprise: Hitler was using the Banderites to further the Nazi goal of defeating the Soviets. The German Nazis reportedly shot OUN-B leaders when they dared to suggest that they be allowed to rule Ukraine.

This brings us to the current geopolitical predicament. The American war against Russia comes as the US political leadership tries to recover a functioning economy using the same logic and institutions that produced the dysfunction in the first place. Deindustrialization? Check. Financialization? Check. Militarization? Check. The American economic and political leadership spent five decades ending what it was that America ‘does’ without any apparent plan to address the (predictable) consequences that are now upon us.

The American war against Russia has been framed by the Americans in terms of oil geopolitics and humanitarian intervention. A seven-year-old with a map of the world could see easily enough that geography favors the Russians in terms of both prosecuting a major war in Europe and providing oil and gas to Europeans and to European industry. The effort by the American political and military leadership to cleave Europe from Russia faces this insurmountable problem of geography. Add 4,000 miles of supply lines, the distance from the US to Germany, to the Nazi Siege of Leningrad for insight into the nature of the problem.

Moreover, the American plan reeks of desperation. The explanation given by the Biden administration, by CIA linked commercial news outlets like the New York Times, and by what is claimed to be a dissident left in the US, depends on a stopping point in history that few outside of the US find plausible. The Russians were rebuffed by the Americans for

three decades as they tried to negotiate security guarantees, including immediately prior to the launch of Russia's SMO (Special Military Operation) and again in April 2022, when UK PM Boris Johnson told the Ukrainian political leadership that the Americans had refused any negotiations.

([Here](#) is a background history of the US – Russia conflict that I wrote a couple of weeks after the conflict started. [Here](#) is where I correctly predicted in 2019 that Joe Biden would be brought to power by the national security state to launch a war against Russia. And [here](#) is a history of the American alliance with German and Ukrainian Nazis for purposes of enticing them to commit terrorist attacks against the Soviets, now the Russians, since the mid-1940s).

([Here](#) is American historian and Cold Warrior George Kennan explaining US President Woodrow Wilson's use of the American Expeditionary Force in 1919 to launch a stealth American war against the Bolsheviks with the goal of reversing the October Revolution. As ideologically and constitutionally inconvenient as this might be for American liberals and 'the left,' there is history to the US – Russia relationship that preceded the launch of Russia's SMO (Special Military Operation) in 2022.

Likewise, American claims of Ukrainian sovereignty are almost too stupid to countenance. Starting in 2013, the US State Department, likely with direct or indirect assistance from the CIA and its stealth cut-outs like NED (National Endowment for Democracy), stoked a burgeoning uprising by the Ukrainian people to turn it into an American regime change operation. Around this same time Ukrainian Nazis from Right Sector and Svoboda committed suspiciously well-timed atrocities against Ukrainian citizens that de-legitimated the democratically elected president of Ukraine to install a government chosen by the American State Department.

The 'American view' has it that the Ukrainian people ousted the Ukrainian President, after which Ukraine returned to being the liberal democracy that it never was. In fact, an early act by the US was to retain predatory and potentially extractive loans from the IMF for Ukraine that the Ukrainian people are on the hook to repay. From 2014 forward the US was arming, supplying, and training Ukrainian militias, including significant contingents of self-described Nazis, to fight in the civil war that the US instigated.

At the time of the launch of Russia's SMO, US-armed Nazis had surrounded Russian ethnic enclaves in Eastern Ukraine and were preparing to ethnically-cleanse Russian-speaking Ukrainians from Eastern Ukraine. This followed eight-years of civil war where the Americans supplied, armed, and trained Ukrainian Nazis to do exactly that. Why

Russia's SMO doesn't qualify as 'humanitarian intervention' in the American view, while far more destructive American interventions in Syria, Serbia, Iraq, Libya, Afghanistan, etc. do, would be a puzzle if it were a puzzle.

For those who missed it, [here](#) is the infamous 'fuck the EU' call from 2014 where former US Assistant Secretary of State for European Affairs, Victoria Nuland, lays out US plans to install a US-allied puppet government to run Ukraine following the US-led coup there. To my knowledge, this (link above) is the only clip that includes mention of Joe Biden's future role as the American prefect in Ukraine. Recall: the first Trump impeachment was over Trump halting weapons shipments that the US was sending to Ukraine to commit terrorist attacks against Russia with.

While Joe Biden appears to have played largely a figure-head role in the coup and subsequent CIA / Nazi civil war against Russian-speaking Ukrainians, what he represents to not-Americans is the persistence of an adversarial foreign policy towards Russia that re-emerged when US President Bill Clinton reneged on the George H.W. Bush administration's promise to keep NATO away from Russia's border. Biden's response has been to censor press accounts that contradict the official storyline while using state propaganda to convince gullible liberals that Nazis doing the bidding of American capital are 'freedom fighters.'

The question for most of us is: why? What possible interest does American capital have in destroying Ukraine? Well, there is the means— weapons and materiel 'lent' to the Ukrainian-Nazi leadership by the Americans that they (the Ukrainians) will spend the next several decades paying for. There is the replacement of Russian oil and gas with more expensive and environmentally-destructive-to-transport 'American' oil and gas. There is the rebuilding of Ukraine by American corporations at Ukrainian expense after it has been destroyed. And there is the regional control over Europe currently imagined to accrue to the Americans from the war.

But how realistic is this? If the Americans can blow up the Nord Stream pipeline supplying Russian LNG to Europe, why can't the Russians blow up LNG transport ships crossing the Atlantic Ocean to deliver 'American' oil and gas to Europe? More to the point, how will European industry be affected by rising energy prices that disproportionately affect it? Reminder: Adolf Hitler was appointed Chancellor of Germany in 1933, the pit of the Great Depression. Is another Great Depression in Europe really what the Americans want?



The Wall Street meltdown of 2008 raised very basic questions regarding the future role of the US in the world. The child-like / aggressively implausible stage of neoliberal capitalism (1980s – today), where the US abandoned its industrial policy while deindustrializing the nation in order to foster money-manager capitalism where bankers allocate capital— mostly to themselves, raises the question of what it is that Americans ‘do?’ In history, the trajectory ran from manufacturing to service jobs to gig jobs.

Joe Biden has been a part of every bad policy decision that the American political leadership has made from the 1970s to today. The neoliberal turn? Check. Resources wars for ‘American’ business interests? Check. Repressive social policies to create the largest carceral population in world history? Check. Promoting George W. Bush’s lie that Iraq possessed WMDs? Check. Privatizing and cutting Social Security? Check. Funding executive bonus pools under the guise of solving environmental problems? Check.

Biden was elected to start a war with Russia. If you follow the history, he has been in place at critical junctures to do just that. That he was a right-wing, neoliberal, war hawk for forty-eight of his fifty years of public self-service— until he ran for president in 2020, should have been a clue that he was the wrong politician for this time. And while the warm embrace of American liberals with self-described Nazis is no surprise here, the broader political context suggests that those interested in political solutions should stop calling each other names and end the war.

This written, the US is in a bad way. And it will remain so no matter who is president. These problems will be intractable until the existing distribution of wealth and power has been reconsidered (redistributed). As long as Lockheed Martin, Goldman Sachs, and Amazon rule the nation, ‘public’ policies will be for their benefit, not ours. Younger readers don’t have twenty or thirty years to figure this out. The problem with low and mid-level conflicts that persist is that they can escalate in the blink of an eye. This war has to be ended quickly. The Americans need to end the bullshit and negotiate a peace.

*Rob Urie is an artist and political economist. His book [Zen Economics](#) is published by CounterPunch Books.*

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