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Do Ukrainian biolabs violate the ban on biological weapons programs?

An explanation must be offered for what was really going on in Ukrainian laboratories working with highly dangerous pathogens

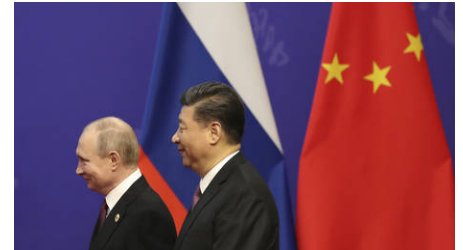


Scott Ritter is a former US Marine Corps intelligence officer and author of 'SCORPION KING: America's Suicidal Embrace of Nuclear Weapons from FDR to Trump.' He served in the Soviet Union as an inspector implementing the INF Treaty, in General Schwarzkopf's staff during the Gulf War, and from 1991-1998 as a UN weapons inspector.

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Unless either Ukraine or the US can prove otherwise, the available evidence points to Kiev operating biological laboratories which may have violated the Biological and Toxins Weapons Convention.

Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs Victoria Nuland appeared before the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations on March 8, [testifying](#) on the US and international response to Russia's attack on Ukraine. After delivering her opening remarks, the veteran US diplomat took questions from the committee members. One question, asked by Senator Marco Rubio, a Republican from the state of Florida, stood out. *"Does Ukraine have chemical or biological weapons?"* he asked.

Nuland [answered the question](#) very deliberately. *"Ukraine has biological research facilities which, in fact, we're now quite concerned Russian troops, Russian forces may be seeking to gain control of, so we are working with the Ukrainians on how we can prevent any of those research materials from falling into the hands of Russian forces should they approach,"* she said.

Of note was the fact that none of this was mentioned in the entirety of her opening speech. The purpose of Rubio's question wasn't to pin Nuland into a corner, but rather set up the follow-on question, **Read more:** Moscow calls for strengthening bioweapons treaty very discomfoting issue into a propaganda opportunity for the US government.

"I'm sure you're aware," Rubio said, *"that the Russian propaganda groups are already putting out there all kinds*

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of information about how they have uncovered a plot by the Ukrainians to unleash biological weapons in the country, and with NATO's coordination." The senator paused before asking his question. "If there is a biological or chemical weapon incident or attack inside Ukraine, is there any doubt in your mind that 100% it would be the Russians behind it?"

Nuland answered this question with more authority: *"There is no doubt in my mind, Senator. And, in fact, it is a classic Russian technique to blame the other guy for what they are planning to do themselves."*

Rubio was right about one thing – the Russians were having a field day about the *"biological research facilities"* Nuland was so reticent about discussing. Maria Zakharova, the spokesperson for the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, **announced** that *"We [Russia] confirm that, during the special military operation in Ukraine, the Kiev regime was found to have been concealing traces of a military biological program implemented with funding from the United States Department of Defense."*

According to Zakharova, the Ukrainian Ministry of Health, on February 24 – the first day of the Russian offensive – had ordered all the Ukrainian biological laboratories to *"urgently"* eradicate the stored reserves of *"highly hazardous pathogens of plague, anthrax, rabbit fever, cholera and other lethal diseases."* She said the documentation on the *"urgent eradication"* of the pathogens was *"received from employees of Ukrainian laboratories."*

While noting that more work was being done by the Russian Ministry of Defense to fully assess the documents in question, Zakharova said Russia was able to conclude *"that components of biological weapons were being developed in Ukrainian laboratories in direct proximity to Russian territory."*

"The urgent eradication of highly hazardous pathogens on February 24 was ordered to prevent exposing a violation of Article I of the Biological and Toxin Weapons

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Convention (BTWC) by Ukraine and the United States,” she added.

Article I of the BTWC

states that *“Each State Party to this Convention undertakes never in any circumstances to develop, produce, stockpile, or otherwise acquire or retain:*

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1. *microbial or other biological agents, or toxins whatever*

their origin or method of production, of types and in quantities that have no justification for prophylactic, protective or other peaceful purposes;

2. *weapons, equipment or means of delivery designed to use such agents or toxins for hostile purposes or in armed conflict.”*

Earlier, the US Embassy in Kiev [published information](#) relating to what it described as a *“Biological Threat Reduction Program,”* a collaboration between the US Department of Defense and the Ukrainian government. According to this data, *“The [biological threat reduction] program accomplishes its bio-threat reduction mission through development of a bio-risk management culture; international research partnerships; and partner capacity for enhanced bio-security, bio-safety, and bio-surveillance measures.”* According to the US Embassy, *“the Biological Threat Reduction Program’s priorities in Ukraine are to consolidate and secure pathogens and toxins of security concern and to continue to ensure Ukraine can detect and report outbreaks caused by dangerous pathogens before they pose security or stability threats.”*

This all sounds innocuous enough and, if true, seems to meet the criterion set forth in Article 1 of the BTWC regarding *“prophylactic, protective or other peaceful purposes.”*

There is suspicion, however, that the Defense Threat Reduction Agency-led biological programs may have a more nefarious purpose. The Bulgarian investigative journalist, Dilyana Gaytandzhieva, has conducted extensive research into this issue. *“The US Army regularly produces deadly viruses, bacteria and toxins in direct violation of the UN Convention on the prohibition of Biological Weapons. Hundreds of thousands of unwitting people are systematically exposed to dangerous pathogens and other incurable diseases. Bio-warfare scientists using diplomatic cover test man-made viruses at Pentagon bio laboratories in 25 countries across the world,”* she [claimed](#).

Gaytandzhieva’s work has been dismissed by the US as ‘pro-Russian propaganda.’ But the inescapable fact is that the US does not have a clean record when it comes to compliance with the BTWC. So-called *“bio-defense”* has been used by the US to circumvent, if not outright violate, the provisions of the BTWC in the past. The most flagrant example of this was the [CIA-led “Project Clear Vision,”](#) which from 1997 until 2000 sought to reverse-engineer and subsequently test a Soviet-era *“bomblet”* designed to disperse biological agents, including anthrax. There was a debate within the Clinton administration as to whether *“Clear Vision”* violated the BTWC, which led to the program being halted in 2000.

There is no need to worry about any such malfeasance at the biolabs in Ukraine, however, the director of the Cooperative Threat Reduction Program, Robert Pope, [recently told reporters](#). *“What we have today... are small amounts of various pathogens that by and large are*

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things that are collected out of their environment that they need for research to be able to legitimately surveil disease and develop vaccines against.”

According to Pope, the Ukrainians had *“more pathogens in more places than we recommend,”* adding that his organization had been helping Ukrainian researchers organize their frozen pathogen collections with an eye on preserving genetic information via sequencing before destroying the live samples. *“All of that, obviously, has been derailed here with the recent events,”* he said.

Pope’s biggest concern was that if these biolabs lost electrical power for any extended time, then the frozen samples would thaw out. *“If the ventilation system is damaged, or the building itself is damaged, and these now ambient-temperature pathogens are able to escape the facility, then they can be potentially infectious in the region around the facility,”* he said.

He expressed hope that the facilities would not be deliberately attacked. *“I think the Russians know enough about the kinds of pathogens that are stored in biological research laboratories that I don’t think they would deliberately target a laboratory. But what I do have concerns about is that they would... be accidentally damaged during this Russian invasion.”*

While Pope had been painting a relatively benign picture of the types of pathogens stored at the facilities he supervised, he left a clue about the potential for something far more worrisome. While noting that many of the biolabs in Ukraine were of new construction, *“others date back to the Soviet-era and the country’s bioweapons program.”* Some of these older laboratories, Pope said, could hold pathogen strains dating back to the Soviet biowarfare programs. *“Scientists being scientists, it wouldn’t surprise me if some of these strain collections in some of these laboratories still have pathogen strains that go all the way back to the origins of that program.”*

If this is the case, then the Ukrainian labs could very well be the repository of [Anthrax 836](#), an extremely deadly

strain of that disease specifically developed to be delivered in warheads mounted on SS-18 intercontinental ballistic missiles [operating from Ukraine](#).

This, it would seem, would put the labs in direct violation of the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention, which prohibits the acquisition or retention of pathogens *“that have no justification for prophylactic, protective or other peaceful purposes.”*

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Anthrax 836, and other similar Soviet-era biological weapons, no longer exist. As such, there is no need to conduct research designed to defend from any potential exposure to such agents. The only possible explanation for retention of Soviet-era biological warfare pathogens would be to keep them for some future biological warfare program, or as a source for covert operations seeking to falsely link a target nation, such as Russia, to illegal activity.

If Marco Rubio had been doing his job, instead of promoting anti-Russian propaganda, he could have – indeed, should have – held Victoria Nuland’s feet to the fire regarding what was really going on at the biological labs in Ukraine. There might be an innocuous answer out there. But until it is provided, it appears that Russia did in Ukraine what the US was unable to in Iraq – launched an attack on a nation which was in possession of prohibited biological weapons.

The statements, views and opinions expressed in this column are solely those of the author and do not necessarily represent those of RT.

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Ukrainian Corruption, Our Crooked Politicians, And The Jewish Agenda

(Correction: its the VATICAN Agenda)

Posted on [March 7, 2022](#) by [State of the Nation](#)

Like



by Patrick McShay

“We are not only fighting for Ukraine, we are fighting for the *New World Order*“.

— Kira Rudik, Ukrainian Member of Parliament

“Russia should go into Ukraine to remove the criminals there whose money laundering operations keep the fake Joe Biden regime afloat, Russia should also go into France and remove the Rothschild puppet Macron too. My understanding is that MI6 and Pentagon brass would not interfere with such a move because it is necessary for planetary liberation.”

— Benjamin Fulford, Journalist

“If I put on glasses and look at myself like the whole rest of the world, I see myself as a puppet master, as the master of Zelensky, someone making apocalyptic plans. I can start making this real.”

— Ihor Kolomoyskyi, Ukrainian Oligarch

It's been surreal but not surprising to see the American media become cheerleaders for a Ukraine war against Russia, since they announced their intention to "De-Nazify" Ukraine. It's times like these that I'm glad that when the government told me that radical Muslims hijacked airplanes and flew them into buildings on 9/11, I dug a little deeper and found out that was a big lie. Or when the media reported in 2014 that the Russians invaded Ukraine, boldly annexed Crimea, because Putin is an evil dictator, had too much influence in Ukraine, and wants to take back territory lost when the Soviet Union was dissolved. But I dug a little deeper and found that that wasn't true either. Today I heard a Fox anchor weigh in on Putin's mental stability without once mentioning our dementia ridden Commander in Chief, his former boss Barack Obama, and our mendacious media are responsible for what is taking place in Ukraine today, and a whole slew of US politicians have lot to hide there.

Everything we see in the news about Ukraine today is based on lies we were told in 2014 about Russia invading Ukraine, and forcibly annexing Crimea. Jennifer Griffin claimed on Fox News that former Ukrainian President Yanukovich was installed by Putin. This, of course, is a lie. Yanukovich was supported by the "Ukrainian Party of Regions" and the "Youth party of Ukraine, won a run-off election against Prime Minister Yulia Tymoshenko, and was sworn in February 2010. Why did Fox's Sandra Smith allow this disinformation to go unchallenged, is she that ignorant of the facts? Jennifer Griffin should be fired!

Two French television network Anchors interviewed a Ukrainian woman and were shocked when she told them that the root of this war started in 2014. She said "wages are low and millions of Ukrainians are living in terrible conditions, while heating bills are 50% higher than last year. She went on to say, "why should we support this puppet president, and this puppet government?" She also said, the economy is tanking and corruption is everywhere, and she doesn't believe Zelensky was fairly elected. She also said that 4 news channels opposed to Zelensky have been banned and reporters opposed to Zelensky have been murdered! This is what is presented by the American media as a thriving democracy?

See the interview here: <https://www.bitchute.com/video/WRHmssmDE8FX/>

Jesse Waters just had former Army general, traitor in Trump admin and ex-employee of George Soros — H.R. McMaster — on his show to ask him his opinion of the Ukraine invasion. Really? George Soros was proven through Wikileaks to be giving the Obama administration directives, was likely the main influence behind the Maidan protests, and has been operating in Ukraine for decades along with other Jewish oligarchs like Ihor Kolomoyski who has said that Zelensky is his puppet, and who hates Putin. The clueless Waters is now calling for air support and sending A-10 US Warthog bombers to Ukraine to bomb the 40 mile long Russian convoy heading for Kiev, while Lindsey Graham is calling for Putin to be assassinated. I've always said the biggest problem with Fox newsreaders is that they get their information from Fox News!

The truth is, Yanukovich was a little too pro-Russia to suit Obama and some of his EU pals, so Mr. Obama conspired with several EU countries and the State of Israel to foment a coup to take out Yanukovich when he refused to sign certain political and trade agreements. Obama sent his Jewish Undersecretary of State, Victoria Nuland to Ukraine, who later admitted that the Obama Administration spent \$5 billion to destabilize Ukraine before the Maidan protest began. The violent protests that followed were hardly a grassroots movement as mercenaries were brought in to join Ukrainian anti government groups like the Neo-Nazi groups, the Druzhina,

the Svoboda Battalion, and the Azov Battalion financed by Kolomoyskyi (8) to ensure that Yanukovich was killed or driven from the country. He eventually fled to Russia and today is in Minsk awaiting, perhaps to take his old position as President.

Nuland was famously recorded saying, "Fuck the EU" while talking with the US's Jewish Ambassador to Ukraine, Geoffrey Pyatt, when he told her that the EU would want some input in choosing Ukraine's next president. When Jewish billionaires force the duly elected President to flee his country or be murdered, and then hand picks a Jewish puppet to be the new president, that is not democracy!

These politicians and pundits saying that support for Ukraine is support for freedom and democracy are clueless or are benefitting in some way, it's ludicrous! These are the same people that convinced over half of the American population to get an experimental and dangerous vaccine that we now know is DNA changing gene therapy, and put masks on their children in school. The truth is, if Ukraine is liberated from these criminals currently in charge, we might learn just how dirty some of these US politicians really are.

Victoria Nuland's husband is Jewish Neo-Con Robert Kagan, who co-founded the "Project For A New American Century" and wrote the white paper titled, "A Clean Break" for Bibi Netanyahu in 1996. It called for Israeli full spectrum dominance of the Middle East and became a hallmark of George W. Bush's foreign policy and a blueprint for his disastrous nation building in the region.

The so-called invasion of the Donbass region and Crimea as presented by the US media is another big lie. After the Maidan protests in Kiev, the Ukrainian Army began shelling the Russian speaking Donbass Region which has continued intermittently since, a violation of the Minsk agreement signed in 2015. That agreement should have ended the fighting in east Ukraine and given autonomy to the Russian speaking area of the Donbass region, but since the agreement was signed, the Ukrainian Government as refused to abide by the agreement.

In another agreement made in 1992, after the dissolution of the Soviet Union, the US gave Russia assurances that no NATO bases would be built on their borders. The last US Ambassador to the Soviet Union, Jack Matlock, who has repeatedly maintained, including in Congressional testimony on the subject, that Gorbachev had received assurances that if Germany was united and stayed in NATO, the borders of NATO would not move further east. That did not last long.

In 1990 George H. W. Bush's Secretary of State James Baker promised Russian President Gorbachev that after the reunification of Germany that "NATO would not expand one inch eastward", and German diplomat Jurgen Chrobog said at the same meeting that "NATO would not expand beyond the Elbe River and therefore not offer membership to Poland or others".

In 2007, at the Munich Security Conference, Putin accused NATO of duplicity and threatening Russia, and said "NATO expansion represents a serious provocation and reduces the level of mutual trust." Joe Biden and his puppet Zelensky have repeatedly violated the Minsk agreement resulting in 14,000 deaths and over 1.2 million refugees that have been forced to abandon their homes and flee to Russia. Where is the American media on this key issue of importance to this narrative?

In 2008, when George W. Bush announced that Ukraine and Georgia were eligible for NATO membership, former Congressman Ron Paul said he knew it was a "Terrible idea", "providing US Military guarantees to Ukraine and

Georgia can only further strain our military. This NATO expansion may well involve the US Military in conflicts unrelated to our national interests.” Dr. Paul was right as usual, the reason they would never allow him to be President.

Like the Donbass Region, Crimea has always been considered Russian territory by it’s citizens. The Russian army didn’t invade Crimea, they have had troops and a naval base there for decades. After the coup that drove out their President, the Crimean Parliament met and agreed that they would hold a referendum and let the people decide to go with the new US led regime and the handpicked Jewish puppet President Petro Poroshenko or pledge their loyalty to Russia. Election monitors were brought in to ensure a fair election, and over 97% of Crimean’s chose to go with Russia. This was certainly no invasion. Eight years later and the US media is still calling it an invasion. What the US military did in Iraq was an invasion!

Investigative journalist George Webb has reported that the Ukrainians were given \$57 million in US aid that was deposited into Ihor Kolomoyskyi’s bank, Privat Bank, the country’s largest bank. Kolomoyskyi’s bank received \$5.6 billion in bailouts from the US government, why? He’s also been investigated for absconding with over \$5 billion, and is being investigated in Ukraine, and by the US government for money laundering and stealing nearly a half a billion of dollars from Privat Bank and buying up hundreds of million dollars in commercial and private properties in the US. Kolomoyskyi controls an energy, media, and real estate empire, is one of the richest man in Ukraine, whose network starred Zelensky in a hit comedy show about an average Joe who becomes president.

According to Webb, Zelensky owns a \$35 million mansion near Miami. Webb also says he has evidence that another Ukrainian Jewish billionaire, Victor Pinchuk has been depositing \$12 million a month into Zelensky’s account that has over a billion dollars in it. In case you don’t remember, Kolomoyskyi is a major shareholder in Burisma Oil Company, owned by another shady character and another Jewish oligarch named Mykola Zlochevsky, the company that paid Hunter Biden, his business partner Devon Archer, and former CIA asset Cofer Black tens of thousands of dollars a month each to sit on the board of Burisma. Devon Archer was just sentenced to prison last week for defrauding the Oglala Sioux Indian tribe in another criminal scam.

Short Video- <https://twitter.com/RealGeorgeWebb1/status/1498661515360153605>

A prosecutor in Ukraine who was investigating Kolomoyski told buzzfeed.com that he was fired because of his investigation. Sound familiar? Joe Biden’s FBI and Department of Justice are involved in the Kolomoyskyi investigation in the US so we can be certain that nothing will come from it. Ukraine is a hub for criminal activity and many of our politicians including The Biden Crime Family are making a fortune in dirty money there. This war is costing these pirates billions. Webb has also reported that Kolomoyskyi operates 11 bio-labs in Ukraine and Kazakhstan funded by the US Pentagon and believes Putin would target them.

See This- <https://www.infowars.com/posts/pentagon-funded-bio-weapons-labs-in-the-ukraine/>

In a recent press conference in Ukraine, prosecutors laid out an elaborate money laundering operation involving Mykola Zlochevsky, Privat Bank and the Biden Crime Family through Rosemont-Seneca, a company owned by Hunter Biden, Devon Archer and John Kerry’s step son Chris Heinz, that received monthly checks from Burisma in the amount of \$83,333.33. Prosecutors say they have documents and shocking video’s to support every accusation, including:

*Millions of dollars being stolen from the Ukrainian people and laundered with the help of corrupt banks, and their subsequent transfer to the accounts of companies controlled by the Biden Family.

*Recordings of conversations between former president Petro Poroshenko and then Vice President Joe Biden.

*Schemes related to the procurement of oil and gas that increased Ukrainians utilities 30%. The highest officials of Ukraine and the US were involved.

*The embezzlement of hundreds of thousands of dollars of technical assistance provided to Ukraine by the US, as well as deliberate sabotage of the prosecutor's office of Ukraine.

*Leaked documents show that millions of dollars flowed from Ukrainian gangsters into a slush fund owned and operated by John Kerry, Devon Archer, John Kerry Jr., Chris Heinz, and Hunter Biden.

Bombshell Video- <https://beforeitsnews.com/politics/2022/02/bombshell-ukraine-press-release-about-joe-biden-must-video-3256836.html>

All of this information was known by US authorities before the 2020 election and was covered up by the mainstream media. Crooked Attorney General Bill Barr knew and looked the other way. Barr also refused to look at the mountain of evidence of election fraud in the 2020 election that these same criminal politicians who looted Ukraine were behind. These are the same criminals who have destroyed our country for the last year, the same criminals that lied about this fraudulent pandemic and mandated these DNA changing bio-weapons they've passed off as vaccines, and they are the same criminals who are pushing Ukraine into a war with Russia, who continues to press the American government to abide by the agreements made by prior administrations. The sad fact is, most of our politicians are liars warmongers, criminals and globalists who would sell us out to Jewish Klaus Schwab's World Economic Forum and the New World Order's "Great Reset" for a bag of Silver.

For the lamebrains in the media that can't understand why Putin and the Russians have made this move, imagine if Russia spent billions of dollars to destabilize Mexico, armed several dissident groups, planned a revolution, forced their president to flee in a bloody coup, installed a puppet president who won't complain when they loot the treasury, and then start putting Russian military bases across the border from Texas and Arizona. That is what criminal US Politicians on both sides of the aisle have done in Ukraine thanks to Barack Obama, Joe Biden, Adam Schiff, John Kerry, John McCain, Lindsey Graham, Richard Burr, Nancy Pelosi and many others. Most of the "Gang of 8" in the Congress and Senate are completely compromised traitors, and should be arrested!

*It was just revealed that the Biden Administration secretly paid over a billion dollars to MSM to not cover the deadly effects of the mRNA poison vaccine program. These people have blood on their hands! Dr. Naomi Wolf says Dr. Fauci, Wallensky, and Collins and others could be charged with conspiracy to commit murder.

<https://citizenfreepress.com/breaking/naomi-wolf-fauci-wallensky-collins-this-could-be-conspiracy-for-murder/>

The Jews in the Congress and Senate, led by Adam Schiff and Jerry Nadler, impeached Trump because he demanded accountability in Ukraine and they stole an election leaving a trail of evidence a blind man could follow, and nothing is being done, while January 6 protestors have been held for over a year on misdemeanor charges. Americans are brainwashed by the liars in the media and our school systems and colleges are turning out dumbed down obedient proles that don't have a clue what real freedom looks like, with rampant censorship and banning books everywhere.

*See Peter Navarro's report on election fraud:

<https://www.thethinkingconservative.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/The-Navarro-Report-Vol-I-II-III-Feb-2-2021.pdf>,

The Biden Administration has pushed this war on Ukraine, and Zelensky has been calling for More weapons and air support, even taunting Biden over his perceived inaction, but this conflict is already all but over. The media has reported that fierce resistance has slowed the 40 mile Russian convoy of tanks and armored vehicles, but that is just more fake news from the liars in our media. This could have all been avoided, but Biden and his cronies were likely too busy lining their pockets to notice that Putin, who is Jewish as well, has either had it with broken promises from corrupt US Politicians or this is all just part of the globalists plan to march us further toward the "Great Reset and New World Order enslavement.

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Firm Pentagon 'no' to Polish plan to send jets to Ukraine

The Pentagon is rejecting a Polish plan to provide Ukraine with MiG fighter jets by transferring them through a U.S. base in Germany

By ROBERT BURNS and VANESSA GERA Associated Press
March 9, 2022, 7:33 PM • 6 min read



The Associated Press

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WASHINGTON -- The Pentagon on Wednesday slammed the door on a Polish proposal for providing [Ukraine](#) with MiG fighter jets, saying allied efforts against the Russian invasion should be focused on more useful weaponry and the MiG transfer with a U.S. and NATO connection would run a “high risk” of escalating the war.

By rebuffing the proposal involving the the Polish jets, the Pentagon appeared anxious to move beyond what had become an awkward disconnect with a NATO ally at a time when President [Joe Biden](#) has stressed the need for a unified and coordinated response to Russia's war.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy has pleaded repeatedly for the U.S. to provide his military with more aircraft — presented as an apparent alternative to establishing a “no-fly zone” over Ukraine to suppress Russian air power. The “no-fly” idea was rejected earlier by Washington and NATO as an unnecessary risk of escalation.

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Last week, Secretary of State Antony Blinken had said Washington was looking at a proposal under which Poland would supply Kyiv with the Soviet-era fighters, which Ukrainian pilots are trained to fly, and in turn receive American F-16s to make up for the loss.

But Poland wanted no part of that, concerned about involving itself too directly in conflict with Russia. Poland then said it was prepared to hand over all 28 of its MiG-29 planes — but to NATO by flying them to the U.S. air base in Ramstein, Germany, from where they would somehow be flown to Ukraine.

That was the arrangement the Pentagon turned aside.

Marek Magierowski, Poland's ambassador to the United States, indicated the Polish government had gotten the message.

"Our American partners rejected this proposal, because they have come to the conclusion that it was too escalatory," Magierowski told CNN. He said Poland understands and "this is what we need now to emphasize again -- the unity and cohesion of NATO. So, let's move on."

U.S. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi said that in a phone call, Zelenskyy on Wednesday again asked urgently for the United States to provide warplanes, anti-aircraft missiles and other weaponry.

However, Pentagon press secretary John Kirby told reporters that Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin discussed the MiG transfer proposal with his Polish counterpart and explained why Washington found it untenable.

Kirby said the Biden administration is talking with other countries about "alternative options" for supporting Ukraine's most pressing defense needs two weeks into its war, especially more ground-based weapons to counter Russian tanks and aircraft in what has been largely a ground war. Kirby said those could include surface-to-air missile batteries and shoulder-fired anti-aircraft missiles.

"Secretary Austin thanked the minister for Poland's willingness to continue to look for ways to assist Ukraine," Kirby said. "He stressed that we do not support the transfer of additional fighter aircraft to the Ukrainian air force at this time and therefore have no desire to see them in our custody, either."

U.S. Vice President Kamala Harris arrived in Warsaw Wednesday night for consultations, but the White House said she was not directly involved with the matter of the planes.

Kirby cited three main reasons Austin rejected the Polish offer, starting with the U.S. view that it would be wiser to provide Ukraine with weaponry that would more directly strengthen its defenses, including anti-armor and air defense systems. Kirby said the Russian air force, while much larger than Ukraine's, has not played a lead role in the Russian offensive and has been of limited effectiveness due to Ukraine's use of ground-based air defenses, which include Stinger missiles.

Kirby said Ukraine still has a significant number of its own aircraft, and the U.S. believes that adding aircraft from other nations "is not likely to significantly change the effectiveness of the Ukrainian air force relative to Russian capabilities."

Also, the U.S. intelligence community has assessed that transferring MiG fighters to Ukraine "may be mistaken as escalatory and could result in significant Russian reaction that might increase the prospects of a military escalation with NATO," Kirby said. Ukraine is not a NATO member, but some of its neighbors are, and the alliance is trying to avoid a spillover of the war.

While Kirby's statement appeared to bring an end to the Polish proposal, the appearance of a public disagreement among allies could have more lasting impact. Last week, the U.S. government threw Poland a hot potato with the request to send the Soviet-made fighter jets.

That plan took the U.S. off guard. By late Tuesday, the Pentagon called it "untenable." On Wednesday, Secretary of State Blinken said that ultimately each country would have to decide for itself how to help Ukraine.

Poland is a crucial ally in the Ukraine crisis. It is hosting thousands of American troops and is taking in more people fleeing the war in Ukraine than any other nation in the midst of the largest European refugee crisis in decades.

It has suffered invasions and occupations by Russia for centuries and still fears Russia despite being a member of NATO. It already had to contend with the Russian territory of Kaliningrad on its northeastern border and is uncomfortably aware of Russian troops across another border, with Belarus.


In a visit Wednesday to Vienna, Polish Prime Minister Mateusz Morawiecki insisted that Poland is not a party to the Ukraine war and that any decision on whether to send the fighter jets could not be one for Warsaw alone.

It carries the risk of “very dramatic scenarios, even worse than those we are dealing with today,” Morawiecki argued.

Michal Baranowski, director of the Warsaw office of the German Marshall Fund think tank, told The Associated Press the Warsaw government “was blindsided and surprised” by Blinken's public statement last week. “This was seen as pressure from the U.S. on Warsaw. And therefore the reaction was to put the ball back in the U.S. government’s court,” Baranowski said.

It all “should have been dealt with behind the scenes,” he said.

Lolita C. Baldor and Eric Tucker in Washington and Lorne Cook in Brussels contributed.

 Comments (2)



RUSSIA-UKRAINE CONFLICT

GOP senators demand that U.S. help transfer fighter jets to Ukraine

More than 40 Republicans are questioning why the administration is refusing to aid in the delivery of MiGs to Ukraine.



— A lone bicyclist passes an apartment building damaged by shelling in Mariupol, Ukraine, on Wednesday. Evgeniy Maloletka / AP

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March 11, 2022, 8:14 AM EST

By **Rebecca Shabad** and **Julie Tsirkin**

WASHINGTON – More than 40 Senate Republicans are calling on the Biden administration to assist in [the transfer of Soviet-era aircraft to Ukraine](#) so it can defend itself against Russian forces.

"So far, Russian forces have been stymied by stiff Ukrainian resistance, and we must redouble our efforts to prevent a brutal and unlawful takeover of Ukraine. We urge your administration to work with Poland and our NATO allies to expedite the transfer of urgently-needed airpower, air defense systems and other combat and support capabilities from the United States, NATO allies, and other European partners to Ukraine," the senators wrote in a letter to President Joe Biden on Thursday.

The letter, signed by 42 Republicans including Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell, came after [U.S. officials rejected a proposal from Poland](#) to transfer its Soviet-era MiG fighter jets to Ukraine through a U.S. military base in Germany.

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U.S. rejects Poland's plan to give Ukraine Soviet-era fighter jets



The Defense Department has said such a handover would be a “high risk” step that could ratchet up tensions with [Russia](#) and risk direct military conflict.

If Ukrainian pilots go to a NATO country to pick up fighter jets and then fly them back into contested Ukrainian airspace, where they might have to engage with Russian fighters, Western officials worry, Moscow could view the country they left from as a combatant and therefore fair game. And NATO’s core tenet, spelled out in [Article 5](#) of its charter, is that an attack on any member country is an attack on all, meaning all 30 member states would be obligated to join the fight.

U.S. military and intelligence officials have also determined that more jets are unlikely to significantly change the effectiveness of the Ukrainian air force, and experts outside the government have noted that Ukraine hasn’t deployed many of the MiGs it already owns. That has made them wonder whether the country has the complex infrastructure needed to support the aircraft, from trained pilots and mechanics to extra parts, munitions and jet fuel.

The senators, however, said in their letter that the explanation they received from the Pentagon about why the U.S. has declined Poland's plan isn't adequate.

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"Send these MiGs," Sen. Mitt Romney, R-Utah, said at a news conference Thursday with other GOP colleagues. "And the question is, well, why aren't they being sent? Because we've heard now for days that this is something that's being discussed. Enough talk. People are dying, send them the planes that they need."

"That's what they say they want," he added. "They're there. They have the eyes to determine what they want."

Sen. Lindsey Graham, R-S.C., said it was a "good day for Putin, bad day for the Ukraine and a dishonorable day for America" because the U.S. is not providing Ukraine with aircraft to defend its airspace.

The eight GOP senators who did not sign the letter were Jim Inhofe of Oklahoma; Bill Hagerty of Tennessee; Jerry Moran of Kansas; Rand Paul of Kentucky; Mike Rounds of South Dakota; Mike Lee of Utah; Cynthia Lummis of Wyoming; and Roy Blunt of Missouri.



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Arms Makers See Bonanza In Selling NATO Expansion

By Jeff Gerth and Tim Weiner

June 29, 1997

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June 29, 1997, Section 1, Page 1 [Buy Reprints](#)

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At night, Bruce L. Jackson is president of the U.S. Committee to Expand NATO, giving intimate dinners for Senators and foreign officials. By day, he is director of strategic planning for Lockheed Martin Corporation, the world's biggest weapons maker.

Mr. Jackson says he keeps his two identities separate, but his company and his lobbying group are fighting the same battle. Defense contractors are acting like globe-hopping diplomats to encourage the expansion of NATO, which will create a huge market for their wares.

Billions of dollars are at stake in the next global arms bazaar: weapons sales to Central European nations invited to join the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. Admission to the Western fraternity will bring political prestige, but at a price: playing by NATO rules, which require Western weapons and equipment.

"The stakes are high" for arms makers, said Joel L. Johnson, vice president for international affairs at the Aerospace Industries Association, a trade group. "Whoever gets in first will have a lock for the next quarter-century."

The potential market for fighter jets alone is \$10 billion, he said. Those jets will require flight simulators, spare parts, electronics and engine improvements. "Then there's transport aircraft, utility helicopters, attack helicopters," Mr. Johnson said -- not to mention military

communications systems, computers, radar, radios and the other tools of a modern fighting force.

"Add them together, and we're talking real money," he said."

The first signs of a military spending spree in Central Europe have led the managing director of the International Monetary Fund to raise the issue with the Secretary of the Treasury. While the State Department says it is urging restraint on the potential NATO nations, the Pentagon is enticing them to buy American warplanes.

NATO leaders are to meet in Madrid July 8-9 to vote on expanding the alliance. The Clinton Administration says Hungary, Poland and the Czech Republic should be admitted now.

Some NATO members say Romania and Slovenia should join now, too. But the Clinton Administration says Romania's democracy and Slovenia's military do not yet meet the alliance's standards.

After Madrid, the issue moves to the United States Senate, which must approve new member states by a two-thirds vote.

"To make sure the Senate knew this was an important aspect of U.S. security," Mr. Jackson said, his U.S. Committee to Expand NATO recently gave a dinner for a dozen Senators at the private Metropolitan Club, two blocks from the White House.

Over lamb chops and red wine, the Senators heard Secretary of State Madeleine K. Albright explain NATO expansion. The guest list included Bernard L. Schwartz, chairman of Loral Space and Communications, a company partly owned by Lockheed Martin. Mr. Schwartz personally donated \$601,000 to Democratic politicians for the 1996 election. Lockheed Martin itself gave \$2.3 million to Congressional and Presidential candidates in the 1996 election, part of a five-fold increase in defense companies' donations to Democrats from 1992 to 1996.

Lockheed Martin wants its F-16 fighters to replace the old Soviet-made MIG-21's in the hangars of Central Europe. Norman R. Augustine, Lockheed Martin's chief executive, toured Hungary, Poland, the Czech Republic, Romania and Slovenia in April, drumming up business and supporting the largest possible expansion of NATO. In Bucharest, following through on an \$82 million radar contract, he supported Romania's entry.

"Norm has an emotional commitment to NATO expansion," Mr. Jackson said.

In May, Bell Helicopter Textron's chairman, Webb Joiner, also promoted Romania's bid as he sealed a \$1 billion deal to sell the Romanians marine attack helicopters. In Washington, the company's lobbyist, Dick Smith, said that Bell Helicopter Textron was fighting for Romania's inclusion by "doing everything we can to tell their story to our friends here."

Mircea Geoana, Romanian Ambassador to the United States, said, "The most interested corporations are the defense corporations, because they have a direct interest in the issue."

NATO was founded in 1949, at the dawn of the cold war, to enlarge the United States' power in Western Europe and contain the Soviet Union and its satellites in Central Europe. The end of the Soviet empire created the chance to expand the alliance.

"NATO enlargement is in our national interests," President Clinton said this month at West Point's commencement. "But because it is not without cost and risk, it is appropriate to have an open, full, national discussion before proceeding."

The Administration says the cost of a few nations' joining NATO may reach \$35 billion over 10 years, with the United States paying about \$2 billion. But the Congressional Budget Office says the cost may reach \$125 billion over 15 years, with the United States paying up to \$19 billion.

Deputy Secretary of State Strobe Talbott said in an interview that Central European nations would actually spend less on arms once admitted to NATO than if left out, thanks to the collective security offered by the alliance.

"Feeling more secure, they will feel less incentive to build up their armaments to deal with real or perceived insecurities," he said.

But Hungary, the Czech Republic and Poland all project rising military budgets in coming years, though that spending is still a small portion of their economies, according to a Senate Foreign Relations Committee report by Senator Joseph R. Biden Jr., a Delaware Democrat who supports NATO expansion.

Hungary expects that joining the alliance will increase its military spending by about 35 percent. Poland projects a 20 percent rise, though a United States Information Agency survey in Poland found that three-quarters of the people favored spending more money on health and education, not weapons.

Critics of NATO expansion say weapons spending could create political and economic problems in Central Europe.

"It's extraordinarily unwise for these countries to shoulder these costs when they must pay the costs of meeting their social needs," said Jack Matlock, a former United States Ambassador to Moscow.

"These countries are free to buy American arms," he said. "The question is how they pay for it. If the American taxpayer finances them, this would be a direct subsidy to the arms industry. If they pay for them themselves, it could lead to real distortions in these countries'

own budgets."

The prospect of soaring arms spending by potential NATO nations, particularly Romania, also worries the International Monetary Fund, whose billions of dollars of loans in the region are conditioned on fiscal restraint, according to the fund's officials.

This month, the fund's managing director, Michel Camdessus, raised the issue of military spending in Central Europe with Treasury Secretary Robert E. Rubin, according to a senior Treasury official.

At the same time, the fund's staff, in its annual review of the United States economy, reminded the Clinton Administration of its past promises to help prevent "excessive military spending" in emerging economies, including Central European nations. The fund's staff urged the United States to handle arms sales "in a way that avoids encouraging unproductive expenditures and heightening security tensions."

A senior Treasury official said the United States shared those concerns and had "urged NATO candidate countries to be cautious about buying big-ticket items."

Still, to entice those same nations to buy American weapons, the Pentagon has laid out a smorgasbord of grants, discount loans and free leases.

The Air Force and the Navy have offered Hungary, the Czech Republic and Poland five-year leases of F-16 and F-18 fighter jets, free of charge. That offer came after the three nations asked the Pentagon about the individual prices and availability of more than \$8 billion in jets, according to documents obtained by Arms Trade News.

Eight billion dollars exceeds the three nations' combined annual defense budgets.

Last month, Romania became the first country to tap into a \$15 billion defense export loan guarantee fund, created by Congress in 1995 at the urging of executives like Mr. Augustine. The Romanians want the money to buy \$23 million in unmanned reconnaissance planes. And this year, Hungary, the Czech Republic and Poland received \$30 million from a \$60 million Pentagon grant program.

Beyond Congress, the White House and the Pentagon, NATO expansion is a hot issue in the growing subculture of nonprofit organizations, where interest groups form associations with civic-sounding names to advance their causes.

Mr. Jackson set up his U.S. Committee to Expand NATO committee last November. The committee's board of directors includes educators, business executives and lawyers. Its members donate their time; it accepts no corporate donations. One of its founders, Greg Craig, recently became the State Department's director of policy planning.

Now the Romanians, hoping to win NATO membership in the next round of candidates, are helping to set up two nonprofit foundations in Washington to advance their cause, said Ambassador Geoana. Financial support for at least one of the foundations will come from Bell Helicopter, Lockheed Martin and other arms makers, the Ambassador and company officials said.