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# Larry C. Johnson: "The Ukrainian Army has been Defeated. What's left is mop-up"

*Mike Whitney • March 21, 2022 • 2,200 Words • 264 Comments • Reply*

12-15 minutes

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**Question 1– Can you explain to me why you think Russia is winning the war in Ukraine?**

**Larry C. Johnson–** Within the first 24 hours of the Russian military operation in Ukraine, all Ukrainian Ground Radar Intercept capabilities were wiped out. Without those radars, the Ukrainian Air Force lost its ability to do air to air intercept. In the intervening three weeks, **Russia has established a de facto No Fly Zone over Ukraine.** While still vulnerable to shoulder fired Surface to Air Missiles supplied by the

U.S. and NATO to the Ukrainians, there is no evidence that Russia has had to curtail Combat Air Operations.

**Russia's arrival in Kiev within three days of the invasion also caught my attention. I recalled that the Nazi's in Operation Barbarossa took seven weeks to reach Kiev and the required 7 more weeks to subdue the city.** The Nazis had the advantage of not pulling punches to avoid civilian casualties and were eager to destroy critical infrastructure. Yet many so-called American military experts claimed that Russia was bogged down. When a 24 mile (or 40 mile, depends on the news source) was positioned north of Kiev for more than a week, it was clear that **Ukraine's ability to launch significant military operations had been eliminated.** If their artillery was intact, then that column was easy pickings for massive destruction. That did not happen. Alternatively, if the Ukrainian's had a viable fixed wing or rotary wing capability they should have destroyed that column from the air. That did not happen. Or, if they had a viable cruise missile capability they should have rained down hell

on the supposedly stalled Russian column. That did not happen. The Ukrainians did not even mount a significant infantry ambush of the column with their newly supplied U.S. Javelins.

**The scale and scope of the Russian attack is remarkable. They captured territory in three weeks that is larger than the land mass of the United Kingdom.** They then proceeded to carry out targeted attacks on key cities and military installations. We have not seen a single instance of a Ukrainian regiment or brigade size unit attacking and defeating a comparable Russian unit. Instead, the Russians have split the Ukrainian Army into fragments and cut their lines of communication. **The Russians are consolidating their control of Mariupol and have secured all approaches on the Black Sea. Ukraine is now cut off in the South and the North.**

I would note that the U.S. had a tougher time capturing this much territory in Iraq in 2003 while fighting against a far inferior, less capable military force. If anything, **this Russian operation should scare the hell out of U.S. military and political**

## **leaders.**

The really big news came this week with the Russian missile strikes on what are de facto NATO bases in Yavoriv and Zhytomyr. NATO conducted cyber security training at Zhytomyr in September 2018 and described Ukraine as a "NATO partner." Zhytomyr was destroyed with hypersonic missiles on Saturday. Yavoriv suffered a similar fate last Sunday. It was the primary training and logistics center that NATO and EUCOM used to supply fighters and weapons to Ukraine. A large number of the military and civilian personnel at that base became casualties.

**Not only is Russia striking and destroying bases used by NATO regularly since 2015, but there was no air raid warning and there was no shutdown of the attacking missiles.**

**Question 2–** Why is the media trying to convince the Ukrainian people that they can prevail in their war against Russia? If what you say is correct, then all the civilians that are being sent to fight the Russian army, are dying in a war they can't win. I don't understand why the media would want to

mislead people on something so serious. What are your thoughts on the matter?

**Larry C. Johnson**— This is a combination of ignorance and laziness. Rather than do real reporting, **the vast majority of the media (print and electronic) as well as Big Tech are supporting a massive propaganda campaign.** I remember when George W. Bush was Hitler. I remember when Donald Trump was Hitler. And now we have a new Hitler, Vladimir Putin. This is a tired, failed playbook. Anyone who dares to raise legitimate questions about is immediately tarred as a Putin puppet or a Russia stooge. When you cannot argue facts the only recourse is name calling.

**Question 3**— Last week, Colonel Douglas MacGregor was a guest on the Tucker Carlson Show. His views on the war are strikingly similar to your own. Here's what he said in the [interview](#):

“**The war is really over for the Ukrainians.** They have been ground into bits, there is no question about that despite what we hear from our mainstream media. So, the real question for us at this stage is, Tucker, **are we going to live with the**

**Russian people and their government or we going to continue to pursue this sort of regime change dressed up as a Ukrainian war? Are we going to stop using Ukraine as a battering ram against Moscow, which is effectively what we've done."** ([Tucker Carlson– MacGregor Interview](#))

Do you agree with MacGregor that the real purpose of goading Russia into a war in Ukraine was "regime change"?

Second, do you agree that Ukraine is being used as a staging ground for the US to carry out a proxy-war on Russia?

**Larry C. Johnson**– Doug is great analyst but I disagree with him—I don't think there is anyone in the Biden Administration that is smart enough to think and plan in those strategic terms. In my view the last 7 years have been the inertia of the NATO status quo. What I mean by that is that NATO and Washington, believed they could continue to creep east on Russia's borders without provoking a reaction. NATO and EUCOM regularly carried out exercises—including providing "offensive" training—and supplied equipment. I believe reports in the

United States that the CIA was providing paramilitary training to Ukrainian units operating in the Donbass are credible. But I have trouble believing that after our debacles in Iraq and Afghanistan, we suddenly have Sun Tzu level strategists pulling the strings in Washington.

There is an air of desperation in Washington. Besides trying ban all things Russian, the Biden Administration is trying to bully China, India and Saudi Arabia. I do not see any of those countries falling into line. I believe the Biden crew made a fatal mistake by trying to demonize all things and all people Russian. If anything, **this is uniting the Russian people behind Putin and they are ready to dig in for a long struggle.**

I am shocked at the miscalculation in thinking economic sanctions on Russia would bring them to their knees. The opposite is true. **Russia is self-sufficient and is not dependent on imports. Its exports are critical to the economic well-being of the West.** If they withhold wheat, potash, gas, oil, palladium, finished nickel and other key minerals from the West, the European and U.S. economies

will be savaged. And this attempt to coerce Russia with **sanctions has now made it very likely that the U.S. dollar's role as the international reserve currency will show up in the dustbin of history.**

**Question 4**– Ever since he delivered his famous [speech in Munich](#) in 2007, Putin has been complaining about the “**architecture of global security**”. In Ukraine we can see how these nagging security issues can evolve into a full-blown war. As you know, **in December Putin made a number of demands related to Russian security, but the Biden administration shrugged them off and never responded. Putin wanted written assurances that NATO expansion would not include Ukraine (membership) and that nuclear missile systems would not be deployed to Romania or Poland.** Do you think Putin's demands are unreasonable?

**Larry C. Johnson**– I think Putin's demands are quite reasonable. The problem is that **99% of Americans have no idea of the kind of military provocation that NATO and the U.S. have carried out over the last 7 years.** The public was always



told the military exercises were “defensive.” That simply is not true. Now we have news that DTRA was funding biolabs in Ukraine. I guess **Putin could agree to allow U.S. nuclear missile systems in Poland and Romania if Biden agrees to allow comparable Russian systems to be deployed in Cuba, Venezuela and Mexico. When we look at it in those terms we can begin to understand that Putin’s demands are not crazy nor unreasonable.**

**Question 5**– Russian media reports that Russian “high precision, air-launched” missiles struck a facility in west Ukraine “killing more than 100 local troops and foreign mercenaries.” Apparently, the Special Operations training center was located near the town of Ovruch which is just 15 miles from the Polish border. What can you tell us about this incident? Was Russia trying to send a message to NATO?

**Larry C. Johnson**– **Short** answer—YES! Russian military strikes in Western Ukraine during the past week have shocked and alarmed NATO officials. The first blow came on Sunday, March 13 at Yavoriv,

Ukraine. Russia hit the base with several missiles, some reportedly hypersonic. Over 200 personnel were killed, which included American and British military and intelligence personnel, and hundreds more wounded. Many suffered catastrophic wounds, such as amputations, and are in hospital. Yet, NATO and the western media have shown little interest in reporting on this disaster.

Yavoriv was an important forward base for NATO (see here). Until February (prior to Russia's invasion of Ukraine), the U.S. 7th Army Training Command was operating from Yavoriv as late as mid-February. Russia has not stopped there. ASB Military news reports Russia hit another site, Delyatyn, which is 60 miles southeast of Yavoriv (on Thursday I believe). Yesterday, Russia hit Zytomyr, another site where NATO previously had a presence. **Putin has sent a very clear message—NATO forces in Ukraine will be viewed and treated as combatants. Period.**

**Question 6—** Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky has been lionized in the western media as a "wartime leader" and a modern-day "Winston Churchill". What the media fails to tell its readers is

that Zelensky has taken a number of steps to strengthen his grip on power while damaging fragile democratic institutions in Ukraine. For example, **Zelensky has “banned eleven opposition-owned news organizations” and tried to bar the head of Ukraine’s largest opposition party, Viktor Medvedchuk, from running for office** on a bogus “terrorist financing” charge. This is not the behavior of a leader that is seriously committed to democracy.

**What’s your take on Zelensky? Is he really the “patriotic leader” the media makes him out to be?**

**Larry C. Johnson**— Zelensky is a comedian and an actor. Not a very good one at that in my view. **The West is cynically using the fact he is Jewish as a diversion from the size-able contingent of Neo-Nazis (and I mean genuine Nazis who still celebrate the Ukrainian Waffen SS unit’s accomplishments while fighting with the Nazis in WW II).** The facts are clear—he is banning opposition political parties and shutting down opposition media. I guess that is the new definition of “democracy.”

**Question 7– How does this end?** There's an excellent post at the Moon of Alabama site titled ["What Will Be The Geographic End State Of The War In Ukraine"](#). The author of the post, Bernard, seems to think that Ukraine will eventually be partitioned along the Dnieper River "and south along the coast that holds a majority ethnic Russian population." He also says this:

"This would eliminate Ukrainian access to the Black Sea and create a land bridge towards the Moldavian breakaway Transnistria which is under Russian protection. **The rest of the Ukraine would be a land confined, mostly agricultural state, disarmed and too poor to be build up to a new threat to Russia anytime soon.** Politically it would be dominated by fascists from Galicia which would then become a major problem for the European Union."

What do you think? **Will Putin impose his own territorial settlement on Ukraine in order to reinforce Russian security and bring the hostilities to an end or is a different scenario more likely?**

**Larry C. Johnson— I agree with Moon. Putin's primary objective is to secure Russia from foreign threats and effect a divorce with the West. Russia has the physical resources to be an independent sovereign and is in the process of making that vision come true.**

***Bio—** Larry C Johnson is a veteran of the CIA and the State Department's Office of Counter Terrorism. He is the founder and managing partner of BERG Associates, which was established in 1998. Larry provided training to the US Military's Special Operations community for 24 years. He has been vilified by the right and the left, which means he must be doing something right. **His analysis and commentary can be found at his blog,** <https://sonar21.com/>*