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The Ukraine Crisis in Context: Brzezinski's Grand Chessboard in the 21st Century

APRIL 19, 2023 BY NEWS WIRE

0 COMMENTS



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21st Century Wire

We are now living in the Raging Twenties of the 21st century . . . but the past has a tendency of catching up with present before evolving into the future.

In the aftermath of Watergate affair and is political fallout, U.S. foreign policy was dominated by the figure of Zbigniew Brzezinsky (1928-2017) and his anti-Communist fervour and blatant Russophobia. An ideological circumstance that was to lead to the emergence of political Islam and Islamist terrorism worldwide. As Brzezinski had mobilized Islam as a weapon against global Communism in the seventies (and eighties), and the resultant blowback set the stage for the American-led Global War-on-Terror as a veiled 'Crusade against Islam,' spearheaded by George W. Bush and Barack Obama (2001-2017).

From War-on-Terror to New Cold War

In the wake of NATO secretary-general (1994-5) Willy Claes's February 1995 proclamation that "Islamic militancy has emerged as perhaps the single gravest threat to the NATO alliance and to Western security" and of course, "9/11," the Brzezinski template gave way to Bush, Jr.'s neoconservative doctrine of pre-emption and the global War-on-Terror. Far from being a resounding success, the Bush doctrine led to a new reality — a new reality that normalized living

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in a state of constant alarm while being under equally constant surveillance (i.e. the Patriot Act), on the one hand, and a very real Islamist extremist threat to the West (with Islamist terror attacks in such varied places like Madrid, London, Paris, Istanbul and Brussels), on the other. In the same breath, Bush and Obama's 'successful' fight against Usamah (spelled as Osama, by the American establishment) bin Laden (or OBL, in American parlance) and his shadowy terror group Al Qaeda was followed by the emergence of Caliph Ibrahim (aka Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi) and his Islamic State (or IS, formerly known as ISIS or ISIL).In this century, Brzezinski himself recognized the folly of the American-led Crusade against Islam, writing in 2007 that "[t]he 'war on terror' has created a culture of fear in America." Going on to lay out his Russophobic argument in full in the next instance – as Russia and not Islam arguably represents "the real challenges" faced by the U.S.

The Bush administration's elevation of these three words [i.e. War-on-Terror] into a national mantra since the horrific events of 9/11 has had a pernicious impact on American democracy, on America's psyche and on U.S. standing in the world. Using this phrase has actually undermined our ability to effectively confront the real challenges we face.

Summarizing, Brzezinski proclaimed that "[t]he culture of fear is like a genie that has been let out of its bottle. It acquires a life of its own." Rather than chasing a chimera, a stateless terror phantom, the West's real enemy remains at large. He even ends his piece with the following query and call to reason.

Where is the U.S. leader ready to say, "Enough of this hysteria, stop this paranoia"? Even in the face of future terrorist attacks, the likelihood of which cannot be denied, let us show some sense. Let us be true to our traditions.

As it turns out, Zbig lived long enough to see his words come to life under another Democrat POTUS. Bush's successor and the current POTUS' indirect predecessor, Barack Obama (2009-17). Though, at first Obama set out to continue his predecessor's "not-so veiled campaign against 'Islamic militancy' euphemistically called the War on Terror-renamed-the Overseas Contingency Operation," as I have written elsewhere. And in some ways, Obama was able to complete Bush's mission: 'Osama bin Laden [was] killed in Abbottabad, Pakistan, in a raid led by US Navy SEALs. President Obama receive[d] live updates in the White House Situation Room." The auspicious assassination is said to have taken place on 2 May 2011, which enabled President Obama to steer U.S. foreign policy into more traditional waters.

In this way, proxy-wars, a staple Cold War tactic, returned to the global news cycles. Arguably, this return was ushered in by the so-called 'Arab Spring,' which in itself had been a product of the Bush administration's groundwork behind the scenes as I have explained in some detail about two years ago now ('The Bush Plan to grow Democracy around the world'). These supposed 'popular uprisings' directly led to a series of western-backed popular uprisings, proxy conflicts and regime change operations, most notably the armed the conflict in Libya. In 2014, I wrote down the following lines laying out my claim:

[T]he Libyan intervention was the conflict that transformed the War-on-Terror renamed Overseas Contingency Operations [under Obama's watch] into the New Cold War, a contest between the US (and its NATO allies) and the new emerging power-houses of the 21st century, Russia and China (even though the latter appears to keep its distance).

From Libya, the New Cold War moved to other proxy-theatres, first to Syria and then into the Ukraine. Today, the two latter proxy-conflicts continue with the former seemingly winding down and the latter on full throttle ever since President Putin launched his "special military operation."

Ukraine on the oddly shaped Eurasian chessboard



THE UKRAINE CRISIS IN CONTEXT: BRZEZINSKI'S GRAND CHESSBOARD IN THE 21ST CENTURY

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INTERVIEW: BASIL VALENTINE - 'WOKE BEER, TRANS MANIA'

Basil Valentine, Bill Gates, Featured, LGBT, Patrick Henningsen, queer, queer ideology, sociengineering, transgender, woke Following his heyday as National Security Advisor and the end of the Cold War, Brzezinski was still thinking of ways to keep Russia down. As masterfully illustrated by Dr Glenn Diesen in his 2022 book *Russophobia*, this hatred of all things Russian should not be understood as a trait peculiar to Zbig alone. Instead as put by Diesen, "[t]he West and Russia have [long] been juxtaposed as Western versus Eastern, European versus Asiatic, civilized versus barbaric, modern versus backward, liberal versus autocratic," and even, as "good versus evil." And in that context, the Ukraine emerged as a major factor. In his 1994 book *The Premature Partnership*, Zbig proposed a rather nice-sounding concept – "geopolitical pluralism." Rather than envisioning a rapprochement between the U.S. and Russia, turns out his main concern was to do with strategies to transform the defeated Soviet Union into a weak and humbled Russia:

[T]he main goal of a realistic and longterm big strategy should be the affirmation of geopolitical pluralism within the former Soviet Union ... The assertion of geopolitical pluralism would prevent the temptation to re-build the empire, with its pernicious consequences for the prospects of democracy in Russia. In not being an empire, Russia stands a chance of becoming, like France and Britain or earlier post-Ottoman Turkey, a normal state.

In his programmatic book, The Grand Chessboard (1997) - a work that outlines his vision of a world dominated by the United States as the sole remaining superpower - Brzezinski's apparent hatred of Russia leads him to posit that the Ukraine is nothing but a "geopolitical pivot," and it is an important pivot "because its very existence as an independent country helps to transform Russia. Without Ukraine, Russia ceases to be a Eurasian empire." And it is therefore no coincidence that Washington has been pouring billions of U.S. Dollars into the country since its independence in 1991, as Victoria Nuland boastfully told the world in 2013 (as recounted last August). In line with Brzezinsky's thinking, the U.S. sought to employ the Ukraine as a weapons against Russia. In fact, this resolve all but predated Obama's revival of the Cold War ethic in 2014. In fact, the U.S. and its Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) have been hard at work attempting to destabilize Russia (or the USSR, at the time) via the Ukraine ever since the end of World War II (1944-45). Declassified CIA documents detail how the United States played an important part in the development of 'Ukrainian Nationalism,' as a way to subvert the USSR from within. This started way back in April 1946, with Operation Belladonna, as revealed in a declassified document (dated 27 December 1946). The document clearly states that "the Ukrainians considered themselves not agents but collaborators of the Americans," hinting at the extreme nationalist ideas espoused by Ukrainian opponents of the Soviet regime. Between 1949 and 1970, the CIA carried out Project AERODYNAMIC (formerly CARTEL, ANDROGEN, AECARTHAGE). This Ukrainian project was subsequently reclassified under the project named QRDYNAMIC in 1970 which later morphed into PDDYNAMIC (1974). And finally, became QRDYNAMIC/QRPLUMB, which operated until Ukraine's independence in 1991. These operations all had the "underlying objective [of] 'Nationalist flare-ups' in widely scattered areas of the Soviet Union, particularly in Ukraine."

In 2013, Victoria Nuland made sure we now all know what happened next: The U.S. spent "over \$5 billion [s]ince Ukraine's independence in 1991."

A Second Chance: A New Cold War following the End of History

With hindsight, it seems easy to understand why President Obama actively re-directed U.S. foreign policy into the direction of a New Cold War. Though the unfunny comic that is Bill Maher likes to insinuate that Obama is but an atheist-in-disguise and 'many Conservative and Tea Party Obama opponents [also] cast[ed] doubt upon the U.S. President's religious and political affiliation, referring to him variously as a Nazi-Socialist-Communist-Muslim, his grounding in the Christian faith remains beyond doubt.' And as a Christian believer, Obama appear 'much attached to the work of the American Protestant exponent of "Christian realism," Reinhold Niebuhr' (1892-1971) – a figure whose words carried a lot weight during the Cold War, when Christian America was fighting godless Communist Russia. As I have explained many years ago in a now-no-longer extant newspaper:

Back in April 2007, then-Candidate Obama told the New York Times columnist David Brooks: "I take away [from Niebuhr's work] the compelling idea that there's serious evil in the world, and hardship and pain. And we should be



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INTERVIEW: FREDDIE PONTON – 'MACRON'S PIVOT TO CHINA'

humble and modest in our belief we can eliminate those things. But we shouldn't use that as an excuse for cynicism and inaction. I take away . . . the sense we have to make these efforts knowing they are hard, and not swinging from naïve idealism to bitter realism."

Obama's religious convictions, in conjunction with Zbig's rampant Russophobia, could not but lead him to reignite the Cold War. In fact, candidate Obama met Brzezinski in 2007. At the time, the former had apparently just read the latter's most recent tome - Second Chance: Three Presidents and the Crisis of American Superpower. The latter approved of the former, even telling journalist Ryan Lizza both agreed "that George Bush [had] put the United States on a suicidal course." That meeting would prove to be consequential, as "[t]hey began to speak and exchange e-mails about policy" subsequently. And later on, during a campaign event in Pennsylvania, Obama made the following prescient if not ominous statement: "The truth is that my foreign policy is actually a return to the traditional bipartisan realistic policy of George Bush's father, of John F. Kennedy, of, in some way, Ronald Reagan." In this way, President Obama led U.S. foreign policy back into established territories: the U.S. could now once again dedicate itself to fighting "serious evil in the world." In the post-World-War reality, there had been but one "evil empire," namely Russia variously referred to as as the Soviet Union. The rivalry between Capitalist America and Communist Russia had become a Manichaean reality in the post-war world order. In fact, the existence of Communist Russia had provided the U.S. with a veritable raison d'être - the godless Communist had been transformed into America's ultimate bogeyman, the reason why the Military-Industrial Complex was able to keep the wheels of industry turning in the pursuit of bigger and better weapons and weapons' systems.

Following the demise of Soviet Communism, the U.S. engineered Russia's transition to a Capitalist system, with all the disastrous consequences this entailed: namely neo-liberalizing Russia, as chronicled by the Canadian author, social activist, and filmmaker Naomi Klein in her magisterial 2007 blockbuster The Shock Doctrine. In 1991, Boris Yeltsin was the current president of Russia, having abandoned the Communist party he had come to power running as an independent - previously he had been a Politburo member and secretary of the Moscow City Committee. In December 1991, "Yeltsin met with the leaders of Ukraine and Belarus to dissolve the USSR, the Soviet economy had been in free-fall for years, with massive inflation, shortages that required ration cards, huge deficits, and dwindling reserves," as related by the U.S. apologist and neocon hawk Dr Michael McFaul, who was U.S. Ambassador to Russia, 2012-2014, and is now known as a "propagandist king of disinformation" on Twitter. In the next instance, Yeltsin turned to "Jeffrey Sachs . . . for advice and funding. Sachs promised that, in exchange for Russia's pledge to undergo whatever economic shock therapy the world market prescribed, he could get them somewhere in the neighborhood of \$15 billion in aid." Klein then adds, "that promised money never arrived." As a result, Yeltsin's popularity could not but wane - "polling in the single digits," was the the phrase used in 1995 - which led him to approach U.S. President Bill Clinton for help. And famously, this led to outright election interference on the part of the U.S. in 1996 - another example of the U.S. trying to keep Russia down, even to the extent that Washington installed a 'friendly' ruler in the Kremlin. Alas, such cozy arrangements couldn't really last forever. Right before the new millennium, being "increasingly unpopular and suffering from ill health," on New Year's Eve 1999, Yeltsin resigned and "named Vladimir Putin acting president," as recounted by the historian Dr Frank Beyersdorf.

Vladimir Vladimirovich Putin was cut from a different cloth; though, in the beginning this was not all that apparent: in the year 2000, President Putin "was actively calling for Russian membership in NATO; in 2001, attempting to become the United States' most important ally," recalls the one-time director of the Carnegie Moscow Center (1994-2022), Dmitri Trenin, writing in 2019:

[Putin back then even suggested] building a Greater Europe that would stretch from Lisbon to Vladivostok, Putin not only gave a speech in the Bundestag in German in which he proclaimed Russia's European choice, but emphatically encouraged the exchange of capital assets for the creation of a common economic space.

But, rather than heralding a new era of mutual happiness and prosperity, as expressed by Dr Hiski Haukkala, the "development of relations between the European Union and Russia has taken place

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ORBAN: UKRAINE IS A 'FINANCIALI NON-EXISTENT COUNTRY'

EU, Europe, Featured, Hungary, NATO, Russia, Ukraine, Zelensky

in fits and starts and has experienced several ups and downs." A circumstance, which convinced Putin to primarily concentrate on the Russian Federation's internal affairs, again turning to Dr Haukkala:

Domestically the first years of Putin's reign witnessed the return of economic growth and political stability in the country. Propelled by rising oil and other commodity prices as well as the positive effects of the 1998 rouble devaluation and the existence of spare industrial capacity, Russia logged on average 7% annual growth between 2000 and 2007.

Still, in the end, Vladimir Putin seems to have abandoned his dreams of a "Greater Europe," in favour of a "Greater Eurasia," in the second half of the 2010s. Haukkala reasons that the cooldown was arguably due to Bill Clinton's air war against Serbia (24 March-6 April 1999) in order to 'protect' Kosovo Albanians from Slobodan Milošević's designs – "the first conflict in which the US-led western military alliance intervened in the internal affairs of a sovereign state." As if to prove Putin's reservations, the U.S. set up Camp Bondsteel – characterized as a "smaller version of Guantánamo" by the then-Council of Europe's human rights envoy, Thomas Hammarberg (2006-12). Still, the U.S. and NATO publicly called this bombing campaign against Serbia a "humanitarian intervention, which could also be described as the beggining of the liberal internationaist "Responsibility to Protect" (R2P) doctine which became more formalized under the Obama presidency.

In the next instance, relations between Russia and the West (meaning the U.S. and its NATO cohorts) could not but deteriorate. The Carnegie Endowment's Senior Fellows, Eugene Rumer and Richard Sokolsky insightfully explain the breakdown:

U.S. policy toward Russia since the end of the Cold War is a story of different administrations pursuing essentially the same set of policies. Two aspects stand out as major irritants in the bilateral relationship: a refusal to accept Russia as it is . . . and the extension of the Euro-Atlantic security architecture into the Eurasian space surrounding Russia.

Rumer and Sokolsky appear to say that Washington either wanted to effect regime change in Russia, or alternatively, failing that – to keep on expanding NATO eastwards to test Russian patience and rekindle the Cold War. Still, by the time that President Obama occupied the White House, then-U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton went through the motions of engaging Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov in a charade meant to symbolize improved ties between Washington and Moscow (6 March 2009): they both pushed a red "reset button." But, *Reuters* relates that the "gift drew smiles as the word 'reset; was mistranslated into the Russian for "overcharge." Obama's subsequent actions in Libya, Syria and the Ukraine could lead some to wonder whether this had really been a mistranslation. America's first black president successfully initiated the New Cold War in those just-mentioned proxy-theatres . . . The Russian oppositional political scientist and historian Valery Solovei explains Washington's rationale concisely and precisely.

Putin's mission is to return to the past. He wants to avenge what he calls 'the greatest geopolitical catastrophe of the 20th Century', the fall of the USSR. He and his entourage, former KGB officers, believe the destruction of the Soviet Union was the work of Western intelligence services.

The Russophobia present in the U.S. (and the wider West) was crystalized into the figure of Vladimir Putin as the new bogeyman to replace OBL. The historian and journalist David Talbot, in the Foreword to Dan Kovalik 2017 book *The Plot to Scapegoat Russia*, put it nicely and I quote: "the US war machine – the vast complex of weapons manufacturers, Wall Street speculators, saber-rattling Washington politicians, armchair generals, and the media industry . . . has revived

the tried and true Red Scare." An irrational fear that could also be called Russophobia, plain and simple.

Ukraine as today's Afghanistan:

As explained earlier, the U.S. "war machine" has been employing the Ukraine as a potential weapons against Russia for nearly 80 years now. Now, though, the big difference is that Russia is employing its own military apparatus to thwart the nefarious designs pursued by the U.S. and its NATO vassals by means of its "special military operation" launched on 24 February 2022, as related by the in the West much-maligned RT:

Russia sent troops into Ukraine on February 24, citing Kiev's failure to implement the Minsk agreements, designed to give the regions of Donetsk and Lugansk special status within the Ukrainian state. For his part President Putin made a public announcement that was only met with derision and unbelief in the West: With this approach [meaning, initiating the "special military operation"], we could avoid crises such as the current one in Donbass that is happening to protect its residents from genocide — and there can be no other definition for the Kiev regime's actions than "a crime against humanity."

Though critical and less critical opinion in the West all but dismissed these Russian claims, it remains a fact that the Kiev regime did not abide by the Minsk agreements and its relentless bombardment campaigns that started in 2014. Kiev's actions might very well warrant the Russian President's harsh condemnation. His use of the noun genocide seems warranted and recalls Israel's "incremental genocide" (as coined by the Israeli historian Ilan Pappe) of the Palestinian population by means of repeated bombing campaigns of the Gaza strip and the implementation of ethnic cleansing in the Occupied Territories (known as the state of Israel). In this context, Germany erstwhile Chancellor, the one-and-only Angela Merkel (2005-21), recently made a rather earth-shattering confession while talking to the Zeit's Tina Hildebrandt and Giovanni di Lorenzo: "The 2014 Minsk agreement was an attempt to give time to Ukraine. It also used this time to become stronger as can be seen today. The Ukraine of 2014-2015 is not the modern Ukraine."

As such, it is my opinion that Merkel's confession may be as explosive as Zbig's words spoken to the French journalist Vincent Jauvert — words published in *Le Nouvel Observateur* (Jan. 15-21, 1998). As a result, I shall here reproduce the lines replacing Afghanistan with Ukraine, while also changing the dates:

According to the official version of history, CIA aid to the [Kiev government] began during [2022], that is to say, after the [Russian] army invaded [Ukraine] . . . But the reality, secretly guarded until now, is completely otherwise. Indeed, it was [December 1, 1991,] that President [George H. W. Bush] signed the first directive for secret aid to the opponents of the pro-[Russian] regime in [Kiev].

Poetic license aside, an impartial observer of history can detect that the altered Brzezinki quote seems eerily close to reality on the ground in the first decades of the 21st century. In fact, in the same interview Brzezinski made another eerily applicable line (again *mutatis mutandis*): "[A]nd that very day I wrote a note to the president in which I explained to him that in my opinion this aid was going to induce a [Russian] military intervention."

This time, though, the Russians, strategically guided by President Putin, seem to have consciously stepped into the trap, given that the lives of the people of the Donbass were at stake – after all Vladimir Putin did use the word "genocide" in this context. In view of the fact that the people in the West had been deliberately kept in the dark about the daily atrocities occurring in the eastern part of the Ukraine, public opinion immediately started referring to the "special military operation" as an 'unprovoked and unjustified military aggression,' on the part of the evil and brutal Russians. The media have been relentlessly feeding the beast of Russophobia with horror story after horror story about unspeakable atrocities carried out by the Russians. In this respect, the German think tanker arguably takes the biscuit with her unhinged remarks. As a guest on one of German television's

many and highly influential talk shows she came flat out and said this on the broadcaster ZDF: "They look like us Europeans but they are not like us Europeans. In a cultural sense they have a different relationship to violence, a different relationship to death . . . [for Russians] life can end quickly in death." On social media, she clarified her Russophobic views in tweet (in English): "A few of you have taken issue with me saying Russians may look European they're not European. Let me explain. 77% of Russia is in Asia, not Europe. Some people don't seem to know that."

The law of unintended consequences: De-Dollarization and the Fall of the American Empire

An Associate Editor at the Indian news website *TFIGlobal*, Ansh Pandey concisely describes the stupendous amounts of money spent (or should I say, wasted) by Washington:

The United States has generously committed to providing \$34 billion in security assistance to bolster Ukraine's territorial integrity, safeguard its borders, and enhance its interoperability with NATO, starting from Russia's initial invasion of Ukraine in 2014 through February 27, 2023. Surprisingly, since the war in 2022 began, the Biden Administration has already committed over a trillion in security and military assistance. The USA is singlehandedly the largest contributor to the Ukraine war.

The Biden administration is boldly continuing Barack Obama's good work - continuing the New Cold War and pouring seemingly countless dollars into a Ukrainian hole - "[s]ince 2014, the United States has provided more than \$37.8 billion in security assistance for training and equipment to help Ukraine preserve its territorial integrity, secure its borders, and improve interoperability with NATO," informs the *State Department. But rather than making the U.S. appear strong and decisive on the world stage, the enormous amounts of money all but highlight America's precarious domestic situations, with inflation continuously fluctuating - "[m]onthly consumer price index shows US prices increased at a lower rate in March, though core inflation remains steady," reports Lauren Aratani. This ongoing "core inflation" all but undermines confidence in the global reserve currency that still is the U.S. Dollar. Still, a process of de-Dollarization has now gotten underway, with China and Russia leading the way, closely followed by Iran but also Saudi Arabia, India and Brazil ("Brazil and Argentina have discussed the creation of a common currency for the two largest economies in South America"). The finance reporter Bruno Venditti even writes that in "a conference in Singapore in January [2023], multiple former Southeast Asian officials spoke about de-dollarization efforts underway." Very recently, even France's Macron, following a trip to China, has come out saying that Europeans nations should decrease their reliance on he "extraterritoriality of the U.S. dollar." As the ever-eloquent Pepe Escobar tweeted, more and more countries seem to be eager to "HOP ON THE DE-DOLLARIZATION TRAIN."

In other words, the Biden's administration's brazen insistence on continuing the New Cold War on the battlefields of the proxy-war that is now taking place on Europe's far-eastern flank seems to have led to rather unexpected outcomes. Voices saying that the end of the American Empire is now at hand have now become louder. Brzezinski's strategy brought about the end of the Soviet Union . . . will the same strategy now also lead to the demise of the current world order, a world dominated by Washington, (and its soft-power weapons like) Hollywood and Coca-Cola that has been in place since the end of World War II and the Bretton Woods Agreement??!? Has the Ukrainian trap now also snared the U.S. is the question that emerges. Has President Biden "put the United States on a suicidal course"?!?

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Gazette. Subsequently, he commenced writing for RT Op-Edge, NEO, and finally, the 21st Century Wire. You can find him on Twitter at @TheErimtanAngle. Read Can's archive here.

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