How to Bring Down an Empire: Benjamin Franklin's Forgotten Rules

1

"Empires, by Pride & Folly & Extravagance, ruin themselves like Individuals"

Benjamin Franklin knew the pattern all through history: Collapse is self-inflicted. In 1773, he wrote a masterpiece of biting satire detailing 20 rules for how a great empire destroys itself from within. The formula is simple: make the government so detestable that the people want secession at any cost.

It was supposed to be a warning, but the British ignored it and learned their lesson the hard way.

Read his rules and judge for yourself. Is this just another history lesson? Or is it an instruction manual still being followed by the empire we live under today?

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TENTH AMENDMENT CENTER

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WEAPONIZED SATIRE

Benjamin Franklin spent years trying to reason with the British government. But, as he wrote to his sister Jane Mecom, he finally realized that being polite to politicians is a waste of time.

"I had us'd all the smooth Words I could muster, and I grew tir'd of Meekness when I saw it without Effect. Of late therefore I have been saucy."

On September 11, 1773 – just months after the Tea Act was passed – that "sauciness" took the form of a brilliant essay anonymously published in a London paper: *Rules By Which A Great Empire May Be Reduced To A Small One.* He took the worst abuses inflicted on the American colonies, and repackaged them as twenty "helpful tips" for the British government to convince the people to **hate** it. The result? An empire chopped down to size by secession, guaranteed.

He wasn't just shaming them. As he told Mecom, he was forcing them to look in the mirror.

"I have held up a Looking-Glass in which some Ministers may see their ugly Faces, and the Nation its Injustice."

He opened the essay by framing it as a leaked government memo – a direct shot at Lord Hillsborough, the former Secretary of State for the Colonies.

"Presented privately to a late Minister, when he entered upon his Administration; and now first published."

Franklin then drew a sharp contrast. He started with the ancient Greek leader Themistocles – a man who didn't waste time on trivial politics because he was too busy doing the hard work of building a society. Then, he flipped the script with some self-deprecating humor.

(2)

"An ancient Sage valued himself upon this, that tho' he could not fiddle, he knew how to make a great City of a little one."

"The Science that I, a modern Simpleton, am about to communicate is the very reverse."

He framed it like a self-help guide. Managing a massive empire is simply too much work for politicians who just want more leisure time.

"I address myself to all Ministers who have the Management of extensive Dominions, which from their very Greatness are become troublesome to govern, because the Multiplicity of their Affairs leaves no Time for fiddling."

THE RULES

Franklin started his rules with simple geography. Start at the edges and let the implosion work its way in from there.

"In the first Place, Gentlemen, you are to consider, that a great Empire, like a great Cake, is most easily diminished at the Edges. Turn your Attention therefore first to your remotest Provinces; that as you get rid of them, the next may follow in Order."

The best way to accelerate that process is to treat the people as second-class citizens. Make sure they have no real representation. Use "law" as a weapon to attack their rights. And cut off free trade.

"Take special Care the Provinces are never incorporated with the Mother Country, that they do not enjoy the same common Rights, the same Privileges in Commerce, and that they are governed by severer Laws, all of your enacting, without allowing them any Share in the Choice of the Legislators."

Despite all the blood, sweat and tears the people spent building the colonies, the government must adopt an arrogant "you didn't build that" mentality. That also means rejecting any foundational principles from their own revolution.

"You are therefore to forget it all, or resent it as if they had done you Injury. If they happen to be zealous Whigs, Friends of Liberty, nurtur'd in Revolution Principles, remember all that to their Prejudice, and contrive to punish it: For such Principles, after a Revolution is thoroughly established, are of no more Use, they are even odious and abominable."

A bloated government is inherently paranoid. Therefore, it must operate on a single, cynical premise: Always treat your own people like the enemy.

"However peaceably your Colonies have submitted to your Government, shewn their Affection to your Interest, and patiently borne their Grievances, you are to suppose them always inclined to revolt, and treat them accordingly."

To increase the hostility, deploy militarized enforcers directly into the communities. The goal is to actively provoke the very rebellion the government pretends it wants to prevent.

"Quarter Troops among them, who by their Insolence may provoke the rising of Mobs, and by their Bullets and Bayonets suppress them. By this Means, like the Husband who uses his Wife ill from Suspicion, you may in Time convert your Suspicions into Realities."

Competent leadership fosters stability. To destroy an empire, establish a reverse meritocracy. Elevate the absolute worst of the worst, filling the government with corrupt, incompetent, petty hacks at every level.

"You are therefore to be careful who you recommend for those Offices. If you can find Prodigals who have ruined their Fortunes, broken Gamesters or Stock-Jobbers, these may do well as Governors; for they will probably be rapacious, and provoke the People by their Extortions. Wrangling Proctors and petty-fogging Lawyers too are not amiss, for they will be for ever disputing and quarrelling with their little Parliaments, if withal they should be ignorant, wrong-headed and insolent, so much the better. Attorneys Clerks and Newgate Solicitors will do for Chief-Justices, especially if they hold their Places during your Pleasure: And all will contribute to impress those ideas of your Government that are proper for a People you would wish to renounce it."

To protect these corrupt hacks, the government must maintain a monopoly on accountability. Always make sure the government investigates itself. And naturally, the government must never find that the government broke the rules for the government.

"To confirm these Impressions, and strike them deeper, whenever the Injured come to the Capital with Complaints of Mal-administration, Oppression, or Injustice, punish such Suitors with long Delay, enormous Expence, and a final Judgment in Favour of the Oppressor."

This results in two predictable outcomes. First, it actively incentivizes even more corruption from the ruling class. Second, it pushes the public right to the edge of their breaking point.

"This will have an admirable Effect every Way. The Trouble of future Complaints will be prevented, and Governors and Judges will be encouraged to farther Acts of Oppression and Injustice; and thence the People may become more disaffected, and at length desperate."

In a free society, these government people would be in prison. Franklin instructed the empire to reward them instead.

"When such Governors have crammed their Coffers, and made themselves so odious to the People that they can no longer remain among them with Safety to their

(4)

"To annihilate this Comfort, begin by Laws to perplex their Commerce with infinite Regulations impossible to be remembered and observed; ordain Seizures of their Property for every Failure; take away the Trial of such Property by Jury, and give it to arbitrary Judges of your own appointing, and of the lowest Characters in the Country, whose Salaries and Emoluments are to arise out of the Duties or Condemnations, and whose Appointments are during Pleasure."

To eliminate dissent, simply redefine it. Ensure that anyone who dares to oppose the government is labeled a traitor, and use every weapon at your disposal to punish them as such.

"Then let there be a formal Declaration of both Houses, that Opposition to your Edicts is Treason, and that Persons suspected of Treason in the Provinces may, according to some obsolete Law, be seized and sent to the Metropolis of the Empire for Trial."

Once dissent is viewed as treason, the government must make sure the entire "justice" system is stacked against the individual. Even without a conviction, it can secure its victory simply by making the legal process and the exorbitant cost of a defense the actual punishment.

"And pass an Act that those there charged with certain other Offences shall be sent away in Chains from their Friends and Country to be tried in the same Manner for Felony. Then erect a new Court of Inquisition among them, accompanied by an armed Force, with Instructions to transport all such suspected Persons, to be ruined by the Expence if they bring over Evidences to prove their Innocence, or be found guilty and hanged if they can't afford it."

Just when the people think the government has pushed as far as it possibly can, it must take things even further and claim unlimited power. In 1766, the British called it the Declaratory Act. Today, Washington D.C. treats the Supremacy Clause exactly the same way.

"And lest the People should think you cannot possibly go any farther, pass another solemn declaratory Act, that "King, Lords, and Commons had, hath, and of Right ought to have, full Power and Authority to make Statutes of sufficient Force and Validity to bind the unrepresented Provinces IN ALL CASES WHATSOEVER."

The result is the complete destruction of any illusion of freedom. The government drops the polite facade and reveals a cold, hard truth: the empire claims absolute ownership over your property, your liberty, and your very life.

"This will include Spiritual with temporal; and taken together, must operate wonderfully to your Purpose, by convincing them, that they are at present under a Power something like that spoken of in the Scriptures, which can not only kill their Bodies, but damn their Souls to all Eternity, by compelling them, if it pleases, to worship the Devil."

Persons, recall and reward them with Pensions. You may make them Baronets too,8 if that respectable Order should not think fit to resent it. All will contribute to encourage new Governors in the same Practices, and make the supreme Government detestable."

Even when the public voluntarily sacrifices everything for national defense – as the colonists did during the Seven Years' War – the government must reject their generosity. An arrogant empire prefers extorting its citizens by force – even after the war is over – rather than accepting their voluntary support.

"If when you are engaged in War, your Colonies should vie in liberal Aids of Men and Money against the common Enemy, upon your simple Requisition, and give far beyond their Abilities, reflect, that a Penny taken from them by your Power is more honourable to you than a Pound presented by their Benevolence. Despise therefore their voluntary Grants, and resolve to harrass them with novel Taxes."

When the public inevitably complains, the government must not simply decline these requests. It must reject them, ignore them, and insult them. The people might eventually forgive a government that robs them. But absolute contempt from the political class guarantees permanent hatred.

"They will probably complain to your Parliaments that they are taxed by a Body in which they have no Representative, and that this is contrary to common Right. They will petition for Redress. Let the Parliaments flout their Claims, reject their Petitions, refuse even to suffer the reading of them, and treat the Petitioners with the utmost Contempt. Nothing can have a better Effect, in producing the Alienation proposed; for though many can forgive Injuries, none ever forgave Contempt."

To truly crush the spirit of the people, the government must destroy the very concept of private property. It must ignore everything the people are already funding – from local infrastructure to the empire's bloated welfare state. Instead, it must arrogantly remind them of a brutal reality: If the government can take one percent of your wealth without your consent, it inherently has the right to take the other 99 percent.

"Remember to make your arbitrary Tax more grievous to your Provinces, by public Declarations importing that your Power of taxing them has no limits, so that when you take from them without their Consent a Shilling in the Pound, you have a clear Right to the other nineteen. This will probably weaken every Idea of Security in their Property, and convince them that under such a Government they have nothing they can call their own; which can scarce fail of producing the happiest Consequences!"

Once property rights are destroyed, the government must never allow the people the comforting illusion that their remaining rights are safe. The weapon of choice is the administrative state. Drown them in mountains of regulations, eliminate trial by jury, pack the courts with corrupt judges, and weaponize asset forfeiture to plunder whatever they have left.

To enforce this absolute power, the government must deploy a massive tax enforcement army. The method is pure extortion: pay these bureaucratic enforcers lavishly with stolen loot, and unleash them to harass the citizens who actually do the real work.

"To make your Taxes more odious, and more likely to procure Resistance, send from the Capital a Board of Officers to superintend the Collection, composed of the most indiscreet, ill-bred and insolent you can find. Let these have large Salaries out of the extorted Revenue, and live in open grating Luxury upon the Sweat and Blood of the Industrious, whom they are to worry continually with groundless and expensive Prosecutions before the above-mentioned arbitrary Revenue-Judges, all at the Cost of the Party prosecuted tho' acquitted, because the King is to pay no Costs."

Take the money collected under the guise of national security and blatantly misapply all of it. Use the bloated defense budget as nothing more than a slush fund to enrich the swamp – the contractors, the insiders, and the political loyalists.

"Another Way to make your Tax odious, is to misapply the Produce of it. If it was originally appropriated for the Defence of the Provinces and the better Support of Government, and the Administration of Justice where it may be necessary, then apply none of it to that Defence, but bestow it where it is not necessary, in augmented Salaries or Pensions to every Governor who has distinguished himself by his Enmity to the People, and by calumniating them to their Sovereign."

The ultimate endgame isn't just the money. It is about manufacturing constant hostility and driving the people straight toward an inevitable crisis.

"This will make them pay it more unwillingly, and be more apt to quarrel with those that collect it, and those that imposed it, who will quarrel again with them, and all shall contribute to your main Purpose of making them weary of your Government."

When the people complain or resist, the government must simply dismiss their concerns as fringe extremism. And most importantly, it must never, ever admit fault or change its course.

"If you are told of Discontents in your Colonies, never believe that they are general, or that you have given Occasion for them; therefore do not think of applying any Remedy, or of changing any offensive Measure. Redress no Grievance, lest they should be encouraged to demand the Redress of some other Grievance."

To avoid accountability, the government must always blame public outrage on its political rivals. Then, to remind the people exactly who holds the monopoly on violence, throw in a public execution or two just to make a point.

"Believe nothing you hear from the Friends of the People. Suppose all their Complaints

to be invented and promoted by a few factious Demagogues, whom if you could catch and hang, all would be quiet. Catch and hang a few of them accordingly; and the Blood of the Martyrs shall work Miracles in favour of your Purpose."

If the people ever acquire enough firepower for their own genuine self-defense, the government must act swiftly to confiscate their weapons.

"If they should have lodged in such Fortress the very Arms they bought and used to aid you in your Conquests, seize them all, 'twill provoke like Ingratitude added to Robbery."

Disarming the public is a masterstroke for destroying an empire. Gun control doesn't just guarantee domestic tyranny; it ensures the country is left completely defenseless against foreign invaders.

"One admirable Effect of these Operations will be, to discourage every other Colony from erecting such Defences, and so their and your Enemies may more easily invade them, to the great Disgrace of your Government, and of course the Furtherance of your Project."

Use the promise of military "protection" as a Trojan horse. Swear to defend the people from outside threats, but intentionally leave them completely exposed and move the troops directly into their neighborhoods instead.

"Send Armies into their Country under Pretence of protecting the Inhabitants; but instead of garrisoning the Forts on their Frontiers with those Troops, to prevent Incursions, demolish those Forts, and order the Troops into the Heart of the Country, that the Savages may be encouraged to attack the Frontiers, and that the Troops may be protected by the Inhabitants."

It doesn't matter whether the public concludes the ruling class is dangerously incompetent or actively malicious. Either way, the government loses all moral authority, convincing the people that those in charge are unfit for office.

"This will seem to proceed from your Ill will or your Ignorance, and contribute farther to produce and strengthen an Opinion among them, that you are no longer fit to govern them."

Finally, make sure the commander-in-chief is armed with sweeping, unconstitutional powers and absolutely zero oversight. Give him everything he needs to rule by his will alone.

"Lastly, Invest the General of your Army in the Provinces with great and unconstitutional Powers, and free him from the Controul of even your own Civil Governors. Let him have Troops enow under his Command, with all the Fortresses in his Possession; and who knows but (like some provincial Generals in the Roman Empire, and encouraged by the universal Discontent you have produced) he may take it into his Head to set up for himself."

CASE CLOSED

Follow this blueprint to the letter, and the political class will achieve its ultimate goal: the complete collapse of its own empire. The productive people will permanently sever ties, and the government will finally be free of the "burden" of ruling a free people.

"If he should, and you have carefully practised these few excellent Rules of mine, take my Word for it, all the Provinces will immediately join him, and you will that Day (if you have not done it sooner) get rid of the Trouble of governing them, and all the Plagues attending their Commerce and Connection from thenceforth and for ever."

While Franklin detailed twenty rules in his essay, these core examples more than prove his point. He signed off with the letters Q.E.D. – the mathematical shorthand for "case closed." The essay hit London like a sledgehammer, and as he wrote to his sister, he was completely prepared for the backlash.

"Those Papers have been much taken Notice of, many are pleased with them, and a few very angry, who I am told will make me feel their Resentment, which I must bear as well as I can, and shall bear the better if any publick Good is done, whatever the Consequence to myself."

Franklin understood a cold truth about human nature: bullies, whether in the streets or in the government, prey on easy targets. Sometimes, simply standing your ground and kicking back is the only way to convince them to reconsider.

"In my own private Concerns with Mankind, I have observ'd that to kick a little when under Imposition, has a good Effect. A little Sturdiness when Superiors are much in the Wrong, sometimes occasions Consideration."

The reverse is equally true: absolute submission invites absolute destruction. If a people chooses cowardice over resistance, they shouldn't be surprised when the empire finally takes everything – their property, their liberty, and their lives.

"And there is Truth in the Old Saying, That if you make yourself a Sheep, the Wolves will eat you."

Tags: American Revolution, Benjamin Franklin, empire, power, Satire

> Periodically wealth is redistributed, whether by the violent confiscation of property, or by confiscatory taxation of incomes…. Then the race for wealth, goods, and power begins again, and the pyramid of ability takes form once more; under whatever laws may be enacted the abler man manages somehow to get the richer soil, the better place, the lion's share; soon he is strong enough to dominate the state and rewrite or interpret the laws; and in time the inequality is as great as before.
>
> — Will Durant

Auxiliary Bishop Of Latin Patriarchate Describes State Of Christians In The Palestinian Territories

By SANAD SAHELIA

(*Zeale News*) — Speaking with journalist Sanad Sahelia, Bishop William Shomali, general vicar and patriarchal vicar for Jerusalem and Palestine, explained the spiritual and human situation of Christians in Gaza, Jerusalem, the West Bank and Israel, how Catholics in the U.S. can show solidarity with the Church in the Holy Land, and what change is needed for peace to become possible. Sanad Sahelia is a Catholic Palestinian journalist who works for the Patriarchate in the West Bank Christian town of Taybeh.

1. Your Excellency, after years of war, killing, displacement, fear and anger, what does it practically mean for a Christian in the Holy Land to live Christ's command, "Love your enemies"? How can a believer love his enemy without denying injustice, justifying violence, or abandoning truth and justice?

Loving enemies means following Christ, who "when He was insulted, did not return the insult" (*1 Peter* 2:23). It does not mean surrendering to injustice or denying the truth. Rather, it first means freeing oneself from hatred and the desire for revenge.

A person has the right to defend himself and to seek justice through the courts and legitimate means to recover his rights. But the distinction between defending one's rights and seeking revenge remains a delicate one that requires spiritual discernment and the light of the Holy Spirit.

Loving enemies also means praying for them and for their conversion and change of heart. This is what the deacon St. Stephen did when he prayed for those who were stoning him, saying, "Lord, do not hold this sin against them."

Saul, who later became the Apostle Paul, was present during the stoning. By the grace of God, he was transformed from a persecutor of Christians into a great apostle of Christ. In this way, we see the power of prayer and love to transform yesterday's enemy into tomorrow's friend.

We also have examples from modern history. After two devastating world wars that claimed the lives of tens of millions of people, the peoples of Europe were able to overcome hatred and build a project of peace and cooperation that continues to this day through the European Union. This confirms that reconciliation is not an impossible dream, but a choice that can create a better future for peoples.

Therefore, Christ's command to love our enemies does not mean abandoning justice or remaining silent in the face of evil. Rather, it means rejecting hatred and revenge, seeking justice through legitimate means, while keeping our hearts open to reconciliation whenever it becomes possible.

Justice and mercy are not contradictory. In the Gospel vision, they complement one another.

2. How would you describe the spiritual and human situation of Christians in Gaza, Jerusalem, the West Bank and Israel today? To what extent has the very survival of Christian presence become threatened by war, emigration, fear, and economic and social pressures? What can the Church do to preserve faith and hope and convince Christian young people that they have a future in the Holy Land?

There is no doubt that the Christian presence in the West Bank and Gaza, and even in Israel, is going through an extremely difficult period because of war, violence, economic deterioration and insecurity.

In Gaza, the situation is even more tragic. Life has become almost impossible because of severe shortages of food and medicine, constant fear, and the widespread destruction that has affected the Strip.

The explosives, rubble and environmental contamination left by the war will also have serious long-term health consequences, particularly for children and the most vulnerable groups.

In the West Bank, people are suffering from fear, poverty and uncertainty about the future. The economy has deteriorated significantly because of the absence of tourism and the decline in employment opportunities, particularly because thousands of workers lost the ability to work inside Israel, where wages had been relatively higher.

In addition, some Palestinian communities are facing increasing pressure because of settlement expansion and what sometimes accompanies it in the form of attacks or restrictions on access to agricultural land and sources of livelihood.

It is true that Christian emigration from the Holy Land is not a new phenomenon. It has continued for more than a century, but today it has reached an alarming stage.

If Christians in Gaza are able to leave the Strip, many of them are unlikely to be able to return, and we would then risk losing a Christian community that has preserved its presence and witness of faith over many centuries.

Many Christian families in the West Bank are also considering emigration if they have the legal and financial means to do so.

As for the role of the Church, it begins with prayer for a just and lasting peace, because prayer gives believers strength and hope and opens hearts to reconciliation. At the same time, the Church continues its humanitarian mission by assisting families in need and supporting those affected.

However, material assistance, important as it is, is not enough on its own to address the deep fear experienced by people or remove their anxiety about their future and the future of their children. Therefore, the greatest challenge is to help our young people discover that remaining in the Holy Land is not merely a personal choice, but also a vocation and a mission.

We must provide them with employment opportunities, support them in facing difficulties, and give them genuine reasons for hope.

We should also recognize that every family that leaves further weakens the Christian presence rooted in this land for two thousand years. This presence bears witness to the Incarnation, teaching, Passion, death and Resurrection of the Lord Jesus in the places that witnessed the events of salvation.

Preserving Christian presence in the Holy Land is not merely a demographic issue. It is a spiritual, historical and ecclesial responsibility, because these Christian communities are the living stones that keep the witness to Christ alive in the land where He walked.

3. In light of what the Church describes as the danger of dehumanizing the other, what do you see happening in the hearts of ordinary Palestinians and Israelis after years of violence and fear? How can the Church help people recover their ability to see the other as a human being, indeed as someone made in the image of God, while acknowledging Palestinian suffering and Israeli fears?

No people reaches the stage of dehumanizing another people overnight. Rather, it happens as a result of many years of accumulated fear, violence and suffering. When a person is subjected to killing, displacement or humiliation, feelings of anger and bitterness arise, and it becomes easier for him to see the other as a threat or an adversary rather than as a human being who shares the same human dignity.

But the Christian faith calls us to a different vision. The other person, regardless of his identity or position, remains a creature made in the image and likeness of God, with a dignity and rights that cannot be denied. This

conviction is not merely a theoretical principle. It is the necessary foundation for any genuine and lasting peace.

In the reality of the Holy Land, we find ourselves facing two different narratives and two different collective memories. Israelis carry within their collective consciousness historical suffering and deep existential fears, while Palestinians hold on to their national and historical rights and suffer from occupation, violence, displacement and ongoing hardship.

A future cannot be built if each side remains imprisoned within its own narrative and unable to hear the narrative of the other. Therefore, the first step is to establish justice and respect the rights of peoples in accordance with international law.

True peace cannot be based on injustice. At the same time, justice alone is not enough if it is not followed by a process of healing for emotions and memory.

After justice comes forgiveness.

Forgiveness does not mean forgetting, justifying what happened, or abandoning one's rights. Rather, it means placing our wounds in God's hands and abandoning the logic of revenge. The believer trusts that God is the just judge, and therefore refuses to make pain a justification for permanent hatred.

Then comes reconciliation. It is a long journey that requires dialogue, encounter, cooperation and education in respect for the other. In reconciliation, we acknowledge the suffering of the other as we ask him to acknowledge our suffering. We recognize his dignity as we ask him to recognize ours.

The role of the Church is to continually remind everyone that every human being, whether Palestinian or Israeli, is a beloved child in the heart of God and is created in His image.

The Church is called to defend truth and justice while at the same time building bridges of encounter, dialogue and reconciliation.

When we succeed in seeing the face of God in the other person, we have truly begun the path out of the cycle of fear and hatred toward a more peaceful and humane future.

4. For Catholics in the United States and outside the Holy Land, how can they approach this conflict as Christians without falling into political polarization or indifference? What do you specifically ask of them, beyond prayer and humanitarian assistance, in terms of solidarity with the Church in the Holy Land and defending human dignity, justice and peace?

The United States has a pivotal role in the Middle East, particularly with regard to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

The Catholic Church in the United States also includes millions of faithful, and many Catholics hold influential positions in political and public life. This gives them a real ability to contribute to promoting peace and justice.

What we ask of Catholics in the United States and outside the Holy Land is, first, to look at this conflict through the eyes of faith and conscience, rather than through political or ideological polarization. Christians are called to name things as they are and to condemn injustice and violence wherever they occur and whoever commits them.

We condemned the attacks that targeted Israeli civilians on Oct. 7, and we have repeatedly expressed our sorrow over the enormous human toll suffered by Palestinian civilians during the war.

Human dignity is indivisible, and every human life is sacred in the eyes of God.

We believe that one of the main reasons for the continuation of this conflict is the absence of a just and lasting political solution that guarantees the legitimate rights of both sides.

Therefore, we continue to believe that a two-state solution based on international law remains the most realistic framework for achieving a just and sustainable peace, so that Israelis can enjoy security and Palestinians can enjoy freedom and dignity in their independent state.

We also ask Catholics around the world to show solidarity with the Church in the Holy Land through prayer, pilgrimage when circumstances allow, support for Church and humanitarian institutions that serve local communities, and by raising their voices in defense of human dignity and fundamental rights.

Christian solidarity is not limited to humanitarian assistance. It also includes a commitment to truth, justice and peace.

At the present time, we hope that the international community, particularly the United States, will make every possible effort to protect civilians, reduce acts of violence and abuses, and create the conditions that allow trust to be rebuilt and a serious political process to be launched toward lasting peace between the two peoples.

5. Pope Leo XIV speaks of a just and lasting peace, and there has also been discussion about the possibility of a papal visit to the Holy Land. From your pastoral experience, what needs to change on the ground, politically, humanely and spiritually, for peace to become possible? And if the Pope visits the Holy Land, how can his visit become part of a genuine process of reconciliation and healing rather than simply an international event?

The Holy See has consistently called for a just and lasting peace in the Holy Land based on respect for human dignity, the rights of peoples and the security of all. From this perspective, it has continued to support a two-state solution, in which Israelis live in security and peace within internationally recognized borders, while Palestinians are able to enjoy freedom and dignity in an independent and viable state.

However, peace is not achieved through political agreements alone. It also requires addressing the deep human wounds left by many years of violence, fear and lack of trust. Therefore, the application of the principles of international law must be accompanied by education in dialogue and mutual respect, and by a willingness to practice forgiveness and reconciliation.

We have heard about the possibility that His Holiness the Pope might visit the Holy Land on the occasion of the Jubilee of Redemption in 2033. We hope that the coming years will provide an opportunity to move beyond the cycle of war toward a new horizon of peace and stability.

If such a visit takes place, its importance would not lie only in its symbolic or diplomatic dimension, but also in its spiritual and human message. The Pope would come first as a pilgrim to the places that witnessed the great mysteries of our faith: the Incarnation, Redemption, and the Resurrection.

He would also come as a messenger of peace, carrying a word of hope to all the inhabitants of this land, Palestinians and Israelis. We hope that such a visit would contribute to encouraging leaders and peoples to choose the path of dialogue instead of confrontation, and the path of reconciliation instead of hatred.

True peace is built not only through treaties, but also through a change of hearts and by seeing the other as a partner in humanity and as a person created in the image of God.

And we say to His Holiness from now: Welcome to the Holy Land, the land of mission and Resurrection, which continues to await the day when justice and peace meet, and when reconciliation triumphs over division and fear.

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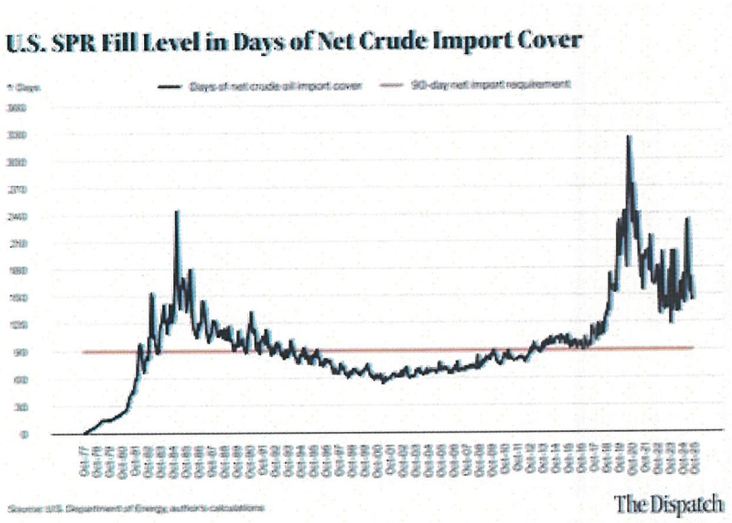
Full Refineries, Empty Tanks

LARRY C. JOHNSON • NOVEMBER 7, 2026 • 1,600 WORDS • 11 COMMENTS



Here is a number the White House would prefer you not memorize: 99.259 million barrels. That is how much distillate, meaning diesel, heating oil and the like, the United States had in storage at the end of October. It is the lowest weekly level since May 2003. Diesel inventories are now 17.8 percent below where they stood on February 27, the day before Operation Epic Fury, and roughly 13 percent below the five-year seasonal average.

If you drive a truck, farm a field or heat a house in New England, that number already shows up in your bills. The national average for diesel was $6.29 a gallon on November 2. Diesel futures closed at $4.39 a gallon on Friday. And winter, as one market analyst I rely on dryly noted, "has not yet fully joined the bidding."

The refineries are fine. That's the problem.

The easy story would be that American refineries are falling apart. They are not. The latest Energy Information Administration data, for the week ended October 30, show the opposite:

- Refineries processed 16.725 million barrels of crude a day, up 199,000 barrels from the week before and 5.6 percent above February.
- National utilization hit 94.5 percent. On the Gulf Coast it reached 96.1 percent.
- Distillate production held at 5.154 million barrels a day, 7.1 percent above February.

In other words, the system is running flat out and still cannot put anything aside. The inventory draw that week was not caused by a refinery breakdown or a sudden export binge. Domestic demand jumped by 232,000 barrels a day, to 4.439 million. Exports rose a mere 21,000 barrels a day. The harvest probably explains part of it, with combines and grain trucks burning diesel across the Farm Belt. But EIA's demand figure is an estimate of apparent consumption, not a meter on every tractor in Iowa.

The structural problem is that Americans and foreign buyers are bidding for the same shrinking pile. Over the past four weeks, domestic demand averaged 4.175 million barrels a day, 8.7 percent above last year. Exports averaged 1.353 million barrels a day, about 23 percent above February. Jet fuel exports are up 81 percent since February. We are selling our fuel abroad at war prices while our own tanks drain.

As the analysis puts it, America is not failing to produce diesel. It is failing to rebuild a cushion. A system with no cushion only needs one hurricane, one refinery fire or one cold snap to turn a tight market into a shortage.

The reserve that isn't

Then there is the Strategic Petroleum Reserve, the national savings account for exactly this kind of emergency. It held 415.4 million barrels on February 27. It now holds 282.2 million, the lowest level since October 1982. That is a 32 percent drawdown in eight months, mostly through the 172-million-barrel US share of the International Energy Agency's emergency release.

And we are not done. Last week, the government said oil companies had agreed to borrow about 40 million more barrels, the final batch of the US commitment. The Energy Department's own projection puts the reserve at about 243 million barrels once everything is delivered.

Consider the floors we are passing on the way down:

- **The informal safety line, about 300 million barrels.** Amos Hochstein, a former Biden energy adviser, said he knew of no one who thought the reserve could safely go much lower. We passed it this autumn.
- **The statutory floor, 252.4 million barrels.** Congress set it as the limit for routine emergency sales. The Energy Department is getting around it by calling the releases "exchanges" rather than sales. Clever. The caverns do not know the difference. If the last 40 million barrels go out, we fall through this one too.
- **The caverns themselves.** Sandia National Laboratories found in late 2024 that well deformation is outpacing the department's repair capacity. Three of the six caverns at Bayou Choctaw have one drawdown left before they risk losing structural integrity. The GAO now puts effective drawdown capacity near 2.7 million barrels a day, against a design rate of 4.4 million.

What is left in the caverns matters as much as how much. On October 16, the Energy Department reported 96.6 million barrels of sweet crude and 185.6 million barrels of sour. Neither is heavy crude. DOE describes both as mostly light, between 30 and 40 degrees API. The difference is sulfur, and sulfur by itself makes nothing. Refiners pay to strip it out to meet the 15-parts-per-million limit on diesel.

What matters is where the barrels go. Gulf Coast refineries, which make most of America's diesel, spent billions on cokers and hydrocrackers to run heavier, higher-sulfur crude and turn more of each barrel into diesel and jet fuel. Feed those plants light sweet shale instead and they make more gasoline and less diesel. So the reserve's sour barrels are its real diesel insurance. They are the closest match the SPR has for those refineries.

That insurance is down to about 186 million barrels. If the final 40 million barrels on loan are mostly sour, it could fall to around 146 million. Even then, the reserve cannot stand in for the truly heavy Canadian, Venezuelan and Mexican crudes those refineries were built to run. That is why the nearly 4 million barrels a day arriving from Canada matter more to your diesel bill than the SPR's headline number.

So the reserve is not just lower. It is slower, older and more fragile than the number suggests. And the Energy Department, never one to waste a euphemism, still calls it strategic.

Who pays

Diesel is not a luxury good. It moves nearly everything Americans eat, wear and buy. It runs the combines, the freight trains, the barges and the backup generators. When diesel stays above $6 a gallon, the cost shows up a few weeks later in groceries, shipping fees and every "fuel surcharge" line on every invoice in the country. That is the inflation voters punished last Tuesday, and it is baked in for the winter.

The empty reserve makes it worse, because it removes the government's only real tool for the next shock. The SPR exists so that a president can open the taps when a hurricane takes out Gulf Coast refineries or a war closes a strait. This president has already opened them for the current war. If Iran hits another tanker, or a cold snap lands on the Northeast in January, there is much less left to throw at the problem, and it comes out slower. Refilling will not be

cheap either. At $90 a barrel, putting back 200 million barrels would cost about $18 billion, with WTI trading near $91 on Friday. (13)

None of this should surprise anyone who has been reading Karl Miller. His October 22 assessment of the UAE showed Fujairah's product stocks down about 65 percent, with light products down 87 percent. His November 1 report on the Gulf tanker fleet showed why the cushion is not coming back soon. Seventy-nine tankers damaged, 18 VLCCs out of service, replacement ships not due until 2028 to 2030. He estimated that losing just 10 percent of Gulf product-tanker service, on a longer voyage, would cut 243,750 barrels a day of diesel and 130,000 of jet fuel. ADNOC's own CEO told ADIPEC on Monday that diesel stocks in some markets were at their lowest seasonal level in 35 years.

The Gulf lost its buffers to missiles. America is spending its buffers to keep pump prices from rising faster. It is the same disease with a different cause, and the market is pricing both.

Winter is coming. So is the bill.

To be fair, the data do not show a collapse. Refineries are running hard, Canadian heavy crude is flowing at close to 4 million barrels a day, and the discount on Western Canadian Select says heavy feedstock is not the immediate bottleneck. Nor do the numbers prove anyone in Washington is deliberately shipping diesel overseas to pad refiners' margins. What they show is simpler and, frankly, worse. America is producing more diesel than it did before the war and still running down its stocks, while the emergency reserve behind those stocks is nearly spent.

And here is the part Washington will be tempted to forget now that the votes are counted. The election is over. The oil shock is not. The ballots were cast on Tuesday, but the barrels lost since February 28 are still lost. The tankers sitting on the bottom of the Gulf of Oman did not refloat when the networks called the House.

Even the optimists are measuring the recovery in years. Aramco's CEO, Amin Nasser, warned in October that even after Hormuz fully reopens, refilling the world's inventories while meeting demand "could take up to two years." Karl Miller's fleet data say the replacement tankers will not arrive until 2028 to 2030. Refilling America's own reserve means buying back more than 170 million barrels in a market that has none to spare. A ceasefire tomorrow would stop the bleeding. It would not refill the tanks, rebuild the fleet or bring diesel back to $4 a gallon. Voters punished the war in November. They will be paying for it well into the next presidential term. The administration has spent eight months treating the Strategic Petroleum Reserve like a credit card with no statement date. The statement is arriving now, just as the furnaces kick on. Diesel is below 100 million barrels, the reserve is at a 44-year low, and the Gulf's tanker fleet will not be rebuilt before the next presidential term. The voters already noticed. The market noticed long before them. The White House, as usual, will notice last.

I discuss on Transition Protocol the latest intel about Mohsen Rezaei's visit with Putin:

> Across the political spectrum, Americans continue to tolerate abuses of power so long as those abuses are carried out by the "right" people, against the "wrong" people, or in the name of some emergency deemed too important to question.
>
> — John and Nisha Whitehead
>
> "The Constitution Can't Protect You If You Don't Protect It"

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(14)

Will Republicans Learn Their Lesson from the 'Disastrous' Midterms?

RON PAUL • NOVEMBER 9, 2026 • 600 WORDS • 10 COMMENTS

Politicians break campaign promises with hardly any hesitation and usually they get away with it. Americans have come to put up with broken promises for so long, they hardly even seem to notice. Last week, however, voters noticed. They showed the Republican party just how angry they were over President Trump's decision to attack Iran and how angry they were with Congress for abandoning its Constitutional authority over matters of war and peace.

The results were dramatic. Voters even turned Texas blue, as Democrats took firm control of both the House and Senate.

As President Trump's promise of a quick war and a quick victory rapidly faded, the costs of the unnecessary and illegal attack thousands of miles away soon began to hit Americans hard. The predictable closure of the Hormuz Strait sent fuel costs through the roof, fanning the fires of inflation which hit everything transported by road, rail, or air.

For months the polls were clear: Americans' top three concerns were high fuel prices, inflation, and the Iran war. All were related yet Republicans ignored voter concerns. Last Tuesday, voters had the final say.

The peace candidate usually wins, and President Trump promised repeatedly on the campaign trail that not only would he not start wars, but he would end existing conflicts. But we've heard it all before. George W. Bush was elected promising a "more humble" foreign policy. After eight years of Bush's Middle East wars, Obama was elected as the "new" peace candidate. However soon the "Saddam must go" of the Bush era became "Assad must go" and "Gaddafi must go" in the Obama era. Trump was elected after Biden took us to the brink of war with Russia over Ukraine. He promised that this time he would be the real peace candidate. We got war on Iran instead – a war that we did not win and cannot win.

Has the Republican party gotten the message? Have they learned the lesson voters can deliver when they finally have had enough of being lied to?

Neocons are seeing the voter rebuke of Trump as an opportunity to return the Republican party to the Bush era. Yes, prices and inflation are a problem, they argue, but that has nothing to do with the Iran war.

Nobody is buying that.

Vice President Vance laid out clearly why Republicans lost in the midterms: the war, inflation, rejection of America first, and our unhealthy relationship with Israel. Bush-era neocons like Marc Thiessen were furious, accusing Vance of being "disloyal" to the President.

Does Vance really mean what he said, or is it just another example of politicians promising what they think voters want to hear?

It seems a Republican Party that drummed out Thomas Massie over his opposition to the "Big Beautiful Bill," who warned about the dangers of putting foreign countries before our own, and who demanded an end to all foreign aid is not a Republican Party that Americans are interested in.

The pain will continue until the Party finally rids itself of the neocons and warmongers and returns to its roots as exemplified in the past by the late Sen. Robert Taft and in the present by Massie, Marjorie Taylor Greene, Joe Kent, Tucker Carlson, and many others who genuinely care about peace and liberty.

What Has the Government Done to Our Freedoms?

(15)

by Andrew P. Napolitano | Nov 5, 2026

Does the government work for us, or do we work for the government? We pay its taxes, obey its laws and regulations, finance its wars and submit to its surveillance. We are told that all of this is necessary for personal safety, collective prosperity and national security. Yet the government has become totalitarian while individuals have become powerless.

The very institution established to protect our natural rights has become our greatest threat.

The Fourth Amendment protects the right to privacy by prohibiting unreasonable searches and seizures and requiring judicial warrants supported by probable cause. Yet the National Security Agency has developed a surveillance apparatus capable of intercepting and examining all electronic communications traveling through the fiber-optic cables that carry the world's internet traffic.

The NSA literally captures every keystroke and telephonic conversation of every person in America. It subjects Americans who are suspected of absolutely nothing to continuous surveillance. The distinction between collecting information first and examining it later offers little comfort to someone whose private life has become government property.

Privacy is not a privilege granted by government. It is a natural right protected by the Constitution. The burden belongs to government to establish probable cause before invading the privacy of an individual, not to its victims to demonstrate afterward why they deserved privacy before the government stole it.

And the loss of privacy produces fear. People who believe their conversations, correspondence, internet searches, medical, legal and banking records, and political associations are being monitored become less willing to be candid. They hesitate before criticizing or challenging government officials, or associating with controversial organizations. They begin self-censorship.

This is how surveillance destroys freedom without ever having to prosecute anyone.

Freedom of speech is the linchpin of all other freedoms. Without it, there can be no meaningful political opposition, no effective accountability, no public exposure of corruption and no peaceful means of challenging government abuses. George Washington warned that if men were prevented from expressing their opinions, reason would become useless and, "dumb and silent, we may be led, like sheep, to the slaughter." Yet the government deports lawful US residents and threatens American college students because it hates and fears their speech.

Congress has enacted over 5,000 criminal laws and its agencies have produced over 300,000 regulations. No person can reasonably claim to understand all of them. Federal criminal laws are often written so broadly

that ordinary Americans can violate provisions without realizing that they have committed a federal crime. Don't dare write a check for less than a dollar, clean fish in a national park or toss caught fish back into the sea.

The Constitution was never intended to create a federal government with unlimited criminal jurisdiction. It establishes a government of limited and enumerated powers. It authorizes only one federal crime — treason. It does not grant Congress a general police power to criminalize whatever conduct it finds objectionable.

The proliferation of federal crimes is a signpost of government corruption. When almost every aspect of human activity can potentially be brought within some criminal prohibition, selective prosecution becomes an instrument of political power. The old observation attributed to Joseph Stalin captures the danger: "Show me the man and I will find you the crime." A government with too many criminal laws can find a legal pretext to punish almost anyone it wishes.

Meanwhile, the government has demonstrated criminal irresponsibility with the people's money. The government's debt has now surpassed $40 trillion and grows by $2 trillion or more annually.

Perpetual war compounds the damage. For generations, administrations of both political parties have treated military intervention as an ordinary instrument of American foreign policy. Wars are launched, expanded and continued without the serious constitutional deliberation the Founders intended.

Congress has increasingly surrendered its responsibility to declare war, while presidents have claimed authority to commit American lives and resources to conflicts with no clearly defined objectives or endings.

War is the health of the state and the enemy of liberty. It produces death, taxation, borrowing, secrecy, executive power, censorship, surveillance and the diversion of productive resources into destruction. It creates permanent bureaucracies whose institutional survival depends upon permanent threats. The national security state becomes an unaccountable government within the government in the name of emergencies that never seem to end.

What makes this tragedy particularly infuriating is that neither political party can claim innocence. Republicans and Democrats have alternated control of the White House and Congress while expanding surveillance, increasing federal spending, accumulating debt, multiplying criminal statutes and perpetuating foreign military interventions.

The problem is not which politicians are in charge. The problem is the concentration of power itself.

Our elected officials increasingly behave as though the Constitution they have sworn to uphold is an inconvenient and avoidable historical artifact rather than the supreme law of the land. The First Amendment says, "Congress shall make no law ... abridging the freedom of speech." If no law

doesn't really mean no law, what does it mean? It means whatever any five justices of the Supreme Court say it means, and that makes them — not the Constitution — the supreme law of the land.

(17)

The Declaration of Independence tells us that governments derive their just powers from the consent of the governed. Consent is meaningless if people are afraid to speak, cannot understand the laws governing them, are watched without suspicion and are forced to finance debts and wars they never authorized.

We were not born as subjects of Washington. We were born free, with natural human rights that no legislation or executive command has the moral authority to extinguish.

Today, the government doesn't work for us. We work for it. We have lost the republic. It has become a fading bankrupt empire. It's time for massive resistance to reclaim personal freedom — to alter or abolish the government that has failed to preserve our liberties and instead assaults them.

To learn more about Judge Andrew Napolitano, visit https://JudgeNap.com.

Satan's Chosen People

November 15, 2026 Categories: Guest Contributions

Print This Article

by: PAUL CRAIG ROBERTS

PAULCRAIGROBERTS.ORG

Satan's Chosen People

As reported by the Israeli press, the caretaker Israeli government while one waits to be formed has cut off water to the remnants of the Palestinian West Bank in order to drive the remaining Palestinians out of their country.

Neither the Muslims nor the Iranians, nor the Great Moral West are doing anything about it.

The death of Palestine, a 2,000 year old community, is a foregone conclusion. Israel using America has destroyed it.

https://www.haaretz.com/west-bank/2026-11-11/ty-article-magazine/.premium/how-water-became-the-idfs-new-weapon-to-pressure-west-bank-residents-to-leave/000001a1-c4a4-db7d-a5e3-e5fdd7690000

FROM HAARETZ

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How the US Brought War to Ukraine

by David Swanson | Nov 13, 2026 | 0 Comments

Reprinted from World BEYOND War:

If there is still someone out there who has persisted until now in the idea that Ukrainian history began in 2022, and that wiser members of the U.S. establishment didn't warn against, and more conniving members strategize for, each U.S. step toward war from the NATO enlargement of the 1990s through the U.S.-backed coup of 2014, the U.S.-backed war that began in 2014, Obama's military training and base building, Trump's weapons shipments, Biden's hostility toward diplomacy, the fantastic horror fables of Russiagate, the reduction of Germany and France to mindless puppets treating the Minsk agreements as a trick, and the U.S. blocking of negotiation or peace just before and just after the Russian invasion — and if such a someone has reached a point of open-mindedness to information, there's a new book that might really help.

And it sure is badly needed in this moment of Democratic candidates rising on public opposition to wars, even while promising to escalate the war in Ukraine the moment they're able to.

But the value of this new book to me lies in how it takes the story of the Ukraine War back, not just to the 1990s but to the 1940s. In *Boiling Point: How America Brought War to Ukraine,* Stephen Kinzer gives us deeper understanding of roots and motivations, establishing beyond any possible dispute that the U.S. government began a project of using Ukraine to weaken Russia and pursued it across generations, through changes in individual actors, through failure after failure, and through U.S. presidents who themselves may have lacked a decent understanding of the project they were continuing — so that, as open hostility toward the Soviet Union became supposed friendliness toward Russia, the public face of obliviousness regarding Russia's inscrutable opposition to the unchanging project of bringing Ukraine into NATO may in fact have involved some actual obliviousness.

Kinzer opens his book claiming to be presenting just the facts, ma'am, and to in no sense be denying the role that Ukrainians have played in their own history. He takes no position on Russia's criminal and murderous actions, but simply includes them as part of the story. Nonetheless, it is a story of a major project aimed at influencing Ukraine and Russia from Washington, Langley, and Manhattan — sometimes secretly, for example by parachuting would-be revolutionaries into Ukraine to meet their deaths, and sometimes openly, for example celebrating U.S. efforts to interfere in a Russian election to ensure that a drunken buffoon remain in charge of Russia. Even the interference in Ukraine during the eight years leading up to 2022 was generally a point of pride to be openly bragged about right up until it wasn't. Not just U.S. officials like Victoria Nuland but private foundations such as George Soros' couldn't help crowing about how much they'd spent and how responsible they were for overthrowing and manipulating the government of Ukraine. Even now, Nuland goes on camera and openly admits to the U.S. blocking of a peace agreement just weeks after the Russian invasion, and NATO's top officials can't stop themselves from pointing out that the insistence on NATO membership was the cause of the war. But the rest of us aren't supposed to repeat these things.

In Ukraine we have polls now showing large majority support for compromising and ending the war, whereas for a couple of years we we badgered with our supposed responsibility to risk nuclear apocalypse because Ukrainians wanted it. The story of U.S. government behavior from the 1940s on, during which the desires of Ukrainians mattered to U.S. policy makers exactly never, makes clear what an odd and fleeting pretense it was

to claim that keeping Ukraine at war was a sacred duty to the people of Ukraine who were insisting upon it.

When World War II ended and the U.S. government was able to jump right back to treating the Soviet Union as its primary enemy, some in the incipient U.S. spy-sabotage-assassination complex that would become the CIA saw Ukraine as the most powerful tool available to threaten Russia, just as Russia saw Ukraine as the pathway for a threatening invasion. Frank Wisner was an early driving force. He would witness a murderous Soviet takeover in Romania. Other key individuals over the decades would themselves or their families have histories of resentment toward Russia. Stalin had starved millions. Soviets had abused and humiliated on a large scale. People like Frank Wisner, Zbigniew Brzezinski, Madeleine Albright, "Masha" Yovanovitch, Evelyn Farkas, Alexander Vindman, Victoria Nuland, Antony Blinken, and many more seem to have taken their Russophobia very personally, while others like Dwight Eisenhower, Henry Kissinger, Richard Nixon, Hillary Clinton, or Joe Biden had more general policies of preferring brute force to words.

The U.S. erased the Nazi history of hundreds of Ukrainians in order to illegally bring them — including the usual quota of Soviet spies — to the United States. Hundreds more were put to work in Germany. Mass murderers of Jews and Poles were protected from both Nuremberg and Soviet justice in order to engage in the Cold War game of spying and counter-spying, propagandizing, infiltrating, and fantasizing about overthrows. For years, Ukrainians were sacrificed to the dream by being sent into Ukraine to the waiting arms of the well-informed Soviets. Fighting for Ukraine to the last Ukrainian is not a new idea.

I was surprised to learn from Kinzer that up through 1992, in a residential apartment building in New York City, immediately nextdoor to the one I lived in around 1990-1991, the CIA had maintained the headquarters of its Ukrainian nationalist propaganda production for 40 years beginning in 1952. This was a publishing house called Prolog at 875 West End Avenue led by Stepan Bandera's buddy Mykola Lebed (whom the CIA was actively keeping out of reports on unprosecuted Nazis as late as 1991). The apartment building ought to be on hidden history tours of the Columbia University area. Kinzer credits its pamphlets, magazines, newspapers, and books with having kept anti-Russian Ukrainian nationalism alive for decades. Radio stations were added, broadcasting from Germany and Greece. Unsuccessful but major efforts were made to recruit Ukrainian athletes at each Olympics, in hopes of putting a non-Nazi face on the campaign.

When the Soviet Union was dismantled and U.S. policy generally rolled on as if nothing had changed, those who saw global domination as the driving force in U.S. policy found this unremarkable. Those who had believed that the U.S. military existed because of the evil Soviets, and NATO existed because of the now-nonexistent Warsaw Pact, were bewildered. Historians generally struggle to blame everything before 1990 on the Soviets and everything after on Russia. Kinzer points out the inconvenient facts, the U.S. approach perhaps best encapsulated in a comment President Bill Clinton made about Boris Yeltsin:

"We keep telling Ol' Boris, Okay now, here's what you've got to do next. Here's some more shit for your face."

Yet even Yeltsin drew the line at Ukraine joining NATO. And despite, or because of, that clear and critical Russian demand from virtually every Russian official for decades, the U.S. altered course not at all. NATO even went to war in Yugoslavia, declared its right to launch wars at will, and suggested that Ukraine might be on the list. Brzezinski had it at the top of his list. Dubya tore up the ABM treaty. NATO declared it would add Ukraine. The U.S. took its secretive activities out of the CIA and made them public through the NED, dumping more money over the 30 years since Ukrainian independence from the Soviets into Ukraine than anywhere else, and funded an "Orange Revolution" that actually used what U.S. media would soon begin accusing the U.S. public of: hired protesters. Despite the

majority of Ukrainians opposing joining NATO, despite Ukraine's neutrality serving it well, and despite the future pretense of wanting to follow the will of the Ukrainian people, the U.S. just kept hammering away at the supposed need to get Ukraine into NATO. But as long as countries like Germany and France were still maintaining their own foreign policies not wholly subservient to Washington, NATO could only threaten to add Ukraine (and Georgia) at some future date.

Eventually, in 2013, the U.S. added television channels to its repertoire. U.S. taxpayers and George Soros paid to tell Ukrainians to assemble in the Maidan along with EU nations' ambassadors, Victoria Nuland, John McCain, Nazi paramilitaries, and half a million other people — and paid to supply them with food and camping supplies. With a Nuland phone call recording publicly advertising U.S. support for the coup, with Senator Chris Murphy and Soros's organization publicly taking credit, a new Ukrainian government began restricting the use of the Russian language and threatening the NATO takeover of the Russian military base in Crimea.

The rest, as they say, is so-called "history."

Major investment and forces put to work on both propaganda and structural momentum-building for the better part of a century may seem unstoppable. But not only does the non-U.S.-government world have a say in events, but there always remains available the option of changing course, or what we might call the five-word option. Just as Kamala Harris would now be president if she has said the five words "No more weapons to Israel," a great many Ukrainians and Russians would still be alive if Joe Biden had said the five words "Ukraine will not join NATO."

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Social Security also tends to stultify conscience, which is another of God's great gifts to mankind. By forcing everyone to participate in this socialist system and other welfare-state programs, people have less need to exercise conscience. They essentially render their conscience to Caesar, dutifully pay their taxes, and convince themselves that they are helping the poor, needy, and disadvantaged.

— Jacob G. Hornberger
"The Evil Within, Part 4: The Welfare State"

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